

GOVT 2305.0u2 – American National Government

Summer 2025 (25U)

Course Syllabus



Course: GOVT 2305.0U2

Course Title: American National Government

Instructor: Sonali Singh

Term: Summer 2025 (25U)

Meetings: Tuesday & Thursday, 10:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m. — JSOM 12.210

Instructor's Contact Information

Office Location: GR 3.314

Email Address: sonali.singh2@utdallas.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 2:00–4:30 p.m. by appointment only (In-person or MS Teams)

Schedule via Calendly: [Calendly Link](#)

Teaching Assistants

- **Mir Akhmadova, Musharraf**
Email: Musharraf.MirAkhmadova@UTDallas.edu
Office Hours: TBA
- **Poulami Sarker**
Email: pxs230116@utdallas.edu
Office Hours: Thursday, 1:00–3:00 p.m. — GR 2.324
- **Rafsanul Hoque**
Email: rxh240002@utdallas.edu
Office Hours: Friday, 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. — GR 2.324

Course Description

Survey of American national government, politics, and constitutional development. Students analyze governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and philosophical foundations. Emphasis is placed on critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, and the practical skills necessary for lifelong democratic participation.

Student Learning Objectives / Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how founding principles influence contemporary political structures and debates.
2. Analyze the evolving relationship between federal, state, and local governments.
3. Evaluate how branches of government check and balance power.
4. Examine civil rights and liberties protections in U.S. law.
5. Analyze public policies, political culture, and institutions empirically.
6. Identify and analyze political involvement mechanisms.
7. Apply theoretical frameworks to understand government and citizen involvement.
8. Propose practical solutions to governmental and societal challenges.

Required Textbooks and Materials

- **Interactive e-Textbook:** Brunell, Thomas, et al. *Introduction to American Government*. Tophat-monocle Corp., 2022.
- **Top Hat subscription**
 - Join Code: 900287
 - ISBN: 9781774127582
 - Registration: <https://app.tophat.com/register/student/>
- Use your UTD email to subscribe to Top Hat. Materials available exclusively via Top Hat.

Weekly Schedule

| Week | Date | Topic / Deadline |
|------|---------|--|
| 1 | June 3 | Course Introduction |
| | June 5 | Chapter 1: American National Government |
| 2 | June 10 | Chapter 2: The U.S. Constitution |
| | June 12 | Chapter 3: Federalism |
| 3 | June 17 | Chapter 4: The U.S. Congress |
| | June 19 | Chapter 5: The Presidency |
| 4 | June 24 | Chapter 6: The Federal Courts |
| | June 26 | Exam Review |
| 5 | July 1 | Exam 1 |
| | July 3 | Chapter 7: Civil Rights |
| 6 | July 8 | Chapter 8: Civil Liberties |
| | July 10 | Chapter 9: Political Parties |

| Week | Date | Topic / Deadline |
|------|-----------|---|
| | July 11 | SHORT ESSAY 1 DUE |
| 7 | July 15 | Chapter 10: Organized Interests |
| | July 17 | Chapter 11: Elections and Campaigns |
| 8 | July 22 | Chapter 12: Media, Information, and Politics |
| | July 24 | Chapter 13: Public Opinion |
| 9 | July 29 | Chapter 14: American Health Policy |
| | July 31 | Chapter 15: Foreign Policy |
| 10 | August 5 | Exam Review |
| | August 7 | Exam 2 |
| | August 8 | SHORT ESSAY 2 DUE |
| 11 | August 12 | Overflow Session (Catch-up / Review) |

Note: The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Grading Policy

Grades in this course will be determined based on the following components:

Course Grade Components:

| Component | Weight |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Attendance & Participation | 10% |
| Top Hat Homework | 30% |
| Exam 1 | 20% |
| Exam 2 | 20% |
| Short Essay 1 | 10% |
| Short Essay 2 | 10% |
| Total | 100% |

Grading Scale:

| Grade | Range |
|-------|----------|
| A+ | 97–100 |
| A | 94–96 |
| A- | 90–93 |
| B+ | 87–89 |
| B | 84–86 |
| B- | 80–83 |
| C+ | 77–79 |
| C | 74–76 |
| C- | 70–73 |
| D+ | 67–69 |
| D | 64–66 |
| D- | 60–63 |
| F | Below 60 |

Notes on Assignments:

- **Attendance & Participation:** Regular attendance and active class participation are essential. Attendance will be recorded, and participation assessed based on engagement in discussions and activities.
- **Top Hat Homework:** Regular assignments completed through the Top Hat platform, due weekly. No late submissions will be accepted.
- **Exams:** Exams will be conducted online through Top Hat, open-book/open-notes. Each exam is timed (90 minutes once started).
- **Short Essays:** Two essays (approximately 750 words each) that critically engage with course themes. Late essays incur penalties (10% first hour, 25% within 12 hours, 50% within 24 hours, 75% within 48 hours, and 100% thereafter).

Grades are not rounded and are final upon assignment. All deadlines and conditions stated are firm unless otherwise announced by the instructor.

Course Policies

Class Materials

The instructor may provide class materials available to registered students to supplement classroom experience. Materials may be downloaded but must not be reproduced or shared outside class, except for approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodations. Violation is a breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is mandatory. Irregular attendance invites scholastic difficulty. Active participation, including in-class activities and discussions, is required, and non-compliance breaches the Student Code of Conduct.

Class Participation

Active participation is crucial. Participation includes attending class, engaging in activities, and providing feedback. Consistent adherence to these guidelines is mandatory, and violations breach the Student Code of Conduct.

Class Recordings

Instructor-made course recordings will be accessible to registered students only. Unauthorized recording, distribution, or publication is prohibited except for approved accommodations. Consent is required for any other usage. Violations breach the Student Code of Conduct.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Cheating and plagiarism are prohibited. Review UT Dallas academic honesty policies at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>. Generative AI use in assignments must have explicit instructor permission, acknowledgment, and citations. Improper use of AI may result in severe penalties, including a grade of zero.

Disabilities Policy

UT Dallas accommodates students with documented disabilities. Contact AccessAbility Resource Center (ARC), AD 2.224, phone: 972-883-2098, email: studentaccess@utdallas.edu, with documentation to request accommodations.

Resources for Student Success

UTD provides resources such as Graduation Help Desk (graduationhelpdesk@utdallas.edu), Comet Cupboard, and Student Counselling Center (972-883-2575). Visit <https://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources> for more.

Further UT Dallas Policies

For detailed policies and procedures, visit <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

Syllabus details may change at the instructor's discretion.