



Course Syllabus: American Government I
POLS1333 Section X12
Fall 2022 Online

Contact Information

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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 Fall semester of 2022. I will use D2L for posting syllabi, course communication, course schedule, attendance, and gradebook, as well as for course materials and testing. There will be some online office hours announced through D2L. You should regularly check D2L and the email hosted via D2L for important course information.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Benjamin Ginsberg, Benjamin, Margaret Weir, Theodore Lowi and Caroline Tolbert. 2019. *We the People*. 13th Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Sons.
Ebook: ISBN: 978-0-393-53878-6

Champagne, Anthony, and Edward Harpham. 2019. *Governing Texas: An Introduction to Texas Politics* 5th Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Sons.
Ebook: ISBN: 978-0-393-53974-5

The student can purchase the ebook either through the bookstore or by following the link and instructions in D2L.

Note: The two ebooks come with access to the InQuizitive software and both are **REQUIRED** for this class. The trial access is not sufficient and no accommodations will be made for those students who do not purchase the ebooks.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook 2021-2022](#)

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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given).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 Conduct.
[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading

Course Grade: There will be 4 exams (exam1, exam2, exam3, and a final), 10 chapter InQuizitive exercises (the lowest 2 scores will be dropped), and a participation grade. For the point distributions see Table 1. All grades will be recorded in D2L.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
InQuizitive	10
Exam 1	20
Exam 2	20
Exam 3	20
Final	20
Participation	10
Total	100

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	Less than 60

InQuizitive

InQuizitive is an adaptive quizzing tool that combines interactive question types with game-like elements to engage students. Instructions for accessing InQuizitive will be given in Introduction section of D2L. Students are **required** to purchase the both electronic textbooks, with the accompanying InQuizitive software, and access the proper class through the student set ID. Students who fail to do so or who do not follow the posted instructions will not receive a grade for this assignment.

InQuizitive assignment must be completed by the noted due date. In InQuizitive, students must answer a minimum number of questions in each activity before receiving a grade and reach a Target Score to earn a 100%.

These grades will be imported into D2L at the end of the semester as a percentage (1% to 100%). The lowest score will be dropped and the rest of the scores will be multiplied by 0.01, and then added together for a maximum of 10 points.

If the quiz is not completed before the due date, the student will receive a **ZERO** grade. There will be **no make-up quizzes** nor will technical issues that occurred on the last day that the quiz is open will be considered.

Participation

On the Friday before the exams, I will assign one or two terms to each student via a news post in D2L. For the review for that particular exam, each student must fully explain to the rest of the class everything about those terms and how they relate to the chapter's topic. Merely, repeating what the textbook states is not enough: the student must define and explain the terms in their own words so that the rest of the class can better understand the topic and how it relates to the topic at hand. These reviews must be posted in the discussion section under that exam title. The discussion section will open for submissions on Saturday at 10am and close in 24 hours and each submission will be worth 2.5 points (see total grade distribution above). Also, I will schedule a Zoom meeting for that Saturday at 10am to answer any questions that students may have about the

exam. It is not mandatory, however, if no one attends the zoom meeting will be canceled and students will miss another opportunity to prepare for the exam.

Exams

Exam Policies: There will be four required examinations: exams 1, 2, 3, and a final. The scheduled examination dates are posted in the calendar section and these are not subject to change. All of the exams will be given online.

Exam Make-Ups: A student must have a sufficient reason for missing an exam (i.e. death in the family, incarceration, power-grid failure, natural disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, asteroid striking the earth, or nuclear war). Any other excuse will be considered invalid and the student will receive a **ZERO** for that grade.

If a student does have a sufficient reason for missing the exam, the make-up exam must be completed within 7 days of the regularly scheduled exam date or 7 days upon their returning to school.

Scheduling the make-up exam is the student's responsibility, not the instructor.

All make-up exams will be in **essay** and **multiple-choice format** that will be conducted through D2L. The student must contact the instructor to schedule a specific date and time for the exam. Technical difficulties will not be considered as sufficient reason for retaking the make-up exam.

Important: If you see a make-up exam appear in the Test section of D2L and you have not missed an exam or did not schedule a make-up then you will not be able to access the exam because it is not for you (it will be password protected).

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.

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 students 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 or extenuating circumstances (see the above approved excuses for missing an exam) 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 IN WRITING well before the date of the exam and approval is solely at the discretion of the instructor.

Exams 1, 2, & 3

These exams will be worth 20 points each and they will be administered online. They will consist of multiple-choice questions and the student will have 60 minutes to complete the exam on the specified date and time (See the course schedule).

Final Exam

The Final exam will be worth 20 points, it will be administered through D2L, and it will consist of multiple-choice questions and the student will have 60 minutes to complete the exam on the specified dates and time (see the course schedule).

Extra Credit

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

Late Work

Late work will ***NOT*** be accepted.

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

Readings: The assigned chapters serve as a foundation for the recorded lectures and they should be read before viewing the lecture. Students who do not read the assigned chapter before the lecture will not be prepared for the concepts covered in the chapter nor will they be prepared to ask any questions that the readings raised.

Not all of the material from the chapters will be discussed in the lecture, however, 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 to 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.").

Emails that do not follow the above guidelines will not receive a response.

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.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University Undergraduate Catalog for the proper procedure.

Notice

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

1333-X12 Course Schedule

WTP: We the People & GT: Governing Texas

Week	Topic	Activity	Start Date	Due Date
1	Introduction			
2	WTP2: US Constitution	InQuizitive		9/11 @ 11pm
3	GT2: Texas Constitution	InQuizitive		9/11 @ 11pm
4	Exam 1		9/12 @ 8am	9/18 @ 11pm
5	WTP3: Federalism	InQuizitive		10/2 @ 11pm
6	WTP8: Political Participation and Voting	InQuizitive		10/2 @ 11pm
7	Exam 2		10/3 @ 8am	10/9 @ 11pm
8	WTP9: Political Parties	InQuizitive		10/23 @ 11pm
	GT4: Texas Political Parties	InQuizitive		10/23 @ 11pm
9	WTP10: Campaigns & Elections	InQuizitive		10/23 @ 11pm
	GT5: Campaigns & Elections in Texas	InQuizitive		10/23 @ 11pm
10	Exam 3		10/24 @ 8am	10/30 @ 11pm
11	WTP11: Groups & Interests	InQuizitive		12/4 @ 11pm
12	GT6: Interest Groups & Lobbying in Texas	InQuizitive		12/4 @ 11pm
13	WTP6: Public Opinion	InQuizitive		12/4 @ 11pm
14	Thanksgiving Break			
15	WTP7: The Media	InQuizitive		12/4 @ 11pm
16	Final		12/5 @ 8am	12/8 @ 11pm