

Midwestern State University - Political Science - Fall 2022

American Government (POLS 1333-X10) (ONLINE ONLY CLASS)

Instructor: Kyle Keel e-mail: kyle.keel@msutexas.edu Office: OD 214

Course Description: American & Texas Government I concerns the study of the culture of the United States and of Texas. We will study the constitutions guiding US and Texas society and Texas and the US' relationship in the federal system. Also to be explored are political parties and interest groups, the media and public opinion, elections, and local governments.

Core Objectives:

- Oral Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Social Responsibility
- Personal Responsibility

This class is solely online. Students will log into D2L (using their MSU student email) through MSU's website, study the chapter information present (as well as that found in the chapters of the book) and take the relevant quizzes & exams, when they become available.

Textbooks:

We the People (Thirteenth Edition), by Ginsburg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert, Campbell. W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2021.

Governing Texas (Fifth Edition) by Champagne, Harpham, Casellas. W.W. Norton and Company, Inc, 2021.

Expectations:

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 then discuss the necessary accommodations to facilitate full and equal participation for the student through Disability Services. Resources are limited and tied to need officially established through the university; otherwise resources cannot be accommodated legally.

IF a student has a health issue/concern regarding attendance long-term for the entire semester, then the student should contact and consult with Disability Support Services to remedy the situation.

It is important to note that this is a class with political discussion, so there may be discussion on difficult and sensitive issues in the online chapter sections.

Emails are the primary contact mechanism for online-based classes, but they themselves do not suffice as "legitimate" documentation for an absence or missed grade. Note that because of security threats, my MSU email account is heavily-secured and therefore will not accept weak, spam, or other unusual emails. **Students need to activate their personal MSU student email to send a legitimate email and have access to the class on D2L** (have your email set up for weather and security alerts on campus as well).

In an email, you should provide a title message, your name and applicable class, and state business in complete sentences. This makes it easier to determine the validity of the email and figure out what applies to you, the student. If an email looks questionable regarding security issues, I will ignore and delete the email to protect relevant data. **I will not discuss grades through the usage of non-MSU email addresses.**

I check and respond to emails usually twice per day, at lunchtime when I get a break from classes and before I leave the office, usually around 4:00 PM. If a student emails me after about 4 PM, I will not see the email until around noon the next day and therefore will not respond until I see the email, around noon of the next day. If a student emails me after 4 PM on a Friday, I will not see the message (and therefore respond) until the following Monday at around lunchtime. Please allow for the appropriate amount of time to pass (as aforementioned) before sending multiple emails about the same issue.

Communication is the key to success. If I don't know you or what's going on with you, then it just seems like you are handling everything okay or just do not care. It is your grade and your degree; own it! Emails from the Dean of Students do not suffice as appropriate documentation themselves but rather serve as helpful reminders for faculty.

It is highly recommended that students seek out **tutoring**, such as with **Supplemental Instruction** (MSU's focused tutoring and counseling personnel). Believe it or not, but the majority of students who seek tutoring are usually making a "B" or low "A" and want to guarantee a high grade.

Grades: There will be **3** exams and quizzes given at announced times (no pop quizzes on D2L!). Each exam is worth 25% of the student's final grade; the quizzes serve as 25%.

ALL GRADES FOR THIS SEMESTER SHALL TAKE PLACE THROUGH D2L. STUDENTS NEED TO ACTIVATE THEIR MSU STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNT TO BE ABLE TO ACCESS D2L AND THEREFORE TAKE QUIZZES AND EXAMS. STUDENTS WILL NEED TO DOWNLOAD LockDown Browser AND Respondus Monitor ON AN APPROPRIATE COMPUTING DEVICE. IF A STUDENT IS HAVING DIFFICULTY ACCESSING D2L OR GRADES TAKING PLACE ON D2L, THE STUDENT NEEDS TO CONTACT DISTANCE EDUCATION'S "D2L Help" at d2lhelp@msutexas.edu

THE PROFESSOR HAS THE RIGHT TO INCREASE, REDUCE, CHANGE, OR OTHERWISE ALTER ASSIGNMENTS, THE GRADING SCALE, AND THE LECTURING FORMAT TO ACCOMMODATE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES AND EMERGENCIES. THE PROFESSOR HAS THE RIGHT TO FORMULATE QUIZZES, EXAMS, AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS ONLINE ON MSU'S D2L TESTING SYSTEM AS NEEDED.

If students do not follow ORAL OR WRITTEN instructions (regarding questions, name, title, etc.) regarding quizzes and exams, then points will be deducted from the overall score.

The quizzes shall be based on material from the individual chapters of the book, which are summarized in the D2L Content's page. Before each exam, I give a review of the course material. The reviews will be posted to D2L on the home page. Exam questions are derived

from the associated chapters in the book(s), but some may be chosen from the book without mention in the review.

During an exam, students are not allowed to look at phones, other electronic devices, loose papers, notebooks, etc. Any violation of this rule will result in a ZERO=0 for the grade and possible expulsion from the class via a conduct referral.

1st exam- around the 2nd week of October;

2nd exam- around the 2nd week of November;

Final Exam (online through D2L): exam available from December 5th-8th.

Note: No grade will ever be determined by a student's individual political beliefs on any given issue. It matters not what you believe, but rather that you are willing to engage appropriately in class activities.

A 2.0 GPA, or a "C" average, is required to graduate with a college/university degree. The grading scale is standard for assignments:

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

Note: ANYONE SEEKING TO MAKE-UP A MISSED GRADE MUST HAVE LEGITIMATE DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED EXPLAINING THE NATURE OF THE ABSENCE. I determine what is deemed "legitimate": this could include military deployment, job training, court or legal issues, medical emergencies, etc. Regarding exams, the documentation must be turned in to me before the exam (unless not physically possible). Without such documentation, the individual grade will be a ZERO = 0. Documentation for absences must be turned in to me in person, unless submitted as an appropriate email attachment (see the aforementioned rules regarding emails).

All makeup grades (quizzes and exams) and forms of class credit (excepting the Final itself) must be completed prior to the beginning of Finals Week. If not completed before the start of Finals Week, the grade(s) shall become a "0".

Usage of any electronic device during the taking of a grade (quiz or exam) shall be construed as cheating by the student and shall result in a '0' for the grade.

GRADES ON D2L HAVE A LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THEY EXPIRE AND CANNOT BE TAKEN!!!! PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DATES AND WHEN GRADES (QUIZZES, EXAMS) ARE SCHEDULED!!!

Dual Credit Students: Pay close attention to your grades. There are no makeups for badly done grades, as apparently some high schools have such as policy. If, as a concurrent high school student, you are at risk of not making a "C", it is highly advised that you drop the course with a "W". Keep on top of your grades, as YOU are in charge of them now.

Chapter Outline

First Exam: US Chapters 1-3

Chapter 1- American Political Culture

Chapter 2- The Founding and the Constitution

Chapter 3- Federalism

Second Exam: Texas Chapters 1-3, 10

Chapter 1- The Political Culture, People, and Economy of Texas

Chapter 2- The Texas Constitution

Chapter 3- Texas in the Federal System

Chapter 10- Local Government

Final Exam: US Chapters 6-11, Texas Chapters 4-6

US Ch. 9- Political Parties

TX Ch. 4- Political Parties

US Ch. 10- Campaigns and Elections

TX Ch. 5- Campaigns and Elections

US Ch. 8- Political Participation and Voting

US Ch. 11- Groups and Interests

TX Ch. 6- Interest Groups and Lobbying

US Ch. 6- Public Opinion

US Ch. 7- The Media

**For the Final exam, similar chapters will be combined, not studied individually.
Pay attention to the Exam Review Guide.**

Advice from a student and professor:

College is the time when one transitions from childhood to adulthood. You will be given vast amounts of freedom like never before and you will have access to many different things, some good and some bad. There are no more truancy issues and parents cannot even legally get information from your professors about your grades, as non-felon civilian adults have a significant "right of privacy" over their person and their property. Grades are between the student and the parent, even if parents are paying tuition. **(As a professor, I am bound by**

