



Course Syllabus: American and Texas Government I
Prothro Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences
POLS 1433 Section X21
Spring 2024 (January 16, 2024 – May 3, 2024)

Contact Information

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Course Description

Political Science 1433 is an introductory course in American and Texas government and politics that focuses on how the U.S. government and Texas government work and why they work the way they do. The purpose of this course is to assist you in developing a better understanding of the government institutions and the political processes that you will interact with as citizens. This course is also designed to provide you with analytical tools so that you can understand and meaningfully participate in American and Texas politics throughout your life. This course will be challenging and critical thinking about Texas and American government will be part of everything that we do. The syllabus provides a general plan for the course; changes may be necessary.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Lowi, T. J., Ginsberg, B., Shepsle, K. A., Ansolabehere, S., & Han, H. (2023). *American Government: Power and purpose* (17th ed.). W.W. Norton and Company. (APP)
Champagne, A., Harpham, E. J., Casellas, J. P., & Clark, J. H. (2023). *Governing Texas* (6th ed.). W. W. Norton and Company. (GT)

Grading

On each assignment, quiz, exam and for the final grade, grades will be assigned according to the following scale

Table 1: Letter Grade

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade
A	90 to 100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	0 to 59

Table 2: Semester Grade Breakdown

Graded Item	Percentage of Grade
Exam 1	15
Exam 2	20
Exam 3	20
Civic Engagement Project (3 parts)	20
Quizzes	10
Final Exam	15
Total Points	100

Communication

The best way to reach me is to contact me via email. My email address is listed on the first page of the syllabus. When emailing me, if you would like a helpful response, you must include your full name, a subject in the subject line, the name of the course in which you are enrolled, and your question. Please use full sentences and not texting language. Individual Zoom or phone appointments may also be set up based on availability.

Assignments

Weekly Module Assignments: Each week there will be module activities to complete listed in a checklist such as chapter reading, outlines, flashcards, watching content, and taking a quiz. Assignments that are graded will appear in the gradebook. Weekly modules can be accessed in D2L by clicking on CONTENT, then COURSE SCHEDULE.

Quizzes

Quizzes will cover recent weekly textbook material and help make sure students are keeping up with content. **No notes, book, cell phones or electronic devices may be used during quizzes or exams.** You will be required to take your quizzes on a lockdown browser through D2L. If you have previously utilized the lockdown browser with a different school, you may be required to uninstall from your device and reinstall the MSU Texas version. Graded quizzes can be accessed on D2L by clicking on, ASSESSMENTS, then TESTS.

Exams

All exams will be taken using Respondus Monitor and Lockdown Browser through D2L. You will need to make sure you have a device that has a webcam enabled to use Respondus Monitor. This safeguards the academic integrity of performance on an exam. Please be sure that you are in an area free from distractions, with a strong and reliable internet signal, **you are in full view of the camera** and on a computer that has the minimum system requirements to run Respondus Monitor and Lockdown Browser. Your exam sessions are recorded and any indication of academic dishonesty, or cheating, will result in an automatic grade of ZERO for that exam, as well as possible expulsion from the course.

Project

Brief Overview: Throughout the semester you will work toward creating an infographic about a special interest topic.

Guidelines: A rubric will be provided on D2L as well as more details of guidelines for the project by accessing the D2L Dropbox. To access Dropbox in D2L, click ASSESSMENTS, then ASSIGNMENTS.

Project Due Dates: In order to ensure that you are on track to completing a successful project, portions of the progression toward the project will be due in the D2L Dropbox to be graded. They are as follows:

Table 3: Project Part Due Dates

Project Part and Description	Due Date
Part 1 – Select topic and describe importance of subject using template.	Feb 18th
Part 2 – Written summaries using the lens of 3 principles of politics.	Mar 27th
Part 3 – Present data and research organized in a visual presentation illustrating your special topic from the lens of 1 principle of politics.	Apr 28th

Make Up Work/Tests

It will be at the discretion of the instructor to allow make up work or tests. Please contact the instructor directly to be assessed. Since this is an online course, work conflict will not be considered a reason as to why an assignment, quiz, or test cannot be completed by the due date.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact myself.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with reliable Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class as well reliable internet or data to submit assignments. ***Assignments and tests are to be completed/submitted by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties or service issues will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit***

assignments, or complete tests, or quizzes. There are many places to access your class, including on a tablet and/or smartphone. Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student D2L helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. Contact distance education and copy your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Class Policies

The Learning Environment: Since this course does not take place in-person where body language, facial expressions, and tone can be interpreted, let us all try to be mindful of what we type. Students are expected to be respectful of their classmates and instructor, always during this course. Students should be respectful of their classmates' identities and backgrounds, such as racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds; religious and political beliefs; language, national origin, and migration or refugee status; gender and gender identity.

This syllabus serves as written notice that harassing or disruptive behavior, either verbal or written, will not be tolerated in the course and that actions will be subject to the disruptive behavior policy.

Disruptive Behavior:

Disruptive behavior, including but not limited to using vulgarity, threatening the instructor or classmates, excessive intentional comments that are meant to troll other classmates or the instructor will not be tolerated. This syllabus serves as the warning that such behavior will not be allowed. Students committing disruptive behavior will be removed from the class.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2023-2024](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's, to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. MSU Texas uses the Turnitin.com Artificial Intelligence detection tool. If Turnitin.com detects that your assignment was completed using AI, you will be given a grade of zero for that assignment.

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. **After notification of acceptance, students requiring**

accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on university property or at University-sponsored activities.

Title IX

At Midwestern State University, the Title IX Department provides students, faculty, and staff with access to their rights and options under Title IX. The Title IX Department conducts investigations into possible violations of MSU's Sexual Misconduct Policy, as well as oversees the university's primary prevention and education programming related to sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and sexual harassment. To find out more or make a report please visit [Title IX](#).

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Table 4: Brief Overview of Course Schedule

Week	Unit	Topic	Assigned Date	Due Date
1	0	<i>Introduction and Five Principles of Politics</i> Reading: APP – Ch 1 Quiz by 1/22/24	1/16/24	1/22/24
2	1	<i>The Legislative Branch (Federal) - Congress</i> Reading: APP – Ch 6 Quiz by 1/28/24	1/22/24	1/28/24
3	2	<i>The Legislative Branch (State) – Texas Legislature</i> Reading: GT – Ch 7 Quiz by 2/4/24	1/29/24	2/4/24
4	3	Exam 1 – Due 2/6/24 (Units 0, 1, & 2) <i>The Presidency (Federal)</i> Reading: APP – Ch 7 Quiz by 2/11/24	2/5/24	2/11/24

5	4	<i>Texas Governor (State)</i> Reading: GT – Ch 8 Quiz by 2/18/24 Project Part 1 - Topic Selection Due 2/18/24	2/12/24	2/18/24
6	5	<i>The Federal Courts</i> Reading: APP – Ch 9 Quiz by 2/25/24	2/19/24	2/25/24
7	6	<i>The Texas Judiciary</i> Reading: GT – Ch 9 Quiz by 3/3/24	2/26/24	3/3/24
8	7	Exam 2 – Due 3/5/24 (Units 3, 4, 5, & 6) <i>Civil Liberties</i> Reading: APP – Ch 4 Quiz by 3/17/24	3/4/24	3/18/24
9		SPRING BREAK	3/11/24	3/17/24
10	8	<i>Civil Rights</i> Reading: APP – Ch 5 Quiz by 3/24/24	3/18/24	3/24/24
11		Project Part 2 - Written Summaries Due 3/27/24 Holiday Break - 3/27 to 3/29		3/27/24
12	9	<i>Bureaucracy</i> Reading: APP – Ch 8 Quiz by 4/7/24	4/1/24	4/7/24
13	10	<i>Social Policy</i> Reading: On D2L Weekly Module Quiz by 4/14/24	4/8/24	4/14/24
14	11	Exam 3 – Due 4/16/24 (Units 7, 8, 9, & 10) <i>Economic Policy</i> Reading: On D2L Weekly Module Quiz by 4/21/24	4/15/24	4/21/24
15	12	Project Part 3 - Infographic Due 4/28/24 <i>Local Government</i> Reading: GT – Ch 10 Quiz by 4/28/24 Last day to drop for “W” before 4 PM - 4/24/24	4/22/24	4/28/24
16	13	<i>Public Finance in Texas</i> Reading: GT – Ch 11 Quiz by 5/5/24	4/29/24	5/5/24
17		Exam 4 - Due 5/7/24 (Units 11, 12, & 13)		5/7/24

Table 5. Social Studies Certification Standards/Competencies List

Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment/Module/Course Activities/Assessment
<p>Understand the key structural features of the US federal government, including the legislative branch, executive branch, and judiciary.</p>	<p>Grades 4-8 Competency 001 (A, B) Grades 4-8 Competency 001 (Q) 4-8 Competency 004 (C, H, L,M) Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 009 (D) Grades 7-12, Domain III (Standard IV) Competency 012 (B, C) Grades 7-12, Domain V: Government and Citizenship (Standard VII-VIII), Standard VII, Competency 017 (B, C, D,E, G) Grades 7-12, Domain V: Government and Citizenship, Standard VII, Competency 018 (A, B,C, E, G)</p>	<p>Unit 1 Assessment: Exam 1 Unit 3 Assessment: Exam 2 Unit 5 Assessment: Exam 2</p>

Understand the key structural features of the Texas state government, including the Texas legislature, executive branch, and judiciary.	Grades 4-8: Competency 004 (C, D, I, K, M)	Unit 2 Assessment: Exam 1
	Grades 7-12, Domain III (Standard IV), Competency 012 (C)	Unit 4 Assessment: Exam 2
	Grades 7-12 Domain V (Standard VII-VIII) Competency 017 (I)	Unit 6 Assessment: Exam 2
	Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (A, B, C, G)	Unit 12 Assessment: Final Exam

Understand the civil liberties and describe the origin of the Bill of Rights and how those rights came to apply to the states.	Grades 4-8, Domain 1 (Standards IV-X), Competency 004 (N)	Unit 7 Assessment: Exam 3
	Grades 7-12 Domain V (Standard VII-VIII), Standard VII, Competency 017 (A, H)	
	Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (G)	

<p>Understand civil rights and describe how different groups have fought for and won protections for their rights.</p>	<p>Grades 4-8, Domain 1 (Standards IV-X), Competency 001 (P, Q)</p> <p>Grades 4-9, Domain 1 (Standards IV-X), Competency 004 (G, J)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 009 (A, D, E, F)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain III (Standard IV), Competency 012 (A)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain IV (Standard V and IX) Competency 016 (B)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VII-VIII), Standard VII, 017 (E, G, H)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standards VII-VIII), Standard VIII, Competency 018 (E, F)</p>	<p>Unit 8 Assessment: Exam 3</p>
<p>Understand the steps and concepts to engage in political participation policymaking at the local,</p>	<p>Grades 4-8, Domain I (Standards IV-X), Competency 004 (B, C, G, H, K)000</p>	<p>Unit 9 Unit 10 Assessment: Exam 3 Unit 11 Unit 12 Unit 13</p>

state and national level.	<p>Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 009 (A, E)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VII and VIII), Standard VII, Competency 017 (I)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standards VII-VIII), Standard, VIII, Competency 018 (C)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain VI (Standards VI, X), Standard VI, Competency 021 (B, E, F)</p>	Assessment: Final Exam
Think critically about policy-making in American and Texas politics and engage in meaningful civic participation.	<p>Grades 4-8 Competency 004 (B, K)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (C, G)</p>	Civic Engagement Project Project Presentation

Grades 4-8 Social Studies Certification:

Domain 1: Social Studies Content (Standards IV-X)

Competency 001 (History)- The teacher understands and applies knowledge of significant historical events and developments, multiple historical interpretations and ideas and relationships between the past, the present and the future, as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

- A. Understands traditional historical points of reference in the history of Texas, the United States and the world.
- B. Analyzes how individuals, events, and issues shaped the history of Texas, the United States and the world.
- P. Demonstrates knowledge of major U.S. and Texas reform movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g., abolition movement, women suffrage movement, temperance movement, Civil Rights movement, agrarian groups, labor unions, James L. Farmer, Jr., Jane Addams, Hector Pérez García, Oveta Culp Hobby, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the evangelical movement).
- Q. Understands important issues, events and individuals of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that shaped the role of Texas in the United States and the world (e.g., Great Depression, First and Second World Wars, Civil Rights movement, Lyndon B.

Johnson, emergence of a two-party system, political and economic controversies, immigration, migration).

Competency 004 (Government and Citizenship)- The teacher understands and applies knowledge of government, democracy and citizenship, including ways in which individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems, as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

- B. Understands the purpose of rules and laws; the relationship between rules, rights and responsibilities; and the individual's role in making and enforcing rules and ensuring the welfare of society.
- C. Knows the basic structure and functions of the U.S. government, the Texas government and local governments (including the roles of public officials) and relationships among national, state and local governments.
- G. Demonstrates knowledge of how state and local governments use sources of revenue such as property tax and sales tax, and the funding of Texas public education.
- H. Demonstrates knowledge of types of government (e.g., constitutional, totalitarian), and their effectiveness in meeting citizens' needs and the reasons for limiting the power of government.
- I. Knows the formal and informal process of changing the U.S. and Texas constitutions and the impact of changes on society.
- J. Understands the impact of landmark Supreme Court cases (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*, *Gibbons v. Ogden*).
- K. Understands components of the democratic process (e.g., voting, contacting local and state representatives, voluntary individual participation, effective leadership, expression of different points of view) and their significance in a democratic society.
- M. Demonstrates knowledge of the importance, accomplishments and leadership qualities of United States and Texas leaders (e.g., Presidents Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Lincoln; U.S. senators Calhoun, Webster, Clay; Texas governors and local Texas representatives).
- N. Analyzes the relationship among individual rights, responsibilities and freedoms in democratic societies.

Grades 7-12 Social Studies Certification

Domain II: US History (Standard IV)

Competency 009-(Political, Economic and Social Developments from 1877 to the Present): The teacher understands significant political, economic and social developments in the United States from 1877 to the present.

- A. Understands political, economic and social changes in the United States from 1877 to the present (e.g., in relation to political parties, transportation, labor unions, agriculture, business, race, gender).
- D. Demonstrates knowledge of significant individuals who shaped political, economic and social developments in the United States from 1877 to the present (e.g., Jane Addams, Henry Ford, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesar Chavez, Betty Friedan, Malcolm X).
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of events and issues that shaped political, economic and social developments in the United States from 1877 to the present (e.g., ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, Great Depression, passage of the GI Bill, passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, urbanization, anti-trust legislation, immigration restriction, globalization, terrorism).

- F. Analyzes the impact of civil rights movements in the United States, including the African American, Hispanic, American Indian and women's rights movements.

Domain III: Texas History (Standard IV)

Competency 012- (Texas in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries): The teacher understands significant historical developments and events in Texas from 1900 to the present.

- A. Understands the impact of individuals and reform movements such as the Progressive movement and the Civil Rights movement on Texas in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g., Jane McCallum, Lulu Belle Madison White, Manuel C. Gonzales, Oveta Culp Hobby, James Hogg, Hector Garcia).
- B. Understands the political, economic, cultural and social impacts of major events in the twentieth century, including World War I, the Great Depression, World War II and the Cold War on the history of Texas.
- C. Understands the political, economic and social impact of major events and individuals in the latter half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries on the history of Texas (e.g., Kay Bailey Hutchison, Barbara Jordan, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Henry B. Gonzalez, Lyndon B. Johnson, James Farmer, George Walker Bush, Craig Anthony Washington, immigration, Rust Belt to Sun Belt migration).

Domain IV: Geography, Culture, and the Behavioral and Social Sciences (Standard V and IX)

Competency 016- (Sociological, Anthropological and Psychological Concepts and Processes): The teacher applies sociological, anthropological and psychological concepts and processes to understand cultural formation and change, intergroup relations and individual development.

- B. Understands the evolving nature of race and gender relations in the United States and knows how people from various racial, ethnic and religious groups have adapted to and modified life in the United States and contributed to a national identity.

Domain V: Government and Citizenship (Standard VII-VIII)

Standard VII Competency 017- (Democratic Principles and Government in the United States): The teacher understands the principles of democratic government and the structure and functioning of government in the United States.

- A. Analyzes the beliefs and principles reflected in the U.S. Constitution (e.g., republicanism, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, separation of church and state, popular sovereignty, individual rights) and other important historical documents (e.g., Declaration of Independence, Federalist Papers, English Bill of Rights).
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of the structure and functions of the government created by the U.S. Constitution (e.g., bicameral structure of Congress, role of congressional committees, constitutional powers of the president, role of the Cabinet and independent executive agencies, functions of the federal court system).
- C. Understands the processes by which the U.S. Constitution can be changed.
- D. Knows procedures for enacting laws in the United States.
- E. Analyzes changes in the role of the U.S. government over time (e.g., civil rights, New Deal legislation, wartime policies).

- F. Understands changing relationships among the three branches of the federal government (e.g., Franklin D. Roosevelt's attempt to increase the number of U.S. Supreme Court justices, War Powers Act, judicial review).
- G. Demonstrates knowledge of the impact of Constitutional amendments on U.S. society (e.g., Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-fourth and Twenty-sixth amendments).
- H. Analyzes the interpretations and impact of landmark Supreme Court decisions on U.S. society (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Schenck v. U.S.*, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, *Engel v. Vitale*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, *Roe v. Wade*, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*).
- I. Demonstrates knowledge of the structure and functions of Texas state government and local governments.

Standard VIII Competency 018- (Citizenship and Political Processes in the United States): The teacher understands political processes in the United States and the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens.

- A. Understands the historical and contemporary roles played by political parties, interest groups and the media in the U.S. political system.
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of processes for filling elective and appointive public offices (e.g., primary system, electoral college).
- C. Demonstrates knowledge of processes for making policy in the United States, the impact of technology on the political process and ways in which different points of view influence decision making and the development of public policy at the local, state and national levels.
- D. Understands rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, including each amendment in the Bill of Rights, (e.g., due process, equal protection) and their role in protecting individual liberties.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of efforts to expand the democratic process in the United States and understands the contributions of significant political and social leaders (e.g., George Washington, John Marshall, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Jr.).
- F. Demonstrates knowledge of the causes and effects of major reform movements in U.S. history (e.g., abolitionist movement, public education, temperance, women's rights, prison reform, civil rights movement).
- G. Understands civic responsibilities (e.g., jury duty), the difference between personal and civic responsibilities and the importance of voluntary individual participation in the U.S. political process.

Domain VI: Economics and Science, Technology, and Society (Standard VI, X)

Standard VI Competency 021- (Structure and Operation of the U.S. Free Enterprise System): The teacher understands the structure and operation of the U.S. free enterprise system; the role of government, business, consumers and labor in the system; and basic concepts of consumer economics.

- B. Analyzes issues and developments related to U.S. economic growth from the 1870s to the present (e.g., anti-trust acts; tariff policies; The New Deal; economic effects of World War I, World War II and the Cold War; increased globalization of the economy).

- E. Analyzes the role of government in the U.S. free enterprise system (e.g., significance of government rules and regulations, impact of fiscal and monetary policy decisions, role and function of the Federal Reserve System, relationship between government policies and international trade)
- F. Demonstrates knowledge of the goals of economic growth, stability, full employment, freedom, security, equity and efficiency as they apply to U.S. economic policy.