

POLS 1131-X10: Federal and Texas Constitutions

Midwestern State University
Fall 2020

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Online Office Hours (via Zoom):

Monday/Wednesday 10 AM – 11:30 AM

Tuesday/Thursday 11 AM – 12 PM

Course Description and Learning Objectives:

Political Science 1131 examines the role of the US Constitution and the Texas Constitution in American and Texas government. This course is also designed to provide you with analytical tools so that you can understand and meaningfully participate in American and Texas politics throughout your life. This course will be challenging and critical thinking about Texas and American constitutions will be part of everything that we do. The syllabus provides a general plan for the course; changes may be necessary.

Required Texts:

Chapter 2: Constructing a Government: The Founding and the Constitution. Theodore J Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2019. *American Government: Power and Purpose*. 15th Edition. New York: WW Norton.

Chapter 2: The Texas Constitution. Anthony Champagne and Edward J. Harpham. 2019. *Governing Texas*, 4th Edition. New York: WW Norton.

Grades:

Breakdown of Grades:

Grade Category	Grade Percentage
Exam 1: The US Constitution	25%
Exam 2: The Texas Constitution	25%
Module Activities	25%
Final Exam	25%

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	0-59

Class Policies:

Coursework:

You will work through this course at your own pace; however, there are deadlines. Work for this course consists of two chapters and accompanying materials. There will be a chapter quiz after each. Then, there will be an exam covering both chapters.

Deadlines and Due Dates:

All assignments have a deadline or due date. Because this is an online course, you have a period of time in which to take the exam. These must be done by the deadline without exception. Missing a deadline will result in a 0. No work will be accepted late.

Quizzes and Exams:

Quizzes:

Quizzes will be composed of multiple-choice questions. There will be one for each chapter. In addition, there will be short chapter exercises that include writing assignments. Quizzes require the lockdown browser and video monitor. Chapter quizzes are timed. No notes or texts are allowed.

The Exam:

The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions. The exam requires the lockdown browser part of D2L and uses the Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor. No notes or texts may be used during the exam. Using notes, other browser windows, emailing, or texting will result in a **0**. There will be a multi-day window in which to take the exam. This course will end at the semester midpoint.

Technology:

This course will be conducted in D2L. It will utilize the Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor for testing. In order to install these programs, you will need the following:

- A desktop computer or laptop other than a Chromebook.

- 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 used for the exam.
- Microsoft Office or a compatible program for written assignments. Access to Microsoft Office 365 available through the Office 365 for Students on the Microsoft website.

Please note: a limited number of webcams and laptops with cameras are available for check-out through the MSU Texas Moffett Library.

For more information about MSU Texas technology requirements:

https://msutexas.edu/it/_assets/files/basic-software-and-hardware-list.pdf

Academic Dishonesty:

All work submitted in this class is expected to be the student's own and original to this course. Otherwise, the MSU Honor Creed has been violated and academic dishonesty has occurred. Using the work of another person as one's own is theft of intellectual property. Submitting work to this course that was produced for another course without permission of both instructors, is also academic dishonesty. Any violation of MSU academic honesty policy will result in an automatic ZERO on the assignment, quiz, or exam in question. Assisting another student in academic dishonesty will also result in a ZERO on that assignment. A second instance of academic dishonesty will automatically result in an F for the course. All instances of academic dishonesty may be turned over to the University for sanction.

Accommodations:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe that you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact:

Disability Support Services (DSS)
Room 168, Clark Student Center
940-397-4140

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation until verification from DSS has been provided.

<https://msutexas.edu/student-life/disability/current-students.php>

Safe Zone Statement:

This classroom is be a place where students will be treated with respect. We will work together to be create an inclusive space that respects equality and diversity in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political beliefs, culture, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment. Harassment, sexual misconduct, violence, bullying, and 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.

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. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at <http://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>

Class Outline:

The following is a tentative outline of the semester. Students will be notified of any changes.

Module 0: Read Me First

Read Me First

Practice Quiz – Due Friday, August 28

Module 1: The US Constitution

American Government: Power and Purpose, Chapter 2: Constructing Government: The Founding and the Constitution, pp. 30-57

Module Exercises and Chapter Quiz: due Friday, September 11

Module 1 Exam: US Constitution – due Friday, September 18

Module 2: The Texas Constitution

Governing Texas, Chapter 2: The Texas Constitution

Module Exercises and Chapter Quiz —Due Friday, October 2

Chapter Quiz: Texas Constitution – Due Friday, October 9

Module 3: The Exam

Federal and Texas Constitution Exam – Due Friday, October 16