UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
GOVT 2305
Synonyms 41067, 41068, 41146
Fall 2006

INSTRUCTOR: Stefan D. Haag
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OFFICE: Pinnacle Campus, Room 407
OFFICE HOURS: MW 1:30 - 6:00 PM
TTH 4:10 - 6:10 PM

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[Activity Calendar] [Learning Objectives]

COURSE OBJECTIVE:
The purpose of this course is to acquaint the student with United States national government. The student will be introduced to: (a) a framework for understanding United States government and politics; (b) the constitutional basis for United States government and politics; (c) the processes of United States government and politics; (d) the institutions of United States government and politics; and (e) selected policies of United States government. Specific behavioral objectives will accompany each unit of instruction.

GRADING PROCEDURES:
The student will be evaluated through five (5) unit examinations and one (1) written assignment. The unit examinations will contain objective questions and essay questions. Each unit examination will consist of thirty (30) multiple-choice questions and two (2) short essay questions that cover the assigned chapters in the Edwards, Wattenberg, and Lineberry textbook and the lectures. Each objective question will be worth one (1) point, and each essay question will be worth five (5) points. A student may earn a maximum of 200 points on the five unit examinations.

The written assignment will be a research paper on a problem in United States government. The research paper is described on pages 3 and 4 of this syllabus. A student may earn a maximum of one hundred (100) points on his or her research paper.

The total number of points accumulated during the semester will determine a student's grade for the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>TOTAL POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>270 - 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>240 - 269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>210 - 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>180 - 209</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>179 or fewer</td>
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TESTING PROCEDURES:
The five unit examinations will be administered in class on the dates indicated on the course activity calendar. Students who are unable to take an examination because of an excused absence will take the examination in the PIN Testing Center (Room 706). Students who miss an examination because of an unexcused absence will not be allowed to take the examination; however, those students may take an examination on that unit as a retest on the last class meeting of the semester. Students will not be allowed to take more than one unit examination on the last class meeting of the semester. The instructor will determine, on an individual basis, what constitutes an excused absence.

RETESTING PROCEDURES:
Students may retest one unit examination on the last class meeting of the semester. Students may also retest one unit examination in the PIN Testing Center during the semester. The examination format will be the same as the original examination and will cover the behavioral objectives for that unit of instruction; however, the questions will be different. The score on the retest will replace the score on the original examination. A permission slip, signed by the instructor, is necessary to retest in the PIN Testing Center.

EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS:
Students will be provided an opportunity to earn extra credit points after each unit examination. The extra credit assignments will involve a variety of activities that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the material covered in the unit. There will be several options for extra credit, but students may only complete one extra credit option for each unit of instruction. The extra credit assignment will be worth a maximum of four (4) points and will be due on the scheduled date for the next unit examination.

INCOMPLETE GRADES:
A student may receive a temporary grade of "I" under the following conditions: (a) the student has a valid, medical reason for requesting an incomplete and has accumulated at least 100 points; (b) the student requests a grade of "I" and agrees to complete the necessary form; and (c) the student agrees to complete the course by the deadline established on the Report of Incomplete Grade form.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:
Regular attendance is considered essential to the successful completion of this course. Supplemental material covered in the lectures will be covered on the unit examinations. To remain enrolled in the course, students must attend class regularly and must not accumulate an excessive number of absences during the semester. The instructor will determine, on an individual basis, what constitutes an excessive number of absences.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES:
Students who withdraw prior to the twelfth class day will not receive any grade on their records. After that date and until November 27, 2006, students who withdraw or are withdrawn by the instructor will receive a non-punitive grade of "W" for the course. Students may withdraw by completing the appropriate form at any Admissions and Records Office. After November 27, students may not withdraw nor may the instructor withdraw them. Those students will receive a performance grade for the course.

The instructor is permitted to withdraw students whose attendance is unsatisfactory; however, the student is responsible for withdrawing from the course if he or she is no longer interested in completing the course.
SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:
As described in the Austin Community College Student Handbook, scholastic dishonesty constitutes a violation of college rules and regulations and is punishable as outlined in the Handbook. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination (either providing answers to or stealing answers from another student), plagiarism, and collusion. Plagiarism includes the use of another author’s words or arguments without attribution. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of any course requirement. If a student commits any of the offenses described as scholastic dishonest in this class or in the Testing Center, the instructor will recommend and actively seek a grade of "F" for the student for the course.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM:
As described in Austin Community College Policy V-72, academic freedom protects professors and students in their search for truth and its free expression. However, professors and students also share a responsibility to respect the opinions of others and to ensure that course materials and discussions are relevant to the course objectives.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Students with Disabilities at PIN 221 (phone number 223-8300) as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

TEXTBOOK:

UNITS OF INSTRUCTION AND TEXTBOOK ASSIGNMENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit I: Constitution and Federalism</th>
<th>Chapters 1 - 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit II: Action, Media, and Campaigns</td>
<td>Chapters 5, 6, and 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit III: Parties, Groups, and Congress</td>
<td>Chapters 7, 9, and 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit IV: Executive and Judiciary</td>
<td>Chapters 11 - 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit V: Policies</td>
<td>Chapters 4, 14 - 15</td>
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RESEARCH PAPER:
Every student is required to submit a research paper on a problem in United States government.

Purpose: The purpose of the research paper is fourfold: to give the student an opportunity to explore a problem in United States national government, to give the student experience in formal writing, to assist the student in developing his or her analytical skills, and to allow the student to implement his or her solution to the problem.

Topic: The topic of the research paper will be a problem in United States national government and will be the same topic for all students. For the fall 2006 semester, the topic will be the political divide in America. The research question will be: A Polarized America: Myth or Reality?
Format: The research paper must be typed with a total length of between 7 and 10 pages, not counting the title page and the Works Cited page. The title page will include the research question, the student’s name, the course number, and the section number. In writing the research paper, the student is expected to use a variety of sources—books, journals, magazines, and the Internet. Sources used in writing the paper must be documented in the body of the paper and listed on a "Works Cited" page at the end of the paper. The citations should conform to the Modern Language Association (MLA) style.

The research paper will consist of three sections. The first section, approximately one page in length, should introduce the divisions that exist in America and should be titled "Red and Blue America." The second section, approximately four pages in length, should discuss, using a variety of sources, whether America is more polarized politically today than in the past and should be entitled "Is America Polarized?" The third section, approximately two pages in length, should describe, using a variety of sources, suggested methods for decreasing the political divisions in America and should be entitled "E Pluribus Unum?"

Grading: The research paper will be graded using the following criteria: quantity and quality of the sources used to write the paper (20 points); description and analysis of whether America is more polarized today than in the past (50 points); description of proposed methods for decreasing the divisions among Americans (20 points); and grammar, writing style, and proper documentation (10 points).

Deadline: The research paper will be due on November 28, 2006. Five (5) points will be deducted for each class meeting date that the research paper is late.