

**Syllabus for POLS 1433 (Honors)
American Government II
Spring 2019**

Course: POLS 1433 American Government II (Honors)

Class: M, W, & F 11:00–11:50, PY209

Lecturer: Steve Garrison, Ph.D.

Contact	Information
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Office Hours:	M, W,& F 10-10:50 and by appointment

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 institutions of American government including the three branches of government at the Federal and state level; governmental bureaucracy and foreign policy.

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: *American Government in Black and White: Diversity and Democracy (3rd edition)*, Paula McClain and Steven Tauber. (2018), New York: Oxford university Press. We will also be using an online Texas politics text entitled *Texas Politics (2nd Edition)* it can be accessed here: <http://www.soomolearning.com/catalog/texas-politics/overview>

In addition to text books there are a series of readings for our discussions that I will in D2L.

Expectations, Examinations, and Grading: Students are expected to attend class. Lectures will not reproduce the texts. During lectures, students are expected to behave in an adult fashion:

i.e. no note passing, punching, kissing, kicking or other juvenile behavior. Disrespectful behavior towards other students or the teacher will not be tolerated and will result in your removal from the class. Also, please turn cellular phones off during class. Most importantly, there are absolutely no firearms in the classroom. There will be two inclass exams and a final exam. The format of each is short answer questions and identification of key terms. The highest grading scale will be 90 (A), 80 (B), 70 (C), and 60 (D). If for any reason you should have to miss a test or assignment you must inform the instructor prior to the time of the test and proper documentation is required for any makeup test. The privilege of additional work will not be granted.

Since this is an honors course students will also complete a research project. This project is designed to allow students to pursue a political issue relating to their area of study or interest. Additional requirements and details will be presented at the beginning of the course, including due dates. Throughout the semester we will devote several class periods to discussion of some contemporary political events. In order to engage in thoughtful discussions it is imperative that students begin paying attention to some reliable news source, such as National Public Radio, Newshour (PBS), CNN, FOXNEWS, MSNBC, The New York Times, USA Today, Dallas Morning News, Austin American Statesman, Washington Post or any variety of reputable news sources. Separate discussion readings will be posted in D2L to guide these discussions. Students are expected to participate in classroom discussion and will be graded on their participation.

Grading:

Activity	Grade
First Examination:	20%
First Examination:	20%
Final Exam:	20%
Research Project Paper:	20%
Research Project Presentation:	10%
Classroom Participation:	10%

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 student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, for educational purposes. The University’s *minimum penalty* for cheating or plagiarism is a *failure of*

assignment. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to expulsion from the university. 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 prior to class. The instructor reserves the right to change the schedule.

Note: the following key applies to the reading schedule.

MT = McClain and Tauber. *American Government in Black and White.*

TP = *Texas Politics*

Course Schedule

Section I: Introduction & Equality in America

January 14: Introduction

- Syllabus

January 16 & 18: Civil Liberties

- MT Chapter Four

January 21: Martin Luther King Holiday

- No Class

January 23 & 25: Civil Rights as a Social Movement

- MT Chapter 12

January 28 & 30: Civil Rights

- MT Chapter Five

February 1: Discussion I: Steve King

- D2L

Section II: American Institutions

February 4 & 6: US President

- MT Chapter Seven

February 8: Discussion II: Independent Counsel Investigation

- D2L

February 11 & 13: Texas Governor

- TP Chapter Six

February 15: Discussion III: Border Security

- D2L

February 18 & 20: US Congress

- MT Chapter Six

February 22: Discussion IV: Budgetary Crisis

- D2L

February 25 & 27: Texas Legislature

- TP Chapters Three and Four

March 1: Exam One

- Study Guide One

March 4 & 6: US Judiciary

- MT Chapter Nine

March 8: Discussion V: The Health Care Challenge

- D2L

March 11 & 13: TX Judiciary

- TP Chapter Seven

March 15: Discussion VI: Recycling & Water Usage

- D2L

March 18, 20 & 22: Spring Break

- No Class

Section III: Implementing Policy

March 25 & 27: The Bureaucracy

- MT Chapter Eight

March 29: Discussion VII: Opioid Crisis

- D2L

April 1: Project Update

- Individual Meetings

April 3: Review for Exam

- Catch up

April 5: Exam Two

- Study Guide Two

April 8 & 10: Economic Policy

- Kollman, Ken. 2017. "Economic Policy" in The American Political System

April 12 & 15: Foreign Policy

- Kollman, Ken. 2017. "Foreign Policy" in The American Political System

April 17: Discussion VIII: US Role in the Middle East

- D2L

April 19: Easter Break

- No Class

April 22 & 24: Formulating Policy

- MT Chapter Sixteen

April 26, 29, May 1, & 3: Presentations

- In Class presentations

May 6: Final Exam: 10:30-12:30

- Study Guide Three
- Final projects due