



Course Syllabus: American Government I
POLS1333 Section X22
Spring 2026 Online

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Michael Baggs
Office hours: By Zoom Appointment
E-mail: michael.baggs@msutexas.edu

Course Description

This is an introductory course to the American political system with a brief survey of the political dynamics of the state of Texas. This course will examine the role of democracy in government; the historical influences on the federal and state constitutions; the structure of these constitutions; the impact of federalism; and how elections, political parties, public opinion, the media, and interest groups influence the political environment.

Texas Core Objectives: This course will support the development of the following state mandated core learning objectives: Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility.

Course Modality Statement: This course has been planned as a fully **online** course for the Spring semester of 2026. I will use D2L for posting syllabi, course communication, course schedule, and gradebook, as well as for course materials and testing. You should regularly check D2L and the email hosted via D2L for important course information.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Caroline J. Tolbert, Andrea L. Campbell, Megan Ming Francis, Margaret Weir, and Theodore Lowi. 2025. *We the People*. 15th Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Sons.

Ebook: ISBN: 978-1-324-08538-6

Champagne, Anthony, Edward J Harpham, Jason P Casellas, and Jennifer Hayes Clark. 2025. *Governing Texas*. 7th Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Sons.

Ebook: ISBN: 978-1-324-08568-3

The two text books costs were included with the student's tuition and can be accessed utilizing the links in D2L. If the student has already purchased the ebook or a hard copy then you will need to notify the bookstore by the opt-out date to receive a refund to your account.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

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Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given).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

Grading

Course Grade: The student's grade will be based on 4 exams (Exam 1, Exam 2, Exam 3, and a Final), core assessment/paper, 13 quizzes (lowest quiz grade will be dropped), and 10 discussion exercises. For the point distribution, see Table 1. All grades will be recorded in D2L.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Points</i>
Exam 1	195
Exam 2	195
Exam 3	195
Final Exam	195
Quizzes (12)	120
Core Assessment/Presentation	10
Discussions (10)	100
<i>Total Points</i>	<i>1000</i>

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900-1000
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

Exams

Exam Policies: There will be four required examinations: Exams 1, 2, 3, and a Final. Each exam will be worth 195 points and they will be administered online via D2L. They will consist of 60 multiple-choice questions and the student will have 60 minutes to complete the exam on the specified date and time (The scheduled examination date ranges are posted in the calendar section of D2L and the course Schedule in this syllabus). These dates are not subject to change.

Exam Make-Ups: Since the exams will be available for 6 to 7 days there should be no reason for a student to miss one. However, if an exam is missed the student must notify the instructor and provide an **adequate** reason by 11:59 pm the Monday after the exam has closed.

If a student does have a sufficient reason for missing the exam, the make-up exam must be completed by 11:59 pm the next day, Tuesday (48 hours after the exam was originally due). After that time, if the student has not completed the exam, they will receive a **ZERO**.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor after missing an exam to schedule the make-up. Only one exam extension per student per semester will be allowed, however, this does not include the final.

Final Exam: Any student who misses the final exam and has a legitimate excuse will receive a grade of 'Incomplete' and will have to take the make-up exam within 30 days of the beginning of the next semester or else the grade will be changed to reflect the student's grade without the final.

Taking Exams Early: Only under extraordinary circumstances will a student be allowed to take an exam, including the final, early. Only university approved excuses (i.e. death in the family, illness, etc.) will be considered for taking an exam early. Plane tickets or summer vacation plans are not a legitimate reason. You must request to take an exam early well before the date of the exam and approval is solely at the discretion of the instructor.

IMPORTANT: Any student who misses the first exam, has no university approved excuse, and who does not schedule or take the make-up the exam within the required period will be dropped from the class.

Quizzes

Each chapter will be accompanied by a quiz in D2L which will consist of 25 multiple choice questions. The purpose of the quizzes is to help the student focus on the main topics of the chapters and to give them an idea of the types of multiple-choice questions that will be on the exam. The exam monitoring software will not be required as these are essentially 'open book' quizzes, and each one will be worth 10 points. The student will have 3 attempts for each quiz

with no time limit. The quizzes will be opened and closed on the dates specified in the Course Schedule, but basically, they will be open for 7 days (except for the last quiz in Week 15). The student's lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Discussions

There will be 10 discussion topics this semester that will run concurrently with the assigned topic for that week. Not all weeks will have a discussion, so check the calendar in D2L or the course schedule in the syllabus for the topics, start, and due dates. The discussion assignments will proceed as follows: the discussion will open on that Monday at 12:01 am and will be open until the following Sunday at 11:59 pm. In these discussions I will post a multi-part question similar to an essay type question that you might find on an exam. The student will need to post a complete response by Sunday night to receive credit for the assignment. **Late responses will not be accepted.** The discussions will be graded the following week and are judged on three levels of achievement: *Needs Improvement*, *Meets Expectations*, and *Exceeds Expectations*. These discussion grades will focus largely on critical thinking and the student will be graded for clarity of thought, depth of analysis, and use of evidence. Last, but not least, the student's ability to follow instructions and utilize good grammar will also be graded.

Note: All discussion prompts **AI responses** have been analyzed and recorded. If your discussion answers even remotely resemble these responses, you will receive a **zero** for that assignment.

It is important that the student take these discussion questions seriously because these, along with quizzes, will constitute the review for the subsequent exam. The student is encouraged to collaborate with their peers on the answers and fully discuss the topics.

Core Assessment

There is one core assessment assignment given during the semester worth 10 points. Instructions for this assignment will be posted in D2L in its own module.

Extra Credit

There is **NO EXTRA-CREDIT** for this class.

Late Work

Late work will **NOT** be accepted.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: January 20th – 23rd

Deadline to file for graduation: May Graduates: February 16th

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 29th

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Technology Requirement & 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 your instructor.

All exams will utilize the Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor for testing. In order to utilize these programs, you will need to note the following:

- Chromebooks are not compatible with the Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor;
- Apple iPads may be used for quizzes and exams, but these are not advised for any assignment with a written component;
- Mobile phones and similar devices are not compatible with the required programs;
- A working webcam on the computing device is needed for all exams and quizzes.

Please note: a limited number of webcams and laptops with cameras are available for check-out through the MSU Texas Moffett Library.

Online Computer Requirements

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

Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ***Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student 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. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

Expectations: Since this is an internet course, the logistics will be somewhat different than a regular lecture class, however all assignments must be completed by the specified due dates. If, however, an issue arises that will cause the student to miss an assignment the following policy must be followed: contact me before the assignment is due and provide valid documentation for not completing it on time. Each case will be judged individually, and it is up to the instructor to decide whether or not to permit late work. Extra credit for missed assignments will not be granted.

Readings: The assigned chapters serve as a foundation for all of the assignments, and they should be read and studied. Do not rely solely on the lecture videos or posted notes. Not all of the material from the chapters is covered in them and the student is accountable for all of the assigned information.

Communication Policy: In order to facilitate timely and effective communication between the instructor and the student the following policies will be put in place:

All emails need to be sent through Desire2Learn. This will keep student communications separate from the day to day administrative and campus wide emails.

All emails need to begin with your full name (i.e. the name that you are registered under) and your class number and section.

All emails received Monday through Friday (before noon) will be answered within 24 hours, while emails received on Saturday, Sunday, or Friday afternoon will be answered on the following Monday.

All emails that concern questions that are already answered in the syllabus, exercise instructions, announcement section of D2L, or given during class will merely be referred to those communications (i.e. my response will be, "Please refer to the syllabus or instructions to answer this question.").

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. **HOWEVER**, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

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.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process.

Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUREady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

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

References

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Caroline J. Tolbert, Andrea L. Campbell, Megan Ming Francis, Margaret Weir, and Theodore Lowi. 2025. *We the People*. 15th Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Sons.

Champagne, Anthony, Edward J Harpham, Jason P Casellas, and Jennifer Hayes Clark. 2025. *Governing Texas*. 7th Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Sons.

Lowi, Theodore J, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2021. *American Government: Power and Purpose*. 16th Edition. New York: WW Norton.

Matto, Elizabeth C et al. Eds. *Teaching Civic Engagement Across the Disciplines*. American Political Science Association, 2017.

McCartney, Alison Rios Millett, Elizabeth A Bennion and Dick Simpson. Eds. *Teaching Civic Engagement: From Student to Active Citizen*, American Political Science Association, 2013.

More resources available at APSAEducate. The American Political Science Association. <educate.apsanet.org>

Social Studies Certification Standards/Competencies List

Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment/Module/Course Activities/Assessment
Understand politics and political systems and cultures of the US and Texas	Grades 4-8 Competency 001 (A, B) 4-8 Competency 004 (H, L) Grades 7-12, Domain III (Standard IV), Competency 011 (E) Grades 7-12, Domain III (Standard IV) Competency 012 (D, E) Grades 7-12, Domain IV (Standard V and IX) Competency 016 (B) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard 7) Competency 019 (E)	Weeks 1-15 Assessments: Quizzes 1-13, Discussion 1-10, Exams 1, 2, 3, & Final
Understand the origins and significance of the US Constitution and Texas Constitution	Grades 4-8, Competency 001 (K, L) Grades 4-8: Competency 004 (B, C, D, E, I)	Week 2 & 3 Assessment: Quizzes 1 & 2, Discussions 1 & 2, Exam 1

	<p>Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 006 (A, B, C, D, E)</p> <p>Grades 7-12 Domain V (Standard VII- VIII) Competency 017 (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (D)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard 7) Competency 019 (B)</p>	
Understand the relationship between the federal government, the state government, and citizens	<p>Grades 4-8, Competency 004 (E, G, J)</p> <p>Grades 7-12 Domain V (Standard VII- VIII) Competency 017 (H, I, J)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (C)</p> <p>Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard 7) Competency</p>	<p>Week 5 & 6 Assessment: Quizzes 3, 4, 5, Discussion 3 & 4, Exam 2</p>

	019 (D) Domain VI (Standard VI, X) Competency 021 (B)	
Understand the Electoral System in the US and Texas	Grades 4-8, Competency 004 (K, N) Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 009 (F) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (B, C, E, G)	Week 10 & 11 Assessment: Quizzes 8 & 9, Discussions 7 & 8, Exam 3
Understand the roles of parties, public opinion, the media and interest groups in politics	Grades 4-8, Competency 001 (P, Q) Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 009 (A, B,D, E) Grades 7-12, Domain III (Standard IV) Competency 012 (A, B, C) Grades 7-12, Domain IV (Standard V and IX) Competency 016 (B, E) Grades 7-12, Domain V	Week 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, Assessment: Quizzes 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, Discussions 5, 6, 9, 10, Exam 3 & Final Exam

	(Standard VIII) Competency 018 (A, C, E, F, G)	
Understand personal and social responsibility for civic engagement	Grades 4-8 Competency 004 (B) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (C, G)	Core Assessment/Paper & 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.
- K. Understands the foundations of representative government in the United States; significant individuals, events and issues of the revolutionary era; and challenges confronting the U.S. government in the early years of the republic (e.g., Mayflower Compact, Virginia Houses of burgesses, John Adams, Abigail Adams, George Washington, Crispus Attucks, Battle of Saratoga,
- L. Demonstrates knowledge of the individuals, events and issues related to the independence of Texas, the founding of the Republic of Texas and Texas statehood (e.g., Moses Austin, Samuel Houston, Erasmo Seguín, Antonio López de Santa Anna, the Fredonian Rebellion, the Battle of the Alamo, the Battle of San Jacinto, the annexation of Texas, the U.S.-Mexican War).
- 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.
- D. Demonstrates knowledge of key principles and ideas in major political documents of Texas and the United States (e.g., Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Texas Constitution) and relationships among political documents.
- E. Understands early United States political issues, including those surrounding Alexander Hamilton, Patrick Henry, James Madison, George Mason; the arguments of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists; states' rights issues; and the nullification crisis.
- 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.
- L. Demonstrates knowledge of important customs, symbols, landmarks and celebrations that represent American and Texan beliefs and principles and that contribute to national unity (e.g., Uncle Sam, "The Star-Spangled Banner," the San Jacinto Monument, "Texas, our Texas").
- 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 006 (Revolutionary Era and the Early Years of the Republic): The teacher understands significant historical events and developments of the Revolutionary Era and the early years of the Republic, including the foundations of representative government in the United States

- A. Demonstrates knowledge of individuals, events and issues that shaped the development of U.S. society during the Revolutionary Era and early years of the Republic.
- B. Analyzes causes of the American Revolution (e.g., mercantilism, British policies following the French and Indian War).
- C. Understands significant political and economic issues of the Revolutionary Era (e.g., taxation without representation, enforcement of the Navigation Acts, Lexington, Concord, winter at Valley Forge, Treaty of Paris of 1783).
- D. Demonstrates knowledge of the foundations of representative government in the United States (e.g., the Articles of Confederation and issues of the Philadelphia Convention of 1787, such as major compromises and arguments for and against ratification).
- E. Understands the origin and development of the American political system and political parties (e.g., Federalists, Democratic-Republicans, Jacksonian democracy, Whigs, Democrats).

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).
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of the effects of reform and third party movements and their leaders on U.S. society (e.g., Populism, Progressive Era reforms, New Deal legislation, Susan B. Anthony, W. E. B. Du Bois, George Wallace).
- C. 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).
- D. 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).
- E. 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 011- (Independence, Statehood, Civil War Reconstruction and Aftermath): The teacher understands significant historical developments and events in Texas from 1821 to 1900.

- E. Understands the major effects of Reconstruction on the political, economic and social life of Texas.

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).
- D. Understands the impact of major developments in manufacturing, the petroleum and gas industry (e.g., Spindletop), commercial agriculture (e.g., cotton, citrus, beef and dairy production) and suburbanization and how various groups altered the natural environment from 1900 to the present.
- E. Understands the effect of major developments in computer technology, transportation (including aerospace) and medical research on the contemporary economic and social history of Texas.

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.
- E. Understands the role and influence of social institutions (e.g., family, religion, educational system, science, mass media) in meeting basic societal needs.

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. Understands the relationship between the states and the national government of the United States (i.e., federalism).
- J. 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.

Standard VII Competency 019- (Types of Political Systems): The teacher understands the development of political systems and the similarities and differences among major historical and contemporary forms of government.

- B. Demonstrates knowledge of significant political documents and the philosophies of individuals in world history (e.g., Hammurabi's Code of Laws, Justinian's Code of Laws, Magna Carta, John Locke, Thomas Hobbes) and their impact on the development of political thought.
- D. Understands similarities and differences between the U.S. constitutional republic and other contemporary forms of government.
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of major forms of government in history (e.g., monarchy, authoritarian government, classical republic, liberal democracy, totalitarian government) and of the historical antecedents of major political systems.

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).

1333-X22 Course Schedule

WTP: We the People & GT: Governing Texas

Week	Topic	Activity	Start Date	Due Date
1	Introduction/Syllabus		1/19 to 1/25	
2	WTP2: Constitution	Quiz 1 & Discussion 1	1/26	2/1
3	GT2: Texas Constitution	Quiz 2 & Discussion 2	2/2	2/8
4	Exam 1		2/9	2/15
5	WTP3: Federalism & GT3 Texas in the Federal System	Quiz 3 & 4, Discussion 3	2/16	2/22
6	WTP8: Political Participation and Voting	Quiz 5 & Discussion 4	2/23	3/1
7	Exam 2		3/2	3/15
8	WTP9: Political Parties	Quiz 6 & Discussion 5	3/16	3/22
9	GT4: Texas Political Parties	Quiz 7 & Discussion 6	3/23	3/29
10	WTP10: Campaigns and Elections	Quiz 8 & Discussion 7	3/30	4/5
11	GT5: Texas Campaigns and Elections	Quiz 9 & Discussion 8	4/6	4/12
12	Exam 3		4/13	4/19
13	WTP11: Groups and Interests & GT6: Texas Interest Groups	Quiz 10 & 11, Discussion 9	4/20	4/26
14	WTP6: Public Opinion	Quiz 12	4/27	5/3
15	WTP7: The Media	Quiz 13 & Discussion 10	5/4	5/8
16	Final Exam		5/9	5/14

*All exams, quizzes, and discussions will open at 12:01 am and close at 11:59 pm on the specified dates