Syllabus for POLS 1333
American Government I

Course: POLS 1333 American Government I

    Class: Internet

Lecturer: Steve Garrison, Ph.D.

    Office: 201 O'Donohoe Hall
    Phone: 397-6282
    Email: steve.garrison@msutexas.edu

Course Description:
This course introduces students to the political system of the United States and the state of Texas. In this course we will study the role and creation of government in society; the role of democracy in government; how history has influenced the state and federal constitutions; the impact of federalism; elections, the media, political parties; public opinion and interest groups.

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.

Texts:
Paula McClain and Steven Tauber. 2019. *American Government in Black and White: Diversity and Democracy (4th edition)*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Expectations, Examinations, and Grading:
I understand this is an internet course and that logistics are different than inclass courses, however, I do expect students to complete assignments by the specified due date. Given that students will have a week to complete the discussion assignments I assume you will have ample time to complete the assignment. If you do not complete the assignment or miss a test please abide by the following policies: contact me before the due date and then provide me with documentation for a valid reason

for not completing your assignment i.e. car wreck or medical issue would be a valid reason, taking a trip to Padre without your instructor (just kidding) would not. The privilege of additional work will not be granted. Additionally I expect students to behave as adults. Disruptive or abusive behavior towards the instructor or other students will result in your withdrawal from the course.

There will be two exams (25% each) and final (30%)examination, practice quizzes (10%), and discussion assignments (10%). The highest grading scale will be 90 (A), 80 (B), 70 (C), and 60 (D). In order to fully grasp the workings of state and local government it is important that students examine the relevance of the course material in terms of current political events. As part of the course I encourage students to start paying attention to some reputable news source. In fact, I would urge you to begin following numerous sources. I am open to format; internet, radio, television just ensure that is actually news and not purely opinion. If you have questions about specific sources let me know. During each unit I will post three discussion questions related to our course material and typically current events of the week. As part of your course requirements I expect each student to post three responses to these questions throughout the week. It is ok to post more and in fact I would encourage you to post more. Please have something substantive to post. In other words you need more than just I agree. At the end of the week provide me with copies of three of your posts during the week. Collectively this will account for your participation and discussion assignment grade. Note: I intend for this to be largely student driven. I will post the prompt and monitor the discussions but I will provide you with a lot of leeway to decide the direction of the course.

Disability Policy: Any student in this course who has a disability that may preclude demonstrating fully his or her abilities should contact me as soon as possible. We will discuss the accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate education.

Plagiarism: I take plagiarism very seriously and will check your work. By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a limited right in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The limited right shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the students work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes. If you have questions about original work, please consult the Student Handbook Code of Student Conduct section 10.

Calendar The following course schedule represents the schedule of readings and topics for the course. The reading assignments are located under the date and topic. Student's should read the assigned readings for the designated week. The date represents the lesson for the beginning of each week. I have abbreviated the textbook as follows: **TM**=American in Black and White. **LN**=Lecture Notes.

Date (Week of)	Lesson	Topic	Readings
Aug. 26	Lesson One	Government & Institutional Design	Syllabus
Sept. 2	Lesson Two	Colonial Society	MT Chapter One
Sept. 9	Lesson Three	Declaration of Independence	TM Appendix
Sept. 16	Lesson Four	US Constitution	MT Chapter 2
Sept. 23	Lesson Five	Texas Constitution	LN Module 5
		Quiz One	Study Guide One
Sept. 30		Exam One	Study Guide One
Oct. 7	Lesson Six	Federalism	TM Chapter 3
Oct. 14	Lesson Seven	US Political Parties	MT Chapter 14
Oct. 21	Lesson Eight	Texas Political Parties	LN Module 8
Oct 28	Lesson Nine	Interest Groups	MT Chapter 13
		Quiz Two	Study Guide Two
Nov. 4		Exam Two	Study Guide Two
Nov 11	Lesson Ten	Public Opinion	MT Chapter 10
Nov 18	Lesson Eleven	Media	MT Chapter 11
Dec. 2	Lesson Twelve	Local Government	LN 12
		Quiz Three	Final Exam Study Guide
Dec. 9		Final Exam	Final Exam Study Guide