



Behavioral Sciences, Humanities and Social Science Division

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT: National, State, and Local I

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

A survey of national, state and local government, including such topics as the U.S. and Texas Constitutions; democratic theory; federalism; political culture, political socialization, and public opinion; political participation and electoral behavior; political parties and interest groups; press; and local government. These phenomena are examined at the national, state and local levels with an emphasis placed on linkages with the formulation of public policy.

This course satisfies state requirements for Teacher Certification In Texas. (4510025142)

Course Title:	American Government: National, State, and Local I
Course Number	GOVT 2301-31004
Credit Hours/Contact Hours	3 semester credit hours/48 instructional contact hours
Prerequisites	See course catalog for Prerequisites *
Semester and Year	Spring 2009
Instructor	Dr. Annie Johnson Benifield
Class days and times	TTH: 8:00 – 9:20
Class Room Location	Tomball S 268
Office Location	Tomball S-257-D TTH: 7:00-8:00 T: 2-3:30
Office Hours:	TH: 12:30-2:00 MF: By Appt only
Office Phone:	281-357-3761
E-mail	annie.j.benifield@lonestar.edu



ADA STATEMENT:

The LSCS colleges are dedicated to providing the least restrictive learning environment for all students. The college district promotes equity in academic access through the implementation of reasonable accommodations as required by the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) which will enable students with disabilities to participate in and benefit from all post-secondary educational activities.

If you require reasonable accommodations because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please notify the instructor of this course as soon as possible and preferably before the end of the first two weeks of class to arrange for reasonable accommodations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: GOVERNMENT 2301

- Understand the meaning of power, politics, and political culture, and evaluate the role of government.
- Identify the elements of democratic theory.
- Understand the roots of American political development from the founding of Plymouth Colony to the Declaration of Independence.
- Identify the major elements of the Declaration of Independence.
- Identify the characteristics and development of the U.S. and Texas constitutions.
- Analyze the concept of federalism and its operation in the U.S.
- Define public opinion, how it is measured, and its impact on public policy.
- Explain the role, activities, and major types of interest groups and describe various techniques used by groups to promote their interests.
- Trace the evolution of political parties and evaluate their role in the American political system.
- Analyze the dynamics of the electoral process.
- Analyze the dynamics of the Realignment Election phenomena.
- Assess the major functions of the media and its role in politics.
- Analyze the development of Texas political parties and the role of the primary elections and party conventions in shaping those parties.

***PREREQUISITES: ENGLISH 0305 OR ENGL 0316 AND ENGL 0307 OR 0326, OR HIGHER LEVEL COURSE (ENGL 1301), OR PLACEMENT BY TESTING.**

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

GINSBERG, BENJAMIN, LOWI, THEODORE J. & WEIR, MARGARET (2007) *WE THE PEOPLE: AN INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS* 6TH TEXAS EDITION

PLEASE PLACE ALL CELLPHONES/BEEPERS/BLACKBERRIES ON VIBRATE UPON ENTERING THIS CLASSROOM

EVALUATION:

There will be **three major exams** in this course. Each test will be worth **100 points** of your final grade. Each examination will be worth **100** points. Each exam **"may"** include any combination of the following: short answer written essays, with the remainder being objective type questions- multiple choice, true/false, completions and/or identifications. These items will be defined before each exam. So please pay close attention, it is critical that you read all assigned chapters and take notes during lectures and discussions in class.

REQUIREMENT	POINTS
EXAM 1	100
EXAM 2	100
EXAM 3	100
DISCUSSIONS/CHAPTER ASSIGNMENTS	60
CHAPTER QUIZZES	150
TOTAL	510

LETTER GRADE ASSIGNMENT:

Final letter grades will be assigned after computing individual final averages in percent as follows:

Final Average in Points	Letter Grade
500-448	A
447-398	B
397-348	C
347-298	D
297 and below	F

Class lectures and discussions will receive the primary emphasis in the course with textbooks and current news events being important supplemental sources. Fifty percent of each exam will be taken directly from the assigned readings in the textbooks and fifty percent from the lectures/discussions.

You can access additional copies of the course syllabus at or in the Web Vista component of this course:

<http://faculty.lonestar.edu/abenifield>

STUDENTS CAN ACCESS THEIR FINAL GRADE BY USING STARGAZER BEGINNING MONDAY, MAY 11, 2009.

GUARANTEED GRADUATE POLICY:

Lone Star College System guarantees that graduates of its Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Applied Science and all Certificate programs, providing under certain circumstances, additional education and training tuition free to students lacking appropriate mastery of specified competencies. For additional information, refer to the LSCS college catalog.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance and participation in all classes are expected. Should you anticipate an absence, please notify the instructor in advance. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the instructor regarding absences and to obtain the lecture notes from another student. Any student who misses four (4) classes (six hours/equivalent to two weeks) should withdraw from the class. To be considered present a student must be present for the entire class session, not just the beginning.

FAMILY: CHILDREN (UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE) OF REGISTERED STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN CLASS. APPROPRIATE CHILDCARE SHOULD BE ARRANGED. ADDITIONALLY, YOUR PARENTS SHOULD NOT CALL ME, E-MAIL ME, ATTEND CLASS FOR YOU, BRING DOCTOR'S NOTE TO ME AND /OR ASK FOR PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR YOU, ETC. MY RELATIONSHIP AS AN INSTRUCTOR IS WITH YOU AND NOT YOUR PARENTS. THIS IS FOR YOUR PRIVACY (PROTECTED BY FEDERAL LAW).

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

Withdrawal from the course after the official day of record and prior to "W" day (see current catalog) will result in a final grade of "W" on the student transcript and no credit will be awarded. Prior to the official withdrawal date, it is the student's responsibility to initiate a course withdrawal request. **LAST DAY TO DROP CLASS AND RECEIVE A "W" IS APRIL 6, 2009.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1. Class attendance is of the essence; therefore, every student is expected to attend all class sessions. Punctuality is similarly stressed.**
- 2. Students are required to keep up with current events through the broadcast and/or print media and will be required to discuss how various events are relevant.**
- 3. Periodically unannounced quizzes will be given to assess the level of understanding of readings and current events. ABSOLUTELY NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES.**
- 4. Three major exams will be given. ABSOLUTELY NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN. Each exam will only include the material preceding it. THE EXAM SCHEDULE IS FEBRUARY 17, MARCH 31, and TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2008 (8:00-9:50 A. M.).**

STUDY GUIDE

The Ginsberg, Lowi & Weir textbook has a website with chapter reviews, summaries, sample exam questions, and other critical data related to the study of American Government.

It is located at the following address:

<http://wwnorton.com/studyspace>

Please utilize this website when preparing for class assignments, discussions, quizzes, exams, etc.

QUIZZES:

FOR EACH PHASE OF THE COURSE AT LEAST ONE QUIZ WILL BE INCLUDED. THERE WILL BE A TOTAL OF THREE (3) QUIZZES AVAILABLE ONLY IN VISTA. YOU WILL HAVE TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE EACH QUIZ. THE HIGHEST SCORE WILL BE POSTED TO THE GRADE BOOK IN WEBCT VISTA. EACH QUIZ IS WORTH 50 POINTS. THERE ARE DEADLINE DATES FOR EACH QUIZ; HOWEVER, ALL QUIZZES WILL BE AVAILABLE BEGINNING THE WEEK OF JANUARY 12, 2009. YOU CAN TAKE EACH QUIZ TWICE AT ANY TIME PRIOR TO THE SPECIFIED DEADLINE DATE. THEY WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE AFTER THE POSTED DATE THROUGH WEBCT VISTA. THERE IS A 60 MINUTE DELAY TIME BETWEEN TAKE 1 AND TAKE 2 FOR THE QUIZZES. NO ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR COMPLETING THIS WORK.

DISCUSSION BOARD TOPICS/CHAPTER ASSIGNMENTS WORTH 60 POINTS

THREE TOPICS WILL BE PLACED ON THE DISCUSSION BOARD DURING THE SEMESTER. EACH STUDENT MUST POST COMMENTS ON ALL OF THE THREE TOPICS.

YOU WILL RECEIVE A MAXIMUM OF FIVE (5) POINTS FOR EACH DISCUSSION BOARD TOPIC YOU PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION. MAXIMUM NUMBER OF POINTS FOR THESE THREE ASSIGNMENTS IS 15 POINTS.

Three Chapter assignments will be included to earn a total of forty-five (45) points in this class. These assignments will be included under the appropriate course content module in Vista. The grade for each assignment will automatically post in the Vista grade book no later than one week after the deadline date for submission so that each student can monitor individual progress in this course.

These assignments involve an individual effort therefore make sure that your papers are not identical or similar to someone else's. This will result in an automatic zero ("0") for the work in question. Plagiarism, collaboration or cheating on any assignment will not be tolerated in this class.

Please read the Academic Integrity statement included on this syllabus and the website so you will gain a comprehensive understanding of The Lone Star College System policy on matters concerning plagiarism, cheating, collaborative and/or copying or sharing other students' work.

***** ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE DATE SPECIFIED. NO LATE QUIZZES, EXAMS OR OTHER ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES SO PLEASE BE SURE TO NOTE ALL DUE DATES ON YOUR PERSONAL CALENDAR AS WELL AS THE WebCT VISTA CALENDAR.**

CHAPTER ASSIGNMENTS:

Student will go to the website listed above and complete the following assignments and bring to class to turn in on the date specified on the syllabus. These assignments can also be submitted through Vista. These assignments are due only on the date specified on the syllabus. **All assignments must be typewritten. No hand written assignments and/or notebook/tablet paper will be accepted. ABSOLUTELY NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Please Do Not Submit Unrequested Data (a five (5) point deduction in points) or the entire WebPages with simply you name written. A zero will be assigned to those papers submitted printed directly from the WebPages.**

- A. Go to <http://wnnorton.com/studyspace> website. Click on Political Science, then click on Weir 6th study space, then Select Chapter 2, Under the connect Icon; select You Decide Exercise. Provide the enumerated questions and answers in a double-spaced format. Due Date: **February 17, 2009.**
- B. Go to <http://wnnorton.com/studyspace>; click on Political Science; then click on study space for Weir textbook; Chapter 8: You Decide Exercise. Provide the enumerated questions and answers in a double-spaced format. This assignment is due **March 31, 2009.**
- C. Go to <http://wnnorton.com/studyspace> Click on Political Science; then study space; Chapter 7: You Decide Exercise. Provide the information requested in an enumerated format with questions/answers. This assignment is due **April 30, 2009.**

TENTATIVE LECTURE & DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

The Colonial Experience

I. INTRODUCTION JANUARY 13, 2009

(GINSBERG, ET. AL, CHAPTERS 1 & 2)

A. BRITISH INFLUENCE

1. TYPES OF COLONIES
2. INTOLERABLE ACTS

B. COLONIAL RESPONSE TO BRITISH RULE

1. First and Second Continental Congress
2. DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

C. ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

1. GOVERNMENT UNDER THE ARTICLES
2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

D. THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS

1. PLANS OF REPRESENTATION: VIRGINIA, NEW JERSEY, CONNECTICUT COMPROMISE
2. RATIFICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

II. PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM FOUNDED

(Ginsberg, et. al, Chapters 1& 2)

A. PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRACY

1. DEMOCRACY – DEFINITION
2. EQUALITY –THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

B. FOUNDATION OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM

1. POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY
2. FEDERALISM
3. SEPARATION OF POWER/CHECKS AND BALANCES
4. JUDICIAL REVIEW- MARBURY vs. MADISION (1803)

C. METHODS OF CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

1. AMENDMENTS – PROPOSALS
2. AMENDMENTS – RATIFICATION

D. THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION (Ginsberg, et. al Chapter 20)

III. FEDERALISM- STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

(Ginsberg, et. al Chapters 3)

A. FEDERALISM

1. DEFINED
 2. COMPARISON WITH OTHER SYSTEMS
 3. WHY FEDERALISM
 4. CONSTITUTIONAL CHECK ON TYRANNY: FEDERALISTS 10 AND 51
- B. POWER SHARING WITHIN THE FEDERAL SYSTEM
1. NATIONAL POWERS
 2. STATE POWERS
 3. McCULLOCH vs. MARYLAND (1819)
 4. DRED SCOTT vs. STANDFORD(1857)
- C. LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (**Ginsberg, et. al 26**)
1. COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN TEXAS
 2. CITY GOVERNMENT IN TEXAS
 3. SPECIAL DISTRICTS
 4. SCHOOL DISTRICTS
- D. **TEST # 1 : FEBRUARY 17, 2009**

SECTION 2: INPUTS INTO THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

I. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND VOTING (Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 8)

A. VOTING

1. DEFINED
2. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS
3. LEGAL RESTRAINTS AS OBSTACLES TO VOTING
4. STATUTES, AMENDMENTS, AND SUPREME COURT CASES

B. VOTING BEHAVIOR DATA ON TEXAS (Ginsberg, et. al , Chapter 21, p. 817-825)

II. POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND PUBLIC OPINION (Ginsberg, et. al, Chapters 1 & 6)

A. POLITICAL CULTURE

1. DEFINED
2. VALUES, BELIEFS, AND NORMS
3. IMPACT OF CAPITALISM/ FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM

B. POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

1. DEFINED
2. AGENTS- PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
3. PROCESS: PRIMACY AND STRUCTURING PRINCIPLES

- C. IDEOLOGY
 - 1. DEFINED
 - 2. POLITICAL FUNCTION OF IDEOLOGY
 - 3. LIBERALISM AND CONSERVATISM DEFINED

- D. PUBLIC OPINION
 - 1. DEFINED
 - 2. POLLS
 - 3. SAMPLING

- E. POLITICAL CULTURE OF TEXAS (**Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 19**)

EXAM #2: March 31, 2009

SECTION III: POLITICAL PARTIES , INTEREST GROUPS AND MASS MEDIA

- A. AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES (**Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 9**)
 - 1. POLITICAL PARTY-DEFINED
 - 2. TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES:TWO PARTY vs. MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM
 - 3. FUNCTIONS AND ELEMENTS
 - 4. PARTY ORGANIZATION

- B. TEXAS POLITICAL PARTIES (**Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 21**)

- C. MAJOR GROUPS AND THEORIES (**Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 11**)
 - 1. INTEREST GROUPS – DEFINED
 - 2. LOBBYIST- DEFINED
 - 3. POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES – DEFINED
 - 4. GOALS, MEMBERSHIPS, AND FUNCTIONS
 - 5. TECHNIQUES AND REGULATIONS
 - 6. TYPES OF GROUPS

- D. INTEREST GROUPS IN TEXAS (**Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 22**)
 - 1. TYPES
 - 2. TECHNIQUES
 - 3. MONEY (**Ginsberg, et. al ,Chapter 10, pp. 387-393**)

- E. MASS MEDIA (**Ginsberg, et. al, Chapter 7**)
 - 1. TYPES
 - 2. CONTROL OF MEDIA- OWNERSHIP & MEGAMERGERS
 - 3. REGULATION OF THE MEDIA- FCC
 - 4. MEDIA USE IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS
 - 5. ACCESS: LIBERAL vs. CONSERVATIVE BIAS

C. TEST # 3: TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2009 (8:00-9:50)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

LSCS is committed to a high standard of academic integrity in the academic community. In becoming a part of the academic community, students are responsible for honesty and independent effort. Failure to uphold these standards includes, but is not limited to, the following: plagiarizing written work or projects, cheating on exams or assignments, collusion on an exam or project, and misrepresentation of credentials or prerequisites when registering for a course. Cheating includes looking at or copying from another student's exam, orally communicating or receiving answers during an exam, having another person take an exam or complete a project or assignment, using unauthorized notes, texts, or other materials for an exam, and obtaining or distributing an unauthorized copy of an exam or any part of an exam. Plagiarism means passing off as his/her own the ideas or writings of another (that is, without giving proper credit by documenting sources). Plagiarism includes submitting a paper, report or project that someone else has prepared, in whole or in part. Collusion is inappropriately collaborating on assignments designed to be completed independently. These definitions are not exhaustive. When there is clear evidence of cheating, plagiarism, collusion or misrepresentation, a faculty member will take disciplinary action including but not limited to: requiring the student to retake or resubmit an exam or assignment, assigning a grade of zero or "F" for an exam or assignment; or assigning a grade of "F" for the course. Additional sanctions including being withdrawn from the course, program or expelled from school may be imposed on a student who violates the standards of academic integrity.

SOFTWARE PIRACY:

Law strictly prohibits unauthorized copying of software purchased by Lone Star College System (Tomball College) for use in laboratories. LSCS (Tomball College) administration will take appropriate disciplinary action against anyone violating copyright laws.

COMPUTER VIRUS PROTECTION:

Computer viruses are, unfortunately, a fact of life. Using the diskettes on more than one computer creates the possibility of infecting computers and diskettes with a computer virus. This exposes the computers of the college, your personal computer, and any others you may be using to potentially damaging viruses. The college has aggressive anti-virus procedures in place to protect its computers, but cannot guarantee that a virus might not temporarily infect one of its machines. It is your responsibility to protect all computers under your control and use and ensure that each diskette you use, whenever or wherever you use it, has been scanned with anti-virus software. Since new viruses arise continually, your anti-virus software must be kept current. And, since no anti-virus software will find every virus, keeping copies of data (backups) is extremely important.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the Lone Star College System to provide equal employment, admission and educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

LSCS Colleges strive to provide an excellent learning environment free from harassment or intimidation directed at any person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Any form of harassment will not be tolerated.

LSC-TOMBALL COLLEGE LIBRARY HOURS:

MONDAY – THURSDAY	8:00 A.M. – 9:30 P.M.
FRIDAY	8:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.
SATURDAY	10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M