

	Course	GOVT 2302.501 Political Institutions in the U.S. and Texas
	Professor	Dr. Gregory S. Combs
	Term	Spring 2011
	Meetings	Tues & Thurs, 5:30-6:45pm in GR 3.420

Professor's Contact Information

Office Phone	Please email ...
Office Location	GR 2.512 (Please contact me beforehand, in case I'm upstairs)
Email Address	gcombs@utdallas.edu
Office Hours	Thurs 1:30-3:00pm, or by appt.
Other Information	I don't read eLearning mail. Please contact me via the above email account with "GOVT 2302" in the subject line. Please use your UTD email account in communications to ensure reliability and confidentiality.

TA's Contact Information

TA's Name	Diane L Verrill
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Office Location	GR 3.314
Office Hours	Tues/Thurs 4:15-5:15pm

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions	<p>There are no formal pre-requisites for this course. <i>However</i>, it is imperative that you be able to conduct yourself in this course as a responsible, thoughtful college student. This means your participation in class discussions, examinations, and research papers should be enlightened with detailed knowledge of the course readings and other appropriate material. If you are unwilling to commit an appropriate amount of time to prepare for each class session, your grades will suffer. If, on the other hand, you enjoy spirited and knowledgeable debates, intellectual stimulation, academic responsibility, and exercising your scholastic prowess then this course is for you.</p> <p>We may employ ScanTron forms (The Pink One: F1712-PAR-L) or Blue Books for our exams. On-Campus and Off-Campus Books have these for very little cost, if not free. I suggest you pick up a stack of them, as you may find them necessary for other large UTD courses.</p> <p>REGARDING THE USE OF LAPTOPS IN CLASS: I encourage you to take notes with whatever method you are most efficient. HOWEVER, the use of laptops in my class is solely at my discretion. If I discover you using your laptop for anything beyond taking notes for this class, you will immediately lose your privilege to use your laptop in the classroom. If you are found surfing, chatting, texting, browsing, emailing, gaming, or hacking rather than typing notes, you must immediately close your laptop and never bring it to class again for the remainder of the semester. NO EXCEPTIONS. If you do not agree with this policy, I encourage you to drop this course now, so as to avoid any unpleasantness once the semester is underway.</p> <p>REGARDING CELL PHONES: Everyone has them, but once the class is in session, no one should hear or see them. If you must leave your phone on for emergencies, ensure that it is silent. If the buzzing of a vibrating phone is audible,</p>
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	then it is not silent. I understand there will be mistakes; therefore, you get one warning. After that, expect grade penalties of 5% per occurrence. Please note that warnings do not extend to texting. Texting or instant messaging during class is inexcusable and will warrant immediate dismissal from the classroom, with all the associated grade penalties and social embarrassment.
Course Description	This class covers the main political institutions of the United States federal government (Congress, the presidency, the court system, and the bureaucracy) as well as the companion institutions in the State of Texas. This course also covers social, economic, and foreign policy.
Learning Outcomes	Upon completing GOVT 2301 & 2302 students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide examples and apply important theoretical and scholarly approaches to explaining state and national institutional behavior, citizen involvement, and interaction between citizens and institutions of government; 2. Analyze and appreciate historical trends in the development of government institutions and their constitutional foundations; 3. Identify, describe, and analyze various mechanisms of citizen political involvement.
Required Texts & Materials	<p>Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore Lowi, and Margaret Weir. <i>We the People: An Introduction to American Politics</i> (Texas Edition) Seventh Edition (or newer).</p> <p>(Note: The textbook has a website for the aid of students: http://www.wwnorton.com/wtp7e/texas/. Here, you will find outlines, vocabulary exercises, and self-diagnostic multiple choice exam questions covering each chapter. This resource is highly recommended.)</p> <p>Gregory S. Thielemann. "Leadership, Power, and Emerging Partisanship in the Texas Legislature" From <i>Texas Politics: A Reader</i>, edited by Anthony Champagne and Edward Harpham. New York: W.W. Norton and Co. 1996. Located at: http://www.utd.edu/~gsc015100/thielemann.pdf</p> <p>In addition to the required daily readings, you should read the newspaper, listen to NPR, or even watch the Daily Show or the Colbert Report regularly. The intent of this directive is to keep you informed of current events in politics and government, for discussions in class.</p>

Academic Calendar

Date	Topic	Readings / Comments
Jan 11-13	Introduction to Course	Syllabus
	Federalist Papers #10 & 51	Appendix, Pgs. A20-A24
Jan 18-20	The Judiciary	Ch. 15
	Civil Liberties	Ch. 4
Jan 25-27	Civil Rights	Ch. 5
	Judiciary Wrap-up	
Feb 1-3	Congress	Ch. 12
	Special Topic: Redistricting	
Feb 8-10	Review for Exam 1	Bring your questions on material so far
	Exam 1	

Feb 15-17	Film: IOUSA	Take notes on main economic concepts
	The Economy	Ch. 16
Feb 22-24	The Presidency	Ch. 13
	The Bureaucracy	Ch. 14
Mar 1-3	The Bureaucracy (continued)	
	Public Policy	Ch. 17
Mar 8-10	Public Policy (continued)	
	Foreign Policy	Ch. 18
Mar 14-18	Spring Break	No classes held.
Mar 22-24	Special Topic: Politics of Terrorism	
	Review for Exam 2	Bring your questions on material
Mar 29	Exam 2	
Mar 31	Texas Reconstruction & The Constitution	Ch. 20
Apr 5-7	Texas Governor	Ch. 24
April 12-14	Texas Legislature	Ch. 23
Apr 19-21	Film: Justice for Sale	Take notes on the judicial election drawbacks
	Texas Judiciary	Ch. 25
Apr 26	Review for Exam 3	Bring your questions on material
Apr 28	Exam 3	This is the last exam, there is no “final” <i>per se</i>

Grading Criteria	<p>Attendance and Participation: Active participation in class discussions is an important requirement for this course. Regular and <i>prompt</i> attendance is required. I expect each of you to read and be conversant for each day’s required materials BEFORE the day of the course meeting. Be prepared to speak fluently on topics relevant to the day’s discussion. Please remember the basic courtesies when disagreeing with others in the room. Speak clearly, concisely, and do not engage in shouting matches. At the same time, if you merely sit there and absorb without examining the issues critically, you are missing out. The college campus is truly one of the last places to voice your ideas in a public forum.</p> <p>I will not provide notes or outlines for any classes you miss. However, since you are responsible for everything discussed in class, regardless of your personal attendance, you should obtain any missed notes from a trusted colleague. Your attendance, promptness, and <i>participation</i> make up 10% of your final grade in this course.</p> <p>Exams: There will be three primary in-class exams over the course of the semester, covering readings as well as in-class lectures. However, only your two highest grades on the exams will be included in your final grade, collectively accounting for 75%. If you bomb the first exam, your grades on the subsequent exams may remedy it. Therefore, if you are absent during an exam, you will not get a “make-up”; rather, you will receive a zero on that exam with the expectation that your performance on the other exams will be sufficiently stellar. You must bring your student ID along with any required test-taking materials (blue books, pens) on exam day. Possession and use of any electronic devices (phone, iPod, etc.) during exams is considered proof of cheating and subject to disciplinary action. Leave any such devices turned off in your sealed backpack underneath the desk.</p> <p>Quizzes: We will have several quizzes over the course of the semester, some announced, some will be surprise quizzes. These quizzes will constitute 15% of your final grade.</p>
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	<p>Grade Allocation: 10 % -- Class Participation / Attendance 75 % -- From 3 In-Class Examinations (only the two highest grades are kept) 15 % -- Quizzes</p> <p>Grading Scale: I will use the following scale to translate your grade percentages into the final letter grade for the course.</p> <p>A+: 97-100 B+: 87-89 C+: 77-79 D+: 67-69 A: 94-96 B: 84-86 C: 74-76 D: 64-66 F: 59-less A-: 90-93 B-: 80-83 C-: 70-73 D-: 60-63</p>
Make-up Exams	As noted previously, there will be no make-up exams. Instead, a missed exam counts as a zero. However, this is not catastrophic, as I record only the two highest exam grades anyway.
Extra Credit	I may announce any opportunities for extra credit during the course of the semester. I will only offer extra credit opportunities at my discretion. Any opportunities that may arise will account for no more than 5% of your final grade.
Late Work	Any take-home assignments submitted after the deadline will suffer one letter-grade drop per day late. That is to say, if you turn in a take-home assignment a day late, the highest grade you can expect on it is a 'B'. The day after that, your maximum grade is a 'C'. Etcetera...
Classroom Citizenship	Civility and mutual respect not only with me, as the instructor, but also with your fellow students is positively mandatory. If you cannot conduct yourself as a responsible, civil adult, you will be ejected from the class.
Field Trip Policies Off-Campus Instruction & Course Activities	<i>Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utd.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.</i>
Technical Support	If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.
Student Conduct and Discipline	<p>The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, <i>A to Z Guide</i>, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.</p> <p>The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the <i>Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System</i>, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's <i>Handbook of Operating Procedures</i>. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at http://www.utd.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html</p> <p>A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.</p>
Academic Integrity	<p>The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that students demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.</p>

	<p>Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.</p> <p>Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.</p>
Copyright Notice	<p>The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm</p>
Email Use	<p>The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.</p>
Withdrawal from Class	<p>The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.</p>
Student Grievance Procedures	<p>Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's <i>Handbook of Operating Procedures</i>.</p> <p>In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.</p> <p>Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.</p>
Incomplete Grades	<p>As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.</p>

<p>Disability Services</p>	<p>The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p>The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is: The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22 PO Box 830688 Richardson, Texas 75083-0688 (972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY) disabilityservice@utdallas.edu</p> <p>If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.</p> <p>It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.</p>
<p>Religious Holy Days</p>	<p>The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated. The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.</p> <p>If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.</p>

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change, with notification, at the discretion of the Professor.