



Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Political Science

POLS 1333: AMERICAN & TEXAS GOVERNMENT I

Fall 2026

Section 107 TR 9:30am-10:50pm (PY 200)

Instructor: Dr. David Watson

Office: O'Donohoe Hall 206

Office Hours: Mon-Wed 2pm-5pm, and by appointment

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Course Description

This course will introduce students to the American political system with a brief survey of the political dynamics of the state of Texas. By the conclusion of this course, students will have a basic understanding of the key components of American and Texas politics, such as political culture, the constitution, federalism, election, political parties, interest groups, and the media. To do that, we will study historical evolution of the American political system and see how Texas state politics have developed in conjunction with the federal government. This course also provides students with opportunities to practice various analytical skills in a range of real-world cases. Classes will include lecture, debates, and presentations, which will help students stay up to date on current issues.

MSU Core Curriculum

POLS 1333 fulfills a requirement of the MSU Core Curriculum. In this course students will demonstrate:

- Critical thinking

- Oral communication
- Personal responsibility
- Civic engagement

Course Objectives

By the completion of this course, students are expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes. They will be able to:

- describe the structure of federalism and the key features of the U.S. Constitution.
- understand the main ideas of the Founding Fathers and the philosophers and how their ideas influenced the creation of the Constitution.
- explain US political parties, their history and formation, and interest groups.
- articulate how campaigns and elections work in the United States and the state of Texas.
- discuss the media and how it influences political outcomes in the United States and the state of Texas.
- Outline how collective action by citizenry impacts policy outcomes and institutional rules in the United States and the state of Texas.

NOTE: The syllabus provides a general plan for the course, and changes may be necessary throughout the semester. Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Requirements:

Completing ALL the readings and regular attendance will be required of all students. Active participation in discussions is critical for students to succeed in this course. Books for POLS 1433 and 1333 are available as e-books in D2L. The required textbooks for the course are:

1. Theodore J Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2025. American Government: Power and Purpose. 18th Edition. New York: WW Norton.
2. Anthony Champagne and Edward J. Harpham. 2025. Governing Texas, 7th Edition. New York: WW Norton.

Grades:

1. Exams (First 2 : 25 points each / Final: 40 points): Each exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and some short answer questions. Questions will test your understanding of the key concepts of American and Texas politics that will be covered in class. 80% total.
2. Class attendance (taken at random). 10%
3. Civil Engagement Presentation. 10%
4. Extra Credit: I generally offer extra credit assignments outside of class. These will be announced in class—they will be linked to current events and offered once per exam section.

Grading: On each exam and for the final grade, points will be assigned according to the following scale: Letter Grade Numerical Grade

A 90-100
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F 59-0

Civic Engagement Project

The Civic Engagement Project assesses a student's ability based on 1.) oral communication, 2.) critical thinking, 3.) social responsibility, and 4.) personal responsibility. All students are required to submit a presentation related to a (relatively) current event and how they feel government should respond to it, citing evidence and a thoughtful narrative. The 5-10 minute presentation should include an in-depth case study on a topical political issue and some questions for class discussion. An effective and thoughtful presentation will earn extra credit. These will be submitted on DL2 for a grade worth 10% of the final grade (Due November 15th).

On Academic Honesty

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.

Student Disability Services

Any student having an education disability plan on file with the university needs to inform me within the first week of the class, so I make the appropriate arrangements to accommodate your situation. 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.

Course Schedule

Week 1 – American Political Culture, Political Economy and the State of Texas

Discussion questions: Why is government needed? What do Americans think about government? How has the social composition of the American population changed over time? Why does Texas' political culture matter? Is the American Constitution a model for the world?

- Introduction to the course
- American Government, Chapters 1 and 16
- Governing Texas, Chapter 1

Week 2 – The Founding and the Constitution

Discussion questions: What does government do and why does it matter? Why are taxes always controversial? Why has the Constitution changed over time?

- American Government, Chapter 2

Week 3 – Federalism

Discussion questions: Which level of government has had the most influence over citizens' lives? How have Supreme Court decisions affected the balance of power between the federal government and the states? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of a unitary system?

- American Government, Chapter 3
- Student presentation 1 Thursday, February 1
- American Government, Chapter 3

Week 4 – The Texas Constitution

Discussion questions: Why does the Texas Constitution matter? What are the main functions of state constitutions? What are the major provisions of the Texas Constitution? (Why) do we need to change it?

****Exam #1 this week**

- Governing Texas, Chapter 2

Week 5 – Texas in the Federal System

Discussion Questions: Why and how does federalism matter to Texas? Why do certain states receive more funding than others at different time periods? How do federal funds flow to Texas? Should the federal government be allowed to impose unfunded mandates on the states?

- Governing Texas, Chapter 3

Week 6 – Political Participation and Voting

Discussion Questions: Why did the US government deny participation to so many for so long? What forces influenced the expansion of voting rights? Why are upper-income Americans more likely to be voters than lower-income Americans?

- American Government, Chapter 8

Week 7 – Political Parties

Discussion Questions: What rules governing the American electoral process promote a two-party system? How do parties attract the popular support they need to win elections? Should Texas make it easier for minor parties to gain political power? Would people be more or less inclined to participate in politics if politicians did not identify with particular parties?

- American Government, Chapter 9

Week 8 – Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

American Government, Chapters 4 and 5

Week 9- Review and Exam #2.

****Exam #2 this week.**

Week 10 – Campaigns and Elections

Discussion Questions: How do district boundaries affect elections for the U.S. House and state legislatures? Is it fair that relatively small states, such as Iowa and New Hampshire have outsize influence in picking presidents? Do American political campaigns help voters make a decision?

- American Government, Chapter 10

Week 11 – Campaigns and Elections in Texas

Discussion Questions: How do the rules for voting affect turnout among different group of Texans? Why is voter participation in Texas the lowest in the nation? What can we do to increase voter participation in the short term? In the long term?

- Governing Texas, Chapter 5

Week 12 – **Groups and Interests**

Discussion Questions: What are the major types of interest groups and whom do they represent? How do interest groups and social groups organize? Why has the number of interest and advocacy groups grown in recent decades?

American Government, Chapter 11

Week 13 – **Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas**

Discussion Questions: What are the major types of interest groups in Texas and how do they influence Texas government? How do ordinary individuals influence Texas government?

- American Government, Chapter 6 • Governing Texas, Chapter 6

Week 14 – **Public Opinion**

Discussion Questions: Why does the media focus on issues on which public opinion is sharply divided while there are in fact many issues on which Americans largely agree? Do liberals live in areas with other liberals and conservatives live in areas with other conservatives? What are the political consequences of geographic sorting?

- American Government, Chapter 6

Week 15 – **The Media**

Discussion Questions: In recent years, a number of major media corporations have acquired numerous newspapers, television stations, and radio properties. Is media concentration a serious problem? Are there differences between how younger adults and older adults get their news.

****Civil Engagement Video due 11-15-26. Submit via D2L.**

- American Government, Chapter 7

Week 16 – **Final Exam**

- Review for final exam

****Final Exam**

Class Policies:

Attendance and Engagement:

Absences: Class attendance is important. Students who do not attend class often have difficulty with the course and receive lower grades. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting and will be noted in Attendance and Engagement. Students missing more than 9 course periods may be dropped from the course without notice. Excused absences will be those as follows: illness, death in the family, legal proceedings occurring during class period, university-approved absence such as travel as member of a MSU sports team, or emergency situation as determined by me. Excused absences require documentation, such as a doctor's note. To have absences excused, I must receive all documentation for the absences within *2 weeks of your return to class. Any documentation received after more than 2 weeks will not be accepted and absences will remain unexcused. No documentation will be accepted after the final class period of the semester.

Engagement:

Engagement during class is as important as attendance. Students are expected to engage in the class and be fully present with their engagement. Students observed using 3 mobile phones, reading non-class materials, or otherwise not fully engaged in class, will not receive engagement credit for that class period. Distracting behavior will also constitute non-engagement for the class period. This syllabus serves as the notice of the above policies; students will receive no further alert if engagement points are not earned during a class meeting. **Lateness:** I will take attendance at each class meeting. Students arriving after the role has been called will not be counted as on-time and will be marked as tardy; this means approximately more than 5 minutes late. Two tardies will be the equivalent to one absence. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late to class either in-person or online will be counted as absent for that class meeting. Students who leave early without an excuse that meets the excused absence criteria for this course may be marked tardy or absent, depending upon how much time remains in the course meeting. **Leaving Class/Disruptions:** Students are expected to be present for the entire class period. Excessively leaving the classroom during the class period is defined in this syllabus as more than 2 times during one class period or leaving 1 time for more than 10 minutes in one class period. Excessive trips outside of the classroom during a class period will be equivalent to 1 absence. This is a form of disruptive behavior. If a student requires accommodation to this rule (e.g. due to illness or medical condition), please let me know in advance. **Disruptive Behavior:** Furthermore, disruptive behavior, including but not limited to raising one's voice to the instructor or classmates, threatening the instructor or classmates, recording the instructor or classmates without permission, sharing screenshots or videos of course material or student work on other platforms, slurs and insults directed at the instructor or classmates, or other behavior that disrupts the course will not be tolerated. This

syllabus serves as the warning that disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students committing disruptive behavior will be removed from the course. The Class Environment: This classroom is a place where all students will be treated with respect. We will work together to create an environment respectful to everyone in the class. Everyone is expected to engage with course material and with the ideas shared by me and the other students from the perspective of academic inquiry and discussion. When we agree or disagree, we will do so with civility and respect. It is the expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment. Harassment, sexual misconduct, violence, bullying, nor disruptive behavior will not be tolerated will result in removal from the classroom and reporting to the appropriate university authority. This syllabus is your warning.

D2L: This course will use D2L through MSU Texas as the online platform. All course material, including assigned textbooks, will be available in D2L.

Web Browser for D2L and D2L Help:

- D2L is the learning management system for MSU. It can be accessed through the MSU Homepage.
- The preferred web browser for D2L is Google Chrome.
- Problems using D2L should be directed to the D2L Help Desk. It is open 7 days a week from 8 AM-10 PM.

Assignments and Late Work:

No late work is accepted, except in unforeseen, limited circumstances such as a medical emergency requiring hospitalization for which documentation is provided. All other assignments not submitted by the due date will receive the mark of zero. Even with a documented excuse, no work is accepted after the final class period of the semester.

Grading Policy:

Grades will be determined in accordance with the information on grading in this syllabus. Although grades will be posted in the D2L gradebook, the weight of assignments may not always be reflected in the D2L gradebook. I will calculate the final course grade using the grade breakdown provided in this syllabus. Students are welcome to calculate their grades at any time and to use D2L to see their progress. However, I will not calculate individual grades for students during the course term, nor will I calculate hypothetical grading scenarios for individual students. In other words, please do not ask me what grade you will need to receive on a particular exam or assignment to earn a particular final grade. With the information provided in D2L and the syllabus, you are welcome to calculate different scenarios on your own.

Communication:

The best way to contact me is to visit me in my office during my office hours or via email (not via D2L email). My email address is listed on the first page of the syllabus. Most of the time, On weekends, I may not be checking email as often, so please be aware that I may not respond until Monday.

Missing the Final Exam:

If the final exam is missed and arrangements for a make-up exam have not been made in advance, the final exam cannot be made up.

Taking Exams Early:

Only under *extraordinary circumstances* can a student take an exam early. Only university-approved excuses, death in the family, or illness with a doctor's note be considered for taking an exam early. Scheduled vacations are not reasons for exam to be given early. The request for an early exam must be made in writing. For any reason, no request will be approved to schedule the final exam earlier than one week before its scheduled date.

Academic Dishonesty:

The MSU Honor Creed applies in this course, and students are expected to abide by it. As a reminder, here is the MSU Honor Creed:

As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so."

As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception.

Thus, We, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student.

We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed.

-Written and adopted by the 2002-2003 MSU Student Senate.

Student work in this course is expected to be original to the student and produced only for this course. Here is the reason: the purpose of this class is to help students learn to think critically about government and to be an active and engaged citizens. This means being able to demonstrate understanding of concepts and applying them to current and future political events. Doing that requires students to put in individual work in the course and for me to evaluate student work individually.

To maintain academic honesty in this class, here are the expectations:

- Students may not use the textbook, chapter summaries, notes, PowerPoints, lectures, or any online material during quizzes and exams.
- Students may not use electronic devices, such as cell phones, or listen to electronic devices (ie wearing headphones) during a quiz or exam; use of electronic devices during an exam will result in the quiz/exam paper being taken up and receiving a 0.
- Students may not collaborate with each other during quizzes or exams. Students looking at another's quiz or exam will have their quiz/exam paper taken up and receive a 0.
- Students may not collaborate to create substantially similar responses to writing assignments.
- In addition, students may not copy the textbook or websites, such as Wikipedia pages, for written response questions.
- Students may not memorize and write in-class response questions material copied or substantially copied from textbook materials or webpages.
- Each written assignment or written response is expected to be in your own words. Submitted work that replicates the textbook or a webpage will be considered academic dishonesty.
- In addition, students may not submit work from previous courses.
- AI tools, such as Chat GDP, may not be used to create assignments.
- AI Detection Detectors, such as Turnitin, will be used in this course and the results used in determining academic honesty.

In other words, all submitted work is expected to be fully your own thoughts and words and created for this course during this semester.

University Policies Services for Students with Disabilities:

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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 Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to Disability Support Services.

MSU Campus Carry Statement: Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. The 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 regarding campus carry, please refer to the MSU Campus Carry Policy.

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.

Active Shooter Policy

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.”

Inclement Weather Policy

If inclement weather closes the university during our class meeting time, there will be no class (in-person or online) that day. If a quiz or exam is scheduled for that class meeting, we will move it to the next class meeting.

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)	Unit 1: The Principles of Politics Assessment: Exam 1 Unit 3: Texas Political Culture Assessment: Exam 2
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) Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 006 (A, B, C, D, E)	Unit 2: The US Constitution Assessment: Exam 1 Unit 4: The Texas Constitution Assessment: Exam 2

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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)	Unit 1: The Principles of Politics Assessment: Exam 1 Unit 3: Texas Political Culture Assessment: Exam 2
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) Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard IV), Competency 006 (A, B, C, D, E)	Unit 2: The US Constitution Assessment: Exam 1 Unit 4: The Texas Constitution Assessment: Exam 2

Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment/Module/Course Activities/Assessment
	Grades 7-12 Domain V (Standard VII-VIII) Competency 017 (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (D) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard 7) Competency 019 (B)	
Understand the relationship between the federal government, the state government, and citizens	Grades 4-8, Competency 004 (E, G, J) Grades 7-12 Domain V (Standard VII-VIII) Competency 017 (H, I, J) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (C) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard 7) Competency 019 (D) Domain VI (Standard VI, X) Competency 021 (B)	Unit 5: Federalism Assessment: Exam 2
Understand the Electoral System in the US and Texas	Grades 4-8, Competency 004 (K, N) Grades 7-12, Domain II (Standard	Unit 5: Elections Assessment: Exam 3 Unit 12: Texas Elections Assessment: Final Exam

Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment/Module/Course Activities/Assessment
	IV), Competency 009 (F) Grades 7-12, Domain V (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (B, C, E, G)	
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 (Standard VIII) Competency 018 (A, C, E, F, G)	Unit 6: Public Opinion Unit 9: Parties Assessment: Exam 3 Unit 10: Texas Political Parties Unit 11: Interest Groups Unit 12: Interest Groups in Texas Unit 13: The Media Assessment: Final Exam
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)	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.

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). 19

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).

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 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, 20 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).

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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).

Important Dates

Fall 2026

I. Holidays

- a. No Class
 - i. Monday, September 7: Labor Day
 - ii. Wednesday, November 25-Friday, November 27: Thanksgiving Break
- b. Other Dates of Note:
 - i. Thursday, October 29 and Friday, October 30: Likely student Halloween celebrations
 - ii. Monday, October 12: No school for WFISD
 - iii. Monday, November 23 and Tuesday, November 24: WFISD Thanksgiving Break Days

II. Key MSU Academic Calendar Dates

- a. Tuesday, September 8: Student Payment Deadline/Void Date
- b. Friday, September 11 (Tentative): Early Alerts (Attendance) Due
- c. Friday, September 18: Annual Reports Due
- d. Monday, October 12 (Tentative): Spring Schedule Released
- e. Friday, October 16 (Tentative): Midterm Grades Due
- f. Monday, November 2 (Tentative): Spring Registration Begins
- g. November 23 at 4 PM: Last Day for a W
- h. Friday, December 4: Last Day of Classes
- i. Saturday, December 12: Graduation
- j. Monday, December 14 at 12 PM: Final Grades Deadline

III. MSU Events

- a. Thursday, September 17: Constitution Day
- b. Saturday, September 19: Family Weekend
- c. Monday, October 12-Saturday, October 17: Homecoming Week

IV. MSU Recruitment

- a. Saturday Tour Dates
 - i. September 12
 - ii. October 3
 - iii. November 21
- b. Mustangs Rally: Saturday, October 24