

TEXARKANA COLLEGE

Syllabus: Federal Government

Course Number: GOVT 2305

Instructor Information

Name: Doug Saffel

Office: L

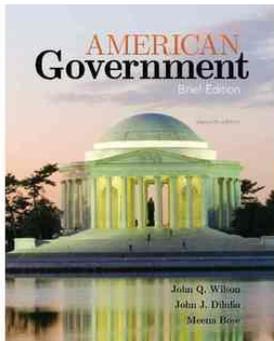
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Textbook Information

American Government: Brief Version, 11th Edition, James Q. Wilson

ISBN-10: 1133594379 ISBN-13: 9781133594376



Student Learning Outcomes for the Course

Learning Outcome #1: The student will define government, politics, and democracy, and explain why America is considered a representative democracy rather than a pure democracy.

Learning Outcome #2: The student will describe and assess the philosophies that inspired the Constitution, the people who wrote it, the events that led up to the writing, and the contents of the Constitution.

Learning Outcome #3: The student will understand the meaning of the federal system.

Learning Outcome #4: The student will examine the evolving history and character of civil liberties and civil rights in America.

Learning Outcome #5: The student will discuss the influence of mass media, interest groups and political parties on public opinion and show how they serve as institutions to connect people to government.

Learning Outcome #6: The student will be able to explain the different types of elections and why and how people participate in the electoral process.

Learning Outcome #7: The student will be able to describe the structure and function of the three branches of the U.S. Government and to contrast their constitutional authorities.

Student Assessment

Student assignments are worth a total of **600 points**, broken down in the following:

A. **5 exams** worth 100 points each (exams are essay tests designed to test your knowledge from readings, lectures, class activities, and video assignments) and **one FINAL EXAM** worth 50 points (multiple choice). You will need a Bluebook for each unit exam and a scantron for the final. See class schedule for testing dates.

B. **50 points** assigned to in-class assignment participation and attendance. These points will be accumulated periodically throughout the semester.

If you miss **an exam** FOR ANY REASON, you must submit a Valid Excuse Form (copies are located in the classroom and at my office door) for any chance of making up the assignment. If you submit no form to me within two weeks of your return, you will be given a zero for the missed assignment. **I do not** allow students to retake exams **or give extra credit work**.

Grading Scale

Grading scale:

540-600=A

480-539=B

420-479=C

360-419=D

Below 360=F

Class Schedule

In the time allowed it is impossible to cover everything of importance in U.S. Government. However, in my judgment, the following topics stand out and will be closely examined: 1) Government, Constitution, and Federalism 2) The Public, Parties, Media, Interest Groups, and Elections; 3) Congress 4) The Presidency and Foreign Policy; Bureaucracy 5) The Judiciary, Liberties, and Rights
Because of the brevity of the assigned text, you are expected to read and know generally the assigned chapters because many of the details will not be addressed directly in class. No

reason exists for me to tell you what is in the assigned reading. Also, because we are part of a media culture, various films, documentaries and movie clips will accompany our course study. Here, we are not merely watching for information, but also working on our critical analysis and discernment skills. Realize that missed videos are difficult if not impossible to make up.

Also, we will participate in various writing and analysis workshops, reading quizzes, reflection journaling, and peer collaborations. These will hopefully strengthen skills as well as help prepare you for the tests. These in-class assignments are difficult (if not impossible) to make up as well.

Schedule is subject to revision. Changes will be announced in class.

TOPIC ADDRESSED and ASSIGNMENTS
Government Introduction; Read Chapter 1
What is American Government? Lecture; Read Chapter 2
HOLIDAY
The Constitution Lecture
Constitution Collaborative; Read 5
Federalism Lecture
UNIT 1 TEST ; Read 6
Writing Workshop
<i>Public Opinion and Political Parties Videos</i>
Public Opinion Lecture; Read 7
Political Parties Lecture; Read 8
Interest Groups Lecture; <i>Interest Groups Video</i>
Campaigns and Elections Lecture
<i>Elections, the Maintenance of Democracy Video</i>
UNIT 2 TEST ; Read 9
Congress Lecture
<i>Legislatures Video</i>
Congress Lecture Part II
UNIT 3 TEST ; Read Chapter 10
Presidency Lecture; Read Chapter 11
Bureaucracy Lecture; <i>Bureaucracy Video</i>
<i>U.S. Foreign Policy Video</i>
UNIT 4 TEST ; Read 12
Judiciary Lecture; Read 3
Civil Liberties Lecture; (22nd is last day to drop)
THANKSGIVING BREAK
<i>Bill of Rights Video</i> ; Read 4
Civil Rights Lecture
Unit 5 TEST
Final Review
FINALS: See Final Exam Schedule

Attendance Policy

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.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class every day. A verbal roll call will be conducted. If a student is late and missed call, it is his/her responsibility to notify me. A student is allowed a maximum of 4 absences (which constitutes 2 class-weeks) of the course. Any more than 4 absences may result in the student being dropped by the instructor.

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.

Make-up Policy

As stated in the Student Assessment section above, if you miss ***an exam or other assignment*** due date FOR ANY REASON, you must submit a Valid Excuse Form (copies are located in the classroom and at my office door) for any chance of making up the assignment. If you submit no form to me within two weeks of your return, you will be given a zero for the missed assignment. I **do not** allow students to retake exams ***or give extra credit work*** so it is imperative that you take advantage of this opportunity if possible.

Academic Integrity Statement

Scholastic dishonesty, involving but not limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of records will make the student liable for disciplinary action after being investigated by the Dean of Students. Proven violations of this nature will result in the student being dropped from the class with an "F".

This policy applies campus wide, including TC Testing Center, as well as off-campus classroom or lab sites, including dual credit campuses. This information can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu>.

Disability Act Statement:

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Larry Andrews at 903.823.3283, or go by the Recruitment, Advisement, and Retention Department located in the Administration building for personal assistance.

If you have an accommodation letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need for this class. *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.

Also:

- Please do not bring **food** to class with you. Also, if you sleep in class, I'll mark you absent for the day.
- 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.
- You are ultimately responsible for yourself and expected to act as ***an adult in a professional environment***. A minor disciplinary infraction may lead to you being asked to leave. More than one minor infraction and any major infractions may result in your being dropped from the course.

I have read and understood the requirements of the syllabus. (Please sign, date, and return *this page only* to instructor by 2nd week of class. Thank you.

COURSE_____

NAME_____ DATE _____

Thanks,
D. SAFFEL