

University of Houston-Downtown

Course Prefix, Number, and Title: POLS 2305: Federal Government

Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours: 3/3/0

Foundational Component Area: Government/Political Science

Prerequisites: Completion or enrollment in ENG 1301.

Co-requisites: None

Course Description: Examines the institutions and politics of the United States national government. Focuses on the US Constitutions, federalism, the development and organization of political parties, public opinion and the role of pressure groups. Covers subject matters such as civil liberties, civil rights, the role of media, campaigns and elections, and policy-making.

TCCNS Number: GOVT 2305

Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:

Assigned Core Objective	Learning Outcome Students will be able to:	Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome*	Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated*
		*A combination of several instructional strategies or content will be used to achieve these outcomes. At least five written pages and an oral discussion/presentation component will be used for assessment in each class.	
Critical Thinking	Describe the origin, content, and development of the U.S. Constitution and compare to the Texas state constitution.	Class discussion and/or readings about the origin, content, and development of the U.S. Constitution and the Texas state constitution will be used to convey knowledge. Writing assignments and oral discussion/presentation can be used to assess knowledge and description ability.	Quizzes and/or tests will be used to test content knowledge. Optional essay can be used to assess proper analysis of the subject matter. A rubric will be used to assess outcome of written/oral work.
Social Responsibility	Describe: a) the roles and responsibilities of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; b) the separation of powers between the three branches; and c) the privileges and responsibilities citizens have within civil society.	Class discussion and/or readings about the three branches of government will be used to convey knowledge. Active civic engagement and /or class discussion can be used to actively acknowledge responsibilities citizens have within civil society.	Quizzes and/or Tests will be used to test content knowledge. Optional of essay can be used to assess proper analysis of the subject matter. A rubric can be used to assess citizen responsibility.

<p>Critical Thinking Social Responsibility</p>	<p>Analyze the American political processes (including such things as the role of public opinion, interest groups, political parties, and the electoral process and/or the impact of political policy), both past and present, on subgroups of the US population, and compare to Texas state political processes.</p>	<p>Class discussion and/or readings about American political processes and Texas-US government comparison will be used to convey knowledge. Students will then be required to analyze the American political processes and compare to Texas. For instance, an assignment can be made asking the student to analyze the role of political parties in the electoral process and then compare Texas political parties with those in other states.</p>	<p>Quizzes and/or tests will be used to test content knowledge. Option of essay or oral discussion/presentation can be used to assess proper analysis of the subject matter. A rubric will be used to assess outcome of written/oral work.</p>
<p>Personal Responsibility</p>	<p>Evaluate the impact and outcomes of past and present federal policy on US citizens, subgroups of the US population, and/or citizens of other countries.</p>	<p>Class discussion and/or readings about American political processes and Texas-US government comparison will be used to convey knowledge. Students will then be required to evaluate impacts and outcomes. For instance, students may be asked to discuss the impact of Brown v Board of Education on segregation in the public school system.</p>	<p>Quizzes and/or tests will be used to evaluate content knowledge. A rubric can be used to assess evaluation ability.</p>
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Use argument and evidence to communicate an analysis of political phenomena and/or policy, orally and in writing.</p>	<p>Class discussion and/or readings will be used to gain content knowledge of policy. Oral presentation/discussion or written essays will be assigned to assess ability to convey argument. For instance a student may be asked to argue for or against the decision in Roe v Wade.</p>	<p>Quizzes and/or tests will be used to assess content knowledge. A rubric will be used to assess students' ability to make logical and coherent argument.</p>

Additional Course Outcomes:

When students complete the course, they shall be able to:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States and compare to the Texas Constitution.
2. Identify key roles and responsibilities within the federal system including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
4. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system and compare to the Texas politics.

5. Analyze the election process and compare to the Texas political process.
6. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
7. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. and Texas politics.

Course Outline:

- Course Induction
- Politics, Government, Values & Ideology
- The Founding and Constitution
- Federalism
- Civil Liberties
- Civil Rights
- Public Opinion and Interest Groups
- Media and Politics
- Political Parties and Electoral Politics
- Congress
- Presidency
- Federal Courts
- Policy-making
- Writing assignment

Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives:

The grading scale is as follows: 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; 59-0% = F.

Statistical Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, and Final	
Three examinations	60% of the course grade
Five quizzes	10% of the course grade
Writing assignment	15% of the course grade
Oral Participation	15% of the course grade
Extra-Curricular Activities	1 extra point on final grade per activity (up to 5)