

GOVERNMENT 2301.001: CONSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR IN THE U.S. & TEXAS

HOBLITZELLE HALL 2.402; MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY 10:00-10:50, FALL 2013

Instructor: Dr. Banks Miller

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Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-2:30, and by appointment

Course Webpage: <https://elearning.utdallas.edu/>

Teaching Assistants: TAs are assigned to you by last name. Please correspond with the TA to whom you are assigned.

A-L

Bennet Min

Office: GR 3.314

Email: bbm090020@utdallas.edu

Office Hours: Friday 1-3.

M-Z

Tianjing Liao

Office: GR 3.314

Email: txl122930@utdallas.edu

Office Hours: Monday 1-3.

Supplemental Instructor: In addition, we are lucky to have a Supplemental Instructor (SI) for the course. SI sessions are free group study opportunities, scheduled three times per week. Sessions are facilitated by an SI Leader, who has recently taken the course and received a high final grade. Attendance is voluntary. For information about the days, times, and locations for SI sessions, refer to www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess/leaders/si.html.

The SI for this course is Dalton Mott (drm101120@utdallas.edu) and he will be available after class sessions for help.

Welcome to Constitutional Foundations and Political Behavior in the U.S and Texas. Over the course of the semester, we will be concerned with several major themes. First, we will consider the basic structural and theoretical underpinnings of the American system of government,

including the U.S. Constitution. Second, we will examine the key components of political behavior in the American system. In examining political behavior we will focus on concepts like public opinion, the mass media, political parties, interest groups, and electoral participation. Third, we will discuss boarder issues in understanding the social foundations of government.

Course Goals:

This course seeks to develop the following capabilities in students:

1. Understanding of how the structure and operation of American government affects citizens' daily lives.
2. Recognition of the role of politics and strategy in the operation of government.
3. The ability to synthesize material from the course to produce a nuanced opinion of the proper role of government and politics in society.

Course Materials:

We the People, Texas Edition (9th ed.). Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Anthony Champagne and Edward Harpham. This book is listed as WTP on the syllabus. ISBN: 978-0-393-92111-3. Note, you may also buy the cloth (ISBN: 978-0-393-12438-5), as opposed to hardback, version of this book, but the syllabus readings are keyed to the hardback version. If you buy the cloth version the pages on the syllabus may not match the pages in the textbook. You may also rent a digital copy of the book or buy an e-book version if you so desire.

Additional readings are noted in the syllabus and can be found on the course's eLearning webpage. These readings are located on the course homepage.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade will be based on following assignments:

1. Four exams, none cumulative, worth 22% of your grade each. The four exams combined are worth 88% of your final grade.

The exams will be a mixture of multiple choice, matching, and true/false in format. They will be given on the days designated in the syllabus. **NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN.** If you are missing class for an excused absence you must let me know in advance. All students missing class for excused UTD related activities must turn in the form from your organization with the excused dates before September 1. For exams, you must bring your UTD photo ID with you to class and keep that on the desk in front of you. You will need to show this ID when you turn in your exams. This means you should leave purses and back packs in the car or at home. If you bring them to class you will be required to leave them in the aisle and we are not responsible for loss or theft.

Some exam review will occur in class and review guides will likely be made available on the course website. I encourage you to study in groups to prepare for the exams.

2. Nine quizzes of which the highest six will count toward your final grade. The six highest scoring quizzes will be worth 2% of your grade each, for a total of 12% of your final grade.

THERE ARE NO MAKEUP QUIZZES. Recall that the three lowest quiz grades will be dropped.

Quizzes are open-book and open-note, so you may refer to your textbook and your class notes when taking the quizzes. A quiz will typically cover one or two of the substantive topics on the syllabus. As noted, the quizzes are available on the eLearning course website in the **Assessments** section. Please note the following:

- It is your responsibility to access and complete the quizzes before they expire, typically you will have 5-7 days to complete a quiz once it opens.
- Deadlines for completing the quizzes are listed below. Failure to take a quiz in the allotted time means receiving a zero for that exam.
- Once you open a quiz you will have two hours to complete it. If you begin a quiz and do not complete it in the allotted time then you will be scored based on the questions you have answered in the time given. Therefore, only begin the quizzes when you will have sufficient time to complete them.
- The questions within a quiz are presented in a randomized order so taking the quiz with someone else will not be helpful. You should take the quizzes on your own and use them as an assessment of your mastery of the material.
- I am not responsible for your inability to access eLearning. Please give yourself plenty of time to complete the quizzes, as failure to take the quizzes before they expire will result in a zero.

Quiz Schedule:

Quiz 1: 8/28-9/4—Political Culture

Quiz 2: 9/9-9/19—Constitutions

Quiz 3: 9/23-9/28—Federalism

Quiz 4: 9/30-10/5—Civil Liberties

Quiz 5: 10/7-10/13—Civil Rights

Quiz 6: 10/16-10/22—Public Opinion

Quiz 7: 10/23-10/29—Media

Quiz 8: 10/30-11/10—Participation & Parties

Quiz 9: 11/15-12/7—Campaigns, Elections & Groups

3. There is no extra-credit in this class. Further, all grades are final unless challenged before the end of the semester. Any challenge to a grade requires that the student provide the requisite materials in support of the challenge. Further, I may adjust the grade up or down depending on the re-examination initiated by the student.

4. Final grades in the class will be determined based on the following scale:

A+ = 96% or higher

A= 93-95%

A- = 90-93%

B+ = 87-89%

B=83-86%

B- = 80-82%

C+ = 77-79%

C = 73-76%

C- = 70-72%

D = 67-69%

F = below 67%

Attendance and Classroom Behavior:

Attendance is expected. I will randomly take attendance throughout the term. In borderline grade cases, the instructor reserves the right to raise the final grade of students who have exhibited exemplary attendance. Further, it is in your best interest to attend lectures, as large components of the exams will be based solely on materials delivered during lectures.

Please silence your cell-phones before coming to class. Do not talk or text on your phone while in class—this kind of behavior is extremely disruptive to students around you and to me. Furthermore it is disrespectful. If I notice ringing cell phones or other disruptive behavior I reserve the right to dock points from a student’s final grade. Cell phones and lap top computers are not allowed in class during exam days. If you are caught with either during an exam you will receive a zero on the exam. Do not sleep in class—bring caffeine if you need it.

Finally, you have responsibilities in this class. Please plan accordingly, including being on time. Falling behind in this class is the easiest way to do poorly in it.

Email Policy:

Please correspond with me via email using only your UT Dallas provided email address. I will not respond to inquiries that do not come from UT Dallas email addresses.

A FINAL NOTE: I do not provide lecture notes to students. Part of your job in this class is to come and take notes. If I move too quickly through the material for you to take notes, then please ask me to slow down during lecture (you probably are not the only one for whom I’m moving too quickly). Do not ask me to provide you with notes—the answer will be no.

Class Schedule:

Date	Topic	Assigned Reading
August 26th	Class Introduction	
August 28th	Collective Action & Government	

August 30th	Political Culture	WTP: 2-15
September 2nd	No Class—Labor Day	
September 4th	Political Culture	WTP: 15-35
September 6th	Texas Political Culture	WTP: 760-795
September 9th	Founding & the Constitution	WTP: 36-57
September 11th	The Ratification Fight	Federalist No. 10; Federalist No. 51
September 13th	The Ratification Fight	Antifederalist No. 1
September 16th	Founding & the Constitution	WTP: 58-73
September 18th	The Texas Constitution	WTP: 796-830
September 20th	EXAM 1	
September 23rd	Protection & Dispersion	The Katrina Breakdown
September 25th	Federalism	WTP: 74-88
September 27th	Federalism	WTP: 89-111; U.S. v. Lopez
September 30th	Civil Liberties	WTP: 112-132
October 2nd	Civil Liberties	WTP: 133-153
October 4th	Civil Liberties	Dist. Of Columbia v. Heller
October 7th	Civil Rights	WTP: 154-176
October 9th	Civil Rights	WTP: 176-201
October 11th	Civil Rights	The VMI Case
October 14th	EXAM 2	
October 16th	Whose Best Interest?	Review of The Democratic Dilemma
October 18th	Public Opinion	WTP: 202-228
October 21st	Public Opinion	WTP: 228-249
October 23rd	The Media	WTP: 250-268
October 25th	The Media	WTP: 268-291
October 28th	The Media	
October 30th	Political Participation	WTP: 292-320
November 1st	Political Participation	WTP: 320-337
November 4th	Political Parties	WTP: 338-360
November 6th	Political Parties	WTP: 360-374
November 8th	Political Parties	Why Parties?
November 11th	EXAM 3	
November 13th	Do Elections Matter?	
November 15th	Campaigns & Elections	WTP: 378-403
November 18th	Campaigns & Elections	WTP: 403-431
November 20th	Campaigns & Elections	Polarized America
November 22nd	Parties & Elections in Texas	WTP: 830-861
November 25th	No Class--Fall break	
November 27th	No Class--Fall break	
November 29th	No Class--Fall break	
December 2nd	Groups & Interests	WTP: 432-467
December 4th	Groups & Interests	The Organization of Interests
December 6th	Interest Groups in Texas	WTP: 862-879

December 9th Reading Day
December 11th **EXAM 4**

Additional UT DALLAS Policies may be found at:
<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>