Federal Government
GOVT 2305 Section 63012
MW 12:30 P.M.-3:20 P.M. - W-266

Professor Vásquez, M.A.,M.B.A.

Email: cevasquez@dcccd.edu - (Primary method of contact)

Office: W-233 Phone # 214-860-8728

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. and Tuesday & Thursday 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m. and by appointment

Required Textbooks/Reading materials

We the People: An Introduction to American Politics - 9th edition

Authors: Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J Tolbert

EISBN:0393904490 & EISBN-13:9780393904499

And

Dallas Morning News, Fort Worth Star Telegram, Washington Times, The Economist or access to any other major newspaper (knowledge of current events will be essential to course activities)

Credit Hours: 3 Semester Hours

Division: Communications & Social Sciences
Office Hours: M-R 7:30 am – 7:00 pm.
Office Phone: 214-860-8783
Office Location: 279-B
**Course Description:** This course is a survey of United States Federal Government. It addresses the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. (To ensure transferability, students should plan to take both Government 2305 and 2306 within the DCCCD.)

**Course Pre-requisites:** Eligibility for enrollment in Government courses in the Dallas County Community Colleges requires that Texas Success Initiative (TSI) minimum standards in reading and writing be met. This may include either passing the THEA exam or an equivalent (such as Accuplacer), having completed a Developmental Studies series in THEA-deficient subject areas (DREA 0093 and/or DWRI 0093), or having completed the equivalent English as a Second Language series (ESOL 0044).

**Core Objectives:** Through the general education core curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse global world; and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning. As a part of DCCCD’s Core Curriculum, students completing GOVT 2305 should advance the following Core Objectives:

1. Critical Thinking skills
2. Communication skills
3. Personal Responsibility
4. Social Responsibility
Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course the student should be able to:
1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the 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 in the political system.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

Instructor Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students have the responsibility to attend class and to consult with the instructor when an absence occurs. If for some reason you must leave class early, you should inform the instructor prior to the start of class of your reason for leaving early.

Students must begin attendance in all classes of enrollment. No exceptions. Financial Aid will not be granted to students who have been certified as not attending by the certification date. For this lecture course, your physical participation in class, on or before the certification date will allow you to receive credit for FA purposes. For certification dates, check with the division or FAO for further information. Students, who are not certified as beginning class, are responsible for any payments due as a result of non-certification, to include the dropping of courses.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students caught plagiarizing an assignment will be subject to an “F” in the course and possible expulsion from the college.

Academic honesty is expected, and integrity is valued in the Dallas County Community Colleges. Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCCD Catalog. More information is available at https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/ss/code.cfm.

Institution Policies: Please visit http://www.mountainviewcollege.edu/Academics/Documents/Institutional%20Policies.pdf for a complete list of institutional policies (Stop Before You Drop; Withdrawal Policy; Repeating a Course; Financial Aid; Academic Dishonesty; Americans with Disabilities Act Statement; Religious Holidays; and Campus Emergency Operation Plan and Contingency Plan).

Attendance

Students must begin attendance in all classes of enrollment. No exceptions. Financial Aid will not be granted to students who have been certified as not attending by the certification date. For this lecture course, your physical participation in class, on or before the certification date will allow you to receive credit for Financial Aid purposes. For certification dates, check with the division or FAO for further information. Students, who are not certified as being class, are
responsible for any payments due as a result of non-certification, to include the dropping of courses.

**Drop Procedures**

If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an “F.”

Students often drop courses when help is available that would enable them to continue. Please discuss your plans with your instructor if you feel the need to withdraw. If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a “W” (Withdraw) in each class dropped.

**STOP BEFORE YOU DROP**

For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions.

Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W”. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access: https://www.1.dcccd.edu/6drop

**Repeating This Course**

Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. This class may **not** be repeated for the third or subsequent time without paying the additional tuition. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas county Community Colleges since the fall 2002 semester. More information is available at:

https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/oep/third_attempt.cfm.

**Financial Aid**

Students must begin attendance in all classes of enrollment. No exceptions. Financial Aid **will not** be granted to students who have been certified as not attending by the certification date. For this lecture course, your physical participation in class, on or before the certification date will allow you to receive credit for Financial Aid purposes. For certification dates, check with the division or FAO for further information. Students, who are not certified as being class, are responsible for any payments due as a result of non-certification, to include the dropping of courses. Students who are receiving any type of financial aid must check with the Financial Aid
Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop dates area also subject to this policy.

If you are receiving financial aid grants or loans, you must begin attendance in all classes. Do not drop or stop attending any class without consulting the Financial Aid Office. Changes in your enrollment level and failing grades may require that you repay financial aid funds.

**The Texas Success Initiative (TSI)**

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a statewide program designed to ensure that students enrolled in Texas public colleges and universities have the basic academic skills needed to be successful in college-level course work. The TSI requires assessment, remediation (if necessary), and advising of students who attend a public college or university in the state of Texas. The program assesses a student’s basic academic skills in reading, writing, and math. Passing the assessment is a prerequisite for enrollment in many college level classes. Students who do not meet assessment standards may complete prerequisite requirements by taking developmental courses in the deficient area and passing them with a grad of C or higher. Additional information is available at https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/admiss/TSI_requirements.cfm.

**Academic Honesty**

Academic honest is expected, and integrity is valued in the Dallas County Community Colleges. Scholastic dishonest is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a chest, plagiarism, and collusion.

As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrolment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCCD Catalog. More information is available at https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0406/ss/code.cfm.

**American Disabilities Act Statement**

Mountain View College and the Office of Special Services are committed to upholding the laws and the spirit of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signed in 1990.

**Religious Holidays**

Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused. A student whose absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Disclaimer Reserving Right to Change Syllabus**

The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.
Inclement Weather Statement

In the event of severe weather conditions, please listen to local radio or television stations for information concerning official closing of Mountain View College facilities. You can also call the inclement weather hotline at 214-860-8888, or check for updates on this web site. Decision for evening classes will be made by 4:00 pm.

eCampus

The class syllabus, announcements and some class presentations will be available on eCampus.

Cell Phones, Electronic Devices and Pagers

Students must turn off or silence all cell phones and electronic devices during class time.

*Failure to do so can result in the student not receiving participation points and/or being asked to leave the class.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. Late work will suffer a **penalty of 5 points** for every day it is late.

Assignments and Points

Class Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students have the responsibility to attend class and to consult with the instructor when an absence occurs. If for some reason you must leave class early, you should inform the instructor prior to the start of class of your reason for leaving early.

*If you are not in attendance, you cannot earn the participation and attendance points. *Students who arrive late or leave early may not receive full participation points.

**Students who are reading, listening to music, texting, sleeping, using the Internet or doing other work will not receive full participation points.**

To earn points, students must be present and must participate in class discussions and group work.

Students are encouraged to take notes on paper; however, if a student wishes to use a laptop they CANNOT use it for any other purpose during class. Doing so will result in the loss of participation points and the student will be asked to discontinue use of their laptop. A second time will result in the student being asked to leave the class.
**Final Exam** - The final exam will not be comprehensive and consist of 100 multiple-choice questions from the material in the chapters and from the lectures. Exams cannot be made up.

**Assistance**

I am available after class to answer questions or to provide assistance. The best way to contact me is via email. I can be reached at the email at the top of the syllabus.

**Class Calendar**

Introductions, Syllabus, Course Objectives, Expectations & Grading

College Research & Writing/Using MLA – Resources available

Using the library & eCampus

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**Course Calendar**

Course Outline

**Part I: Foundations**
Chapter 1: American Political Culture
Chapter 2: The Founding and the Constitution
Chapter 3: Federalism
Chapter 4: Civil Liberties
Chapter 5: Civil Rights

**Part II: Politics**
Chapter 6: Public Opinion
Chapter 7: The Media
Chapter 8: Political Participation and Voting
Chapter 9: Political Parties
Chapter 10: Campaigns and Elections
Chapter 11: Groups and Interests

**Part III: Institutions**
Chapter 12: Congress
Chapter 13: The Presidency
Chapter 14: Bureaucracy in a Democracy
Chapter 15: The Federal Court
Part IV: Policy
Chapter 16: Government and the Economy
Chapter 17: Social Policy
Chapter 18: Foreign Policy and Democracy

Tests & Assignments: There will be 3 required exams in this course. Tests will be given after chapter lectures & reviews (approximately every 3 weeks). The first 2 exams consist of 50 multiple-choice and/or true/false questions. The Final exam consists of 100 multiple-choice and/or true/false questions. Make up exams will only be given if student has previously discussed missing a test with me. There will be no makeup exam for the final per district policy.

Late Arrivals: On test days if you arrive late, after one or more students have taken the exam and left the class, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

Current events: 2 current event assignments @ 100 points each= 200 points

Each student is required to find a current event article (on the President of the United States State of the Union Address on Tuesday, January 20, 2015) and write a 2 page reflective paper about the article including a short summary of the article and student analysis. Please include a cover page. The paper must be typed (12 font) and double spaced. Printout the article and the paper and staple them together. Be prepared for class discussion on the article. The current event due dates are on the schedule. Late papers will not be accepted. Current event papers are due in class on the specified due date. Papers will not be accepted via email, another student or by the staff in the faculty building. Late papers will NOT BE ACCEPTED. Each student will be responsible for keeping abreast of current events, including, Texas news, United States news, and international events that affect United States government. We will start each class with a discussion of current events. I will expect each student to contribute to daily class discussions. See attached document at the back of syllabus for strongly recommend reputable news sources.

Civic Engagement Project: Participation in a political activity is required. This may range from writing or sending a letter to a government official (proof of mailing required,) participating in a political organization, working on a political campaign, attending a speech or town hall meeting of an elected official, or city council meeting, school board, county commissioner, or justice of the peace. For more information, ask the instructor for help or recommendations. Do not leave this for the end. This assignment can be submitted in class on due date.
Course Assessment:

Students will be accumulating points throughout the semester.

3 exams 100 points
1 Civic Engagement Project 200 points
2 current event assignments (100 points each) =200 points
Class Participation 50 points

Total 750 points
750-650=A
649-550=B
549-450=C
449-350=D
349 and below=F

**Class Participation & Attendance:** Points are awarded for attendance, punctuality, and participation in class discussions and in class activities. **This is worth up to 50 points. Each Tardy = a deduction of 1 participation point & Absences = a deduction of 3 participation points.**

Attendance will be taken every class time. More importantly, those who are absent from class will miss much of the information that will appear on you exams. Active participation in the classroom enhances your education and will benefit your experience in topics that you may not know much about. If you are not engaging yourself in your own education, reading the assigned material, taking notes, coming to class prepared and on time, completing all the assignments, than do not expect to receive a good grade in this class.

**Tardies/Late Arrivals/Early Departures:**
In addition to attending class, you are also responsible for being to class on time and staying for the entire class. Walking in late and leaving early is disrespectful to the Professor as well as the rest of the class. You will be considered tardy if you arrive after the roll is taken but within the first 5 minutes of class. If you leave after 20 minutes of the class, you will be counted absent. You will also be marked absent if you leave class more than 20 minutes before the scheduled
ending. If you leave between 20 minutes and the ending time, you will receive a tardy. Be aware, for every 2 tardies you will receive an unexcused absence.

**Extra Credit:** A total of 8 points may be earned through the completion of a variety of “projects” related in some way to government or politics. The earned points are added to the student’s final average upon meeting these conditions - ONLY those students with 2 or fewer unexcused absences and not more than 1 tardy will be eligible to count these points toward their final average. All other students’ earned points will be added to the lowest exam grade used in calculating that portion of their average.

**Student Classroom Behavior:**

The following is a list (by no means exhaustive) of behavior which is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If you persist in any of these behaviors after being warned about your conduct, you will be reported to the Dean and removed from class.

During the class, a student shall not:

- Carry on extended private conversations outside the subject being discussed.
- Enter the room late or in a noisy manner, thus distracting punctual students.
- Leave the room early without having made prior arrangements with me, except in case of illness.
- Repeatedly speak out (thus inhibiting other students’ participation) without first being recognized.
- Work on assignments or read the texts of another course.
- Engage in acts of personal grooming.
- Use vulgar, indecent, or other language which detracts from the class atmosphere.
- Respond to papers or cellular phones. The electronic devices are to be turned off while you are in class.
  
  * If you plan on sleeping do not bother coming to class.
  
  * Please be respectful of your fellow classmates and of your instructor.
  
  * If you choose to bring a laptop to class please be aware of any extra usages of a laptop, i.e. the Internet, Facebook, MySpace, etc., it is distracting to those around you.
* I do not want to see or hear a cell phone, if I do, I will ask you to leave for the remainder of the class.

If students violate this policy they may also lose their privilege to participate in any extra credit.

**The instructor reserves the right to change or revise the course syllabus.**

**Communication:** Do not hesitate to send an e-mail to the instructor if you need information or help. E-mail you will find works very well, especially since Tarrant County College prides itself on the use of integrated technology. Phone calls usually miss their mark and are not an effective way to communicate with the instructor. Please note that I will attempt to respond to email and voice messages during business hours. Please feel free to contact me for an appointment or speak to me during my office hours if you need academic assistance. You may also call me or email me (remember: email is not an appropriate form of assignment/paper submission). I do not respond to email on weekends or after 5:00pm weekdays. **All emails should include your name, class and number, and class time in the subject line. All voicemail should also include this information.**

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Academic integrity is the foundation of the academic community. Because each student has the primary responsibility for being academically honest, students are advised to read and understand all sections in the Mountain View College handbook relating to standards of conduct and academic life. Students are responsible for adhering to the MVC policy on scholastic dishonesty.

Definitions:

Academic dishonesty includes, cheating, plagiarism, falsifying academic records and other acts intentionally designed to provide unfair advantage to the student or attempt to commit such acts. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, intentionally giving or receiving unauthorized aid or notes on examinations, papers, or class assignments intended to be individually completed. Cheating also includes the unauthorized copying of tests or any other deceit fraud related to the student’s academic conduct. Falsifying academic records includes, but is not limited to altering grades or other academic records. Plagiarism occurs when a student obtains someone else’s work and presents those ideas or words as her or his own academic work.

Anyone caught plagiarizing or cheating will be given a failing grade and will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

**Statement of ADA Compliance:** Mountain View College seeks to provide appropriate academic adjustments for all individuals with disabilities. This college will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines, specifically section 504 of the Rehabilitations Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act, with respect to providing
appropriate academic adjustments to afford equal educational opportunities. It is the responsibility of the student to register with and provide medical verification and academic schedules to the Disability Support Services (DSS) at the beginning of each semester and no later than the second week of school unless otherwise determined by the coordinator. The student also must contact the faculty member in a timely manner to arrange appropriate academic adjustments. In order to provide accommodations for eligible students, the instructor must receive an instructor notification form from the Disability Support Services Office. If you have a disability for which you would like to receive academic accommodations, please contact:

**Electronic Devices:** The spread of cellular phones, I-Pods, Bluetooth’s, or any other listening, gaming, communication, or not above mentioned devices have become an annoyance. These devices disturb class and should be turned off (not silent or vibrating mode, and should not be on your desk) before entering classroom. Students failing to comply will be asked to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. If students violate this policy they may also lose their privilege to participate in any extra credit.

**Cell Phone Policy:** Students are expected to observe classroom etiquette and common courtesy toward the instructor and fellow classmates. Pagers, cell phones, electronic devices, game playing, checking/sending email, texting and surfing the Internet are not allowed. More importantly, it is our experience that students who are checking their email, making flight arrangements on the Internet, playing solitaire, finishing an assignment that was due at the beginning of the class, etc. miss the most important information that is said during class (and then ask the same question that was just answered -- only a few minutes later).

*PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE (and remove from ear) communication devices BEFORE COMING INTO CLASS.* 1st infraction is a warning. Instructor will email the warning. 2nd infraction the student is asked to leave the class, and 3rd infraction they are asked to not return to class until a conference is held with the Department Chair or VP of Student Services.

**Current event #1 on President Obama’s State of the Union Address:** DUE: Friday, January 30, 2015 via Blackboard

Exam 1 Tentatively Scheduled – Friday, February 6, 2015

**Current event #2 on President Obama’s Community College Proposal (Free Tuition):** DUE: Friday, February 13, 2015 via Blackboard

Exam 2 Tentatively Scheduled – Friday, February 27, 2015

**Exam 3 Tentatively Scheduled – Friday, March 20, 2015 - Last Class Date**
Civic Engagement Project DUE: Monday, March 2, 2015

Other Important Dates:

Conference Day/No Class- Thursday, February 19, 2015

Professional Development Day/ No Class- Friday, February 20, 2015

Spring Break: March 9-13 College buildings & offices will be closed for the week.

News Resources:

Here are just some examples of news outlets that are more dependable than others.

Newspapers and Magazines -


United Kingdom – The Guardian, Financial Times

Middle East – Israel, Globes, Haaretz, Jerusalem Post Magazines: Challenge, A Magazine Covering the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict, The Economist

Saudi Arabia – Al Hayat, Arab News, Saudi Gazette Any of these news outlets can be translated into English.

Turkey - Sabah, Magazines: Economist

South America – Business News Americas, Center for International Policy

Asia:

China – ChinaDaily.com, Not the South China Morning Post

Japan – Glocom Platform, Japan Focus

Radio –


Sirus/XM – POTUS, BBC World Service, C-Span, NPR Now, CNBC

Democracy Now – DFW local station, 89.3, Verizon Fios Channel, 278
Internet – www.realnews.com

www.cq.com Congressional Quarterly

www.hnn.us History News Network

Blogs – The Huffingtonpost, The Drudge Report, Daily KOS

Television – Public Broadcasting Station (PBS), local channel 13, also if you have a rabbit ear antenna PBS the World, channel 13.2. PBS has many news programs, nature, history, and worldly programs available. C-SPAN – 1, 2, 3.
Spring 2015

Flex-Term 1/20/15 – 3/20/15

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I have read and understood the Federal Government 2305.63012 syllabus and I accept the conditions stated therein.

Student’s Printed Name ___________________________ Student Signature ___________ Date ___________

Instructor’s Printed Name ___________________________ Instructor Signature ___________ Date ___________