**Course Information**

**Course Title:** Federal Government

**Course Prefix & Number:** GOVT 2305

**Semester & Year:** FALL 2023

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| **Instructor Information** |

**Instructors Name:** John Hubbard

**Office Location and #:** Social Science Building Office F

**Office Phone:** 903-823-3346

**Email:** [john.hubbard@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:john.hubbard@texarkanacollege.edu)

**Office Hours:**

Email will usually be the best communication method in this class. Please use your TC email. I check my email multiple times a day during the week but may not check it on weekends or evenings. If you do email me, I typically respond within 24 hours M-F and by the following Monday if contacted on Friday afternoon or over the weekend.

T: 8:30-9:30, 1:00-3:00

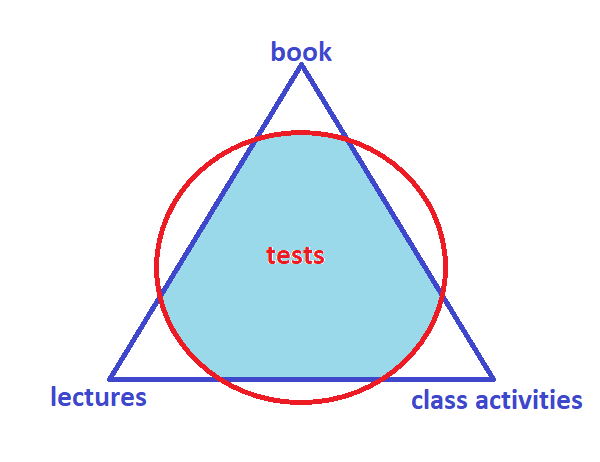
W: 9:00-11:00, 1:00-3:00

Th: 8:30-9:30, 1:00-3:00

**Teaching Philosophy**

I strongly believe that the best learning environment is maieutic. In this course we can teach other by exploring questions and answers that bring forth both latent and new ideas. In this we develop a shared understanding and empathy for the ideas others have on many of the topics highly contested in our democratic system.

The Course is based on the constructivism learning theory and the following teaching and learning model.



Book: reading and writing are essential to learning. The assigned reading introduces concepts and terms, provides more detail than lectures, and promotes strong foundations that align with the lectures and class activities.

Lectures: The short lessons are 'direct instruction' on special topics, allowing for expert knowledge and skills to be modeled, as well as opportunities to explain and re-conceptualize ideas found in the text. Online (prerecorded) lectures do not have the same level of engagement as done in a face-to-face (TRA) classroom but can still be effective as to giving an alternate modality to the other lessons.

Class Activities: Learning is seldom done passively. While being attentive to lectures and reading should not be passive (note taking is essential!), class activities provide the best opportunities for students to engage in lessons and explore topics.

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| **Course Description** |

A study of American national government with emphasis on the United States Constitution, Federalism, Congress, the Presidency, and the federal courts. Additional emphasis is placed on bureaucracy, criminal procedure, civil liberties, political parties, and voting behavior.

We have three broad questions that we will continually explore. Each of these has many answers that are both straightforward and complex, the answers are fixed and the are fluid, the answers are logical sound and contradictory, etc. For each topic we cover, please consider these questions:

1. Why do we have a government?
2. What kind/form/structure of government do we have?
3. How does this government work for me/for those around me/for those who are (un)like me/for those who are (dis)advantaged?

This course format will be a combination of face-to-face meetings in a classroom setting with coursework and materials available through TCOnline (Moodle).

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.

2. Demonstrate an understanding of our federal system.

3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.

5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties.

6. Analyze the election process.

7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

**Pre/Co-requisite**  
 Successfully completed the reading portion of the TSI Test.

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| **Textbook & Course Materials** |

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|  | ***American Government*, 2nd edition**  <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-2e>  The book is available for free viewing online, in app, as a pdf, on Kindle, or as a print copy (purchase through open**stax**™).  You MUST have access to this textbook both in your home/study space and in class. |

**Computer Requirement Policy:**

Students are **required** to have a computer with Internet access for classes. The computer must be an actual computer – smart phones, iPads, Androids, Chromebooks, etc., are not acceptable substitutes because they lack software compatibility necessary to complete all assignments and tests. Financial costs for the necessary equipment and internet access are the responsibility of the student.

Students needing to purchase a computer may do so through the Texarkana College Bookstore. Systems purchased through the bookstore meet or exceed all requirements, are competitively priced, and may be purchased using financial aid funds. If the system is purchased through another source, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure the system meets all requirements.

Computer systems requirements:

* Webcam, microphone, and speakers or headphones
* Windows 10 or a recent version of Mac OS (minimum Sierra). Windows 10 S mode is not supported
* Hardware capable of running Microsoft Teams (free download) and supports multi-media playback
* Support for Chrome or Microsoft Edge – Note: Firefox, Safari, or other browsers may not work on all TC applications
* Able to run Microsoft Office which will be provided free to TC students
* Adobe Reader or another PDF viewer
* Antivirus software such as Windows Defender or another 3rd party anti-virus solution

Students should regularly backup content to prevent loss of coursework due to hardware failure. Backup copies of documents and other coursework may be placed on OneDrive cloud storage. OneDrive is included free of charge for all TC students.

A list of Internet service providers can be found on the TC website at: <https://www.texarkanacollege.edu/coronavirus/>.

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| **Student Learning Outcomes** |

**Learning Outcomes**

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5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties

6. Analyze the election process.

7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

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| **Grading** |

**Course Requirements:**

Topic Activities 30%

Topic Quizzes (up to 13) 50%

Midterm Exam 10%

Final Exam 10%

Total 100%

**Grading:**

A range = 89.5-100

B range = 79.5-89.4

C range = 69.5-79.4

D range =59.5-69.4

F range = Below 59.5

I use standard mathematical rounding (any fraction equal to or above .5 will be rounded up), but I will make no other adjustment of grades. Please remember that your final grade is the culmination of work that you have done over the course of the semester. It is not the product of bargaining at the end of the term. Moreover, I cannot make an exception for one student without making it for all students, and that is never practical.

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| **Class Schedule** |

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| This course is divided into the following Units of study: |

**Alternate Operations during Campus Closure**

**In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, Texarkana College may need to move to altered operations and course delivery methods. During this time, Texarkana College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: online learning management system (Jenzabar or Moodle), online conferencing through TEAMS, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Texarkana College's website (www.texarkanacollege.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, instructor email notifications on the method of delivery and course-specific communication, and Texarkana College email notifications for important general information.**

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| **Course Calendar: *subject to change at instructors’ discretion; students will be notified in class*** |

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| **MONTH** | **DAY/Dates** | **TOPIC ADDRESSED** | **In-class Activities, Assignments**  **Each class period after the first one, requires you to come to class having read the aligned chapter(s) from American Government.** |
| **Aug** | **17** | **Course Introduction** | **Syllabus check, What do you Know? Why government? What is government? Read Chapter 1.** |
|  | **22** | **Topic 1: American Government & Civic Engagement** | **Read Chapter 2.** |
|  | **24** | **Topic 2: The Constitution** | **Read Chapter 3.** |
|  | **29** | **Topic 3: American Federalism** | **Read Chapter 11.** |
|  | **31** | **Topic 4: Congress** | **Read Chapter 12.** |
| **Sept** | **5** | **Topic 5: The Presidency** | **Read Chapter 15 & 17.** |
|  | **7** | **Topic 6: Bureaucracy and Foreign Policy** | **Read Chapter 13.** |
|  | **12** | **Topic 7: The Judiciary** | **Read Chapter 4.** |
|  | **14** | **Topic 8: Civil Liberties** | **Read Chapter 5.** |
|  | **19** | **Topic 9: Civil Rights** | **Read Chapter 9.** |
|  | **21** | **Topic 10: Political Parties** | **Read Chapters 6 and 8.** |
|  | **26** | **Topic 11: Public Opinion, Media & Political Socialization** | **Read Chapter 7.** |
|  | **28** | **Topic 12: Elections** | **Read Chapter 10.** |
| **Oct** | **3** | **Topic 13: Interest Groups & Lobbying** | **Read Chapter 16.** |
|  | **5** | **Topic 14: Domestic Policy** | **Prepare for final.** |
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**Absentee Policy**

*SPECIAL NOTE: Attendance can be tracked in TCONLINE and TEAMS, as well as face to face. The following applies no matter how you are involved in the class.*

Texarkana College’s absentee policy allows instructors to withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences. If a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she **may** be considered absent. Three tardies constitute one absence.

Faculty members **are not** obligated to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments and tests as a result of a student’s absence from class. ***However, I do have a make-up procedure.***

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class every day

**Attendance Policy 8-Week Hybrid**

Texarkana College attendance policy allows students to be dropped by instructors for excessive absence. TC considers excessive absence to equate to anything greater than 15% of the class. In an 8-week term, this means that instructors may drop students for attendance if student absences exceed more than one week of class meetings and/or online assignments. In a 16-week term, instructors may drop students for attendance if student absences exceed more than two weeks of class meetings and/or online assignments.

A student should not stop attending a class without formally withdrawing from the course by the institution’s published *Last Day for Students to Drop*. If a student stops attending class after the published Last Day for Students to Drop, the student **may** receive a grade of “F” in the class. The instructor will submit the last date of attendance for students receiving a grade of “F” or “W”.

Withdrawal from a course(s) **may** affect a student’s current or future financial aid eligibility. Students should consult the Financial Aid Office to learn both short and long term consequences of a withdrawal.

**Excused Absences**A student’s absence due to school trips and/or school business will not be counted against a student’s allowable number of absences. Military duty and absences for Holy Days (FBD LEGAL) are covered in a separate section of the catalog and the student handbook. These are the only excused absences that are considered by Texarkana College. Responsibility for work missed for any absence is placed on the student. Instructors are required to allow students to make up work missed if the absence is due to military duty or religious holy days when students follow the correct notification procedures.

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| **Make-up Policy** |

If you miss ***an exam*** FOR ANY REASON, you must email me or submit in class a Makeup Exam Form with a request if you wish to make-up the test within two weeks of your return. Failure to do so will result in a zero for the missed assignment. In the Email/Form, you will schedule an appointment with me for a date and time for the make-up, including your name, course, and missed test. Failure to keep your appointment may result in a zero. CLASS ACTIVITIES cannot be made up for a grade.

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| **Extra Credit** |

I **do not** allow students to retake exams, give bonus points, ***or give extra credit work.***

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| **Academic Dishonesty Policy** |

This information can be found in the TC Catalog/Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu>.

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| **Disability Act Statement** |

This information can be found in the TC Catalog/Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu>.

If a student qualifies for accommodations from the TC Director of Disability Services indicating that he or she has a disability that requires academic accommodations, the director will send an email to the instructor so accommodations can be made. *It is best to request these changes at the beginning, if not before, the start of class*, so there is ample time to make the accommodations.

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| **Financial Aid** |

**Attention!** Dropping this class may affect your funding in a negative way! You could owe money to the college and/or federal government. Please check with the Financial Aid office before making a decision.

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| **Basic Needs Security Statement** |

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing enough food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in this course or ability to remain in school, is urged to contact Tonja Blase, Director of Student Retention, at 903.823.3349 for support.  Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so.

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| **PART II**  **Classroom Policy and the Professional Skill Set** |

The professional skill set includes being prepared, organized, operating on schedule, conducting oneself professionally and cordially, working with others and working independently, meeting new challenges, and perhaps most importantly, **understanding that life is 10% percent what happens to you and 90% how you react to it** (anecdotally, of course). My classroom policy is based on *professional culture.*

* While drinks are acceptable, please **do not eat in class. Eating should be done before or after class.**
* Today’s professional world expects everyone to be well versed in device usage. While I would prefer no cell phone usage during class (and NEVER for talking or texting), **limited usage for class purposes such as recording lectures, ebook reading, taking photos of notes, etc. is permissible** as long as they are not distracting to myself or other students. The same guidelines apply to tablets or laptops. **Make sure your phone does not ring in class.** **Failure to follow this guideline may result in your being asked to leave for the day.**
* There will be a **zero-tolerance policy for any behavior that is disruptive** of classroom learning. This includes use of vulgar language or rude behavior toward instructor or any other student in the class.
* **Remember, an emergency on your part does not necessarily constitute one on mine or your fellow students.** Cars that do not start, children who are sick, a change of work schedule, an inability to wake up in the morning, not having materials for class, a failure to understand the final exam schedule and other similar problems *should not be brought into our classroom*. **If you need exceptions or adjustments, please see me during office hours or schedule an appointment.** I am very willing to work out alternate arrangements with students, but I cannot fix these life problems.
* Class begins promptly. Class may not begin with my lecture, but it is your responsibility to arrive before or at start of class. Remember, you choose your schedule, so do not be late. Tardiness should almost never happen. **If you are late more than once, we will need to talk during office hours.** Walking into class during lecture is a major distraction.
* Present means you are alert, prepared, and participating. Sleeping in class is distracting, disrespectful, and counterproductive. If you are going to sleep, stay at home. **If you sleep in class, I may ask you to leave and I will mark you absent for the day.**
* Students should **make arrangements with the instructor in advance** if they need to leave class before dismissal. However, these should be rare occurrences. School should always be at or near the top of your priority list and rarely should other things override class time.
* The courses I teach deal almost exclusively with the two most potentially volatile subjects known to humankind: religion and politics. However, here we consider these on academic terms only. Please, do not take topics discussed personally. Learn to **separate the intellectual from the emotional**.