

**University of Texas at Dallas**  
**GOVT 2302 Fall2013**  
**Syllabus**

Instructor: Dr. Brian Bearry

TA: TBA

Email:

Office: GR3.230 x4966

Office hrs: F 12:45-2:00 pm

Email: [brian.bearry@utdallas.edu](mailto:brian.bearry@utdallas.edu)

**Textbooks:**

Bearry, Brian. *American Government: Understanding the Democratic Republic*  
Kendall Hunt Publishing, ISBN: 978-1-4652-3098-0

Champagne, Anthony; Harpham, Edward. *Governing Texas: An Introduction to Texas Politics*  
W.W. Norton, ISBN: 0393920356

Hamilton, Madison, Jay *Federalist Papers*. These papers may be found at: <http://www.law.ou.edu/hist/federalist/>

U.S. Constitution: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.overview.html>

John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon (*Cato's Letter #15*, freedom of speech/press):

[http://www.constitution.org/cl/cato\\_015.htm](http://www.constitution.org/cl/cato_015.htm)

James Madison, *Memorial and Remonstrance*: <http://www.law.ou.edu/ushistory/remon.shtml>

Brutus *Essay #11* <http://www.thisnation.com/library/antifederalist/80.html>

**Prerequisites:** none

Alexander Hamilton argued during the Constitutional Convention that men are attached to their governments for what he considered five reasons: self-interest, opinion, habit, force of law or arms, and honor. With this in mind, what would you say is the cause of most Americans' attachment to their government? Is it merely opinion imprinted through education; is it simply habit; or is the American model of government, as the American founders believed, the best guarantor of freedom and liberty yet devised by human beings? Or, are the principles of the Constitution an eloquent deception so that the wealthy and "elite" can rule? What is *your* attachment? Do you belong to that class of citizens who Roger Sherman argued (when discussing the incompetence of the American people to elect Congress) should not be allowed to vote because they "lack for information and are constantly liable to be misled?" Or, do you know the basic underlying principles, institutions and functions of American government and politics? The purpose of this course is to discuss questions such as these and to give you a broad overview of the foundation and purpose of American and Texas governmental institutions and politics. The focus of this course will be twofold. The first part of this course should help you should gain an appreciation for American and Texas governmental institutions and law, in which we will explore the Congress, the Executive, the federal bureaucracy and the Judiciary (and their State of Texas equivalents.) During the second half of this course we will explore civil rights/civil liberties and public policy, to include social, economic and foreign policy. By the end of the semester, you should have the intellectual foundation to understand, analyze and discuss American and Texas government and politics as they pertain to contemporary American political life.

**Requirements, grading and participation:**

Each student will be required to follow current events (you may use whatever newspapers, magazines, internet sites—please ensure the source is considered "legitimate" as defined by common journalistic and political standards). You will see current events questions on the tests and quizzes. There will be four exams for this course. Thus, your final grade will be determined as follows:

Four exams	25% each
Total	100%

### ***Attendance, etc.***

Attendance is expected and required. Though there is no attendance policy for this section *per se*, attendance will be taken and *exemplary* attendance (i.e., one or two total absences) will be taken into consideration when determining final grades. Conversely, too many absences will result in the loss of a full-letter grade—what constitutes “too many” is determined by the instructor, and as a rule of thumb, a student arrives at that threshold at around 9 absences. Arriving late to class is a tardy and will be considered an absence. All final grades will be determined at the instructor’s discretion. When challenging a grade, it is the responsibility of the student to produce the requisite materials. The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus at any time.

Cell phones, pagers, palm pilots and any other electronic device that rings, beeps, clicks, whirrs, etc.; turn them off.—should a student need to be reminded more than once, a student will lose 10% of his final course grade. Two or more violations will result in judicial action. **NO LAPTOP COMPUTERS MAY BE USED IN THIS CLASS.**

**DO NOT BRING CELL PHONES INTO EXAMS. ANYONE CAUGHT WITH A CELL PHONE OR ANY OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE WILL IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE A 0 (F) FOR THAT EXAM.**

### **SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION**

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is offered for this 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](http://www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess/leaders/si.html).

The SI for this class is Ngoc Nguyen. He can be reached at: [ngoc.nguyen@utdallas.edu](mailto:ngoc.nguyen@utdallas.edu).

### **EXAM RULES**

Exams will be taken on-line and will be open for one hour on the syllabus exam date. The exam will be open for the 24hr period on that day. **YOU MUST ENSURE YOU HAVE A WORKING COMPUTER AND EXCELLENT INTERNET ACCESS.** Those who are unable to take or complete an exam due to the internet dropping-out, computer problems, etc., will have to take a 90 minute blue-book essay exam.

### ***Class rules and grades:***

1. email: You must put your *full name* on all email correspondence. Emails sent without a name will not be answered. **We will NOT send exam, quiz, assignment and final grades via email.** You may receive your grades when exams, etc., are returned during or after class, or you may drop by my or the TA’s office hours to receive your grades and other pertinent material.
3. In order for you to receive an excused absence, you **must** notify me or the Teaching Assistant **prior** to class; or you **must** have a documented medical emergency; otherwise, all absences and each tardy will be considered unexcused.
4. All grades are final (unless there is a mistake when determining a grade—this does happen). The time to be concerned with a grade is during the semester, not after. When challenging a grade, it is the responsibility of the student to produce the requisite materials. There is no extra credit given in this class.

### ***University Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:***

It is the policy of the University of Texas at Dallas that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Signing in other students on an attendance sheet is considered misrepresentation and is a fraud. Violations will result in immediate disciplinary action to the fullest extent of University policy. See the University catalog for a detailed explanation.

***Reading schedule and course outline:***

Aug 26—first day of class  
Aug 28—*Federalist Papers* #10, #51; (constitutional principles)  
Aug 30— *Federalist* #57, Articles I, U.S. Constitution; (Congress—House of Representatives)  
Sept 2—campus closed; Labor Day  
Sept 4—*Federalist* #62; (Congress—Senate)  
Sept 6—reading TBD (Congress)  
Sept 9—reading TBD (Congress)  
Sept 11—*Governing Texas*, ch 7  
Sept 13—*Federalist* #70; Article II, U.S. Constitution (presidency)  
Sept 16—*American Government*, 181-206 (presidency)  
Sept 18—*American Government*, 206-232 (presidency)  
Sept 20—*Governing Texas*, pp 213-226  
Sept 23—lecture; exam #1 review  
Sept 25—**EXAM #1**  
Sept 27—*American Government*, Ch 11 (federal bureaucracy)  
Sept 30—lecture; (federal bureaucracy)  
Oct 2—*Governing Texas*, pp 226-243  
Oct 4—*Federalist* #78; *Brutus* #11; Article 3, U.S. Constitution (federal judiciary)  
Oct 7—*American Government*, pp 247-259 (federal judiciary)  
Oct 9—*American Government*, pp 259-268 (federal judiciary)  
Oct 11—*Governing Texas*, ch 9  
Oct 14—**EXAM #2**  
Oct 16—James Madison, *Memorial and Remonstrance*; *Cato's Letter* #15 (introduction to civil liberties)  
Oct 18—Bill of Rights; (civil liberties)  
Oct 21—*American Government*, pp 53-69 (civil liberties and civil rights)  
Oct 23—*American Government*, pp 69-81 (civil liberties and civil rights)  
Oct 25—lecture; (civil liberties and civil rights)  
Oct 28—lecture; (civil liberties and civil rights)  
Oct 30—*Governing Texas*, ch 10  
Nov 1—lecture; (civil rights)  
Nov 4—exam #3 review  
Nov 6—**EXAM #3**  
Nov 8—lecture; (introduction to public policy)  
Nov 11—*American Government*, ch 13 (public policy)  
Nov 13—*American Government*, ch 14 (public policy)  
Nov 15—lecture; (capitalism and socialism)  
Nov 18—lecture; (economic policy)  
Nov 20—Reading Day  
Nov 22—campus closed; Fall Break  
Nov 25—*Governing Texas*, ch 11 (Texas economic policy)  
Nov 27—lecture; (social policy)  
Nov 29—lecture; (social policy)  
Dec 2—*Governing Texas*, ch 12 (Texas social policy)  
Dec 4—*Federalist Papers* #6 & 7 (introduction to U.S. foreign policy)  
Dec 6—lecture; (foreign policy)  
Dec 9---exam #4 review  
Dec 11—**Exam #4**

**News and editorial sources:**

Realclear Politics <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/index.html> Excellent source of political news and opinion.

Drudge Report <http://drudgereport.com/>

Political polling <http://www.pollster.com/>

Fox News <http://www.foxnews.com/> “Conservative” or right-leaning news site.

CNN <http://www.cnn.com/> “Liberal” or left-leaning news site.

Dallas Morning News <http://www.dallasnews.com/> State and local news.

Washington Examiner <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/> Political news with a conservative slant

The Politico <http://www.politico.com/> Political news with a liberal slant.

Powerline <http://www.powerlineblog.com/> Generally high-quality conservative/right political commentary.

Talking Points Memo <http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com/> Generally high-quality liberal/left political commentary.

Redstate <http://www.redstate.com/> Partisan conservative political commentary.

Daily Kos <http://www.dailykos.com/> Partisan liberal political commentary.