



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
**SAN ANTONIO**

Federal Government 24052 GOVT 2305 - 602  
Spring 2024

**General Information**

Course & Section #	GOVT 2305- 602
Term & Years	Spring 2024
Course Schedule	Online asynchronous
Course Location	Remote

**Instructor Information**

Name and Title	Dr. Daniel Braaten Associate Professor of Political Science
E-mail	dbraaten@tamusa.edu
Phone Number	210-784-2276
Office Hours	Tuesday, Thursday 10:30-12:30pm
Office Location	Central Academic Building, Office 347-C

**Course Overview**

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.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

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 check 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

**Required Course Materials**

*AmerGov: Long Story Short* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by Christine Barbour

<https://vantage.sagepub.com/BRAATE-5540/JoinCourse>

Course ID: BRAATE-5540

**Course Requirements**

Quizzes - There are also weekly quizzes in this course. You can take the quiz on the online text (see the link above) and they will be open on Monday at 6am and are due on Sunday at 11:59pm. Each quiz will cover the chapter for that week. Each quiz is worth 15 points and 1 point per

question. You have two attempts at the quiz and I will take the high score as your grade for that quiz (150 total points)

Writing Assignments – There are three writing assignments in this course. Each assignment will be open the week it is due on Monday and then due the Sunday of that week on Blackboard at 11:59pm. Each assignment will be approximately 2-4 pages in length and worth 50 points each (150 total points)

Chapter Data Assignment – Each chapter we go through has 1 short assignments embedded within dealing with analyzing data. You must complete each one for each chapter. They are completion grades so you simply must just do them to get credit. The assignments are due on Sunday at 11:59pm They are worth 5 points each (50 points).

Discussion Board Posts – Each Monday I will post a discussion question related to the weeks topic. Students are required to post at **least 2 responses**. One to the original post by me and one post to one of your fellow classmates post. These responses will be graded and are worth 10 points each. Your online participation will be evaluated on a quantity and quality basis. Your comments should advance the discussion, add value, and be relevant. Comments such as "I agree" and "ditto" are not considered value-added participation. Therefore, when you agree or disagree with a comment, please state and support your agreement or disagreement. The posts are due on Sundays at 11:59pm (200 points total)

### **Grade Breakdown**

Grade	Equivalent Points
A	90%-100%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	Below 60%

### **Attendance Policy**

This course is online and asynchronous so there is no attendance *per se*. However, the class is structured for students to progress through specific topics weekly. Although you have the entire week to complete the assignments you still need to complete them in that time frame. This is not a class you can put off until the end of the semester and try and race through to finish in the last few weeks. You must “attend” to the assignments weekly.

### **Make-Up Assignments**

I will not accept late assignments. However, during the last week of the semester, I have that time scheduled as “make up time.” This means students can make up ONE assignment that they missed throughout the semester.

### **Rules and Guidelines for (Blackboard) Discussion**

Use the following conventions when composing a discussion posting:

1. During a Discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the Discussions multiple times during the week.
2. If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use e-mail rather than the discussions
3. Use the appropriate Discussion Topic; don't post everything on the "Main" Discussion Topic.
4. Be patient. Don't expect an immediate response when you send a message.
5. A helpful hint for use with both discussions and e-mail --- Compose your message in your word-processing application in order to check spelling, punctuation, and grammar -- then copy and paste your composition into e-mail or the discussion. This also saves online time.
6. Everyone should feel free to participate in online discussions. Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
7. Respect each other's ideas, feelings and experience.
8. Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
9. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
10. "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or discussion topic when applicable.
11. Use the "reply" button rather than the "compose" button if you are replying to someone else's posting.
12. Do not use postings such as "I agree," "I don't know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the Discussions, and will not be counted for assignment credit.
13. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.

### **Penalties for Academic Dishonesty**

The faculty of the Department of Arts and Sciences expects students to conduct their academic work with integrity and honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in the failure of a course and dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion- the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentation of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the College. Students are expected to do their own course work. Cheating or plagiarism by an individual student will result in a grade of F on the particular paper or in the course.

The University's policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found in <http://www.tamusa.tamus.edu/undergraduate-catalog-2011.pdf>.

### Prohibited Conduct

All forms of prohibited conduct are outlined in the TAMU-SA student handbook. In addition, guidelines and procedures for handling instances of student misconduct are contained therein, which can be viewed on line at: <http://www.tamusa.tamus.edu/studenthandbook.html>

### Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Week	Topics Covered	Assigned Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1 (1/16-1/21)	Introduction	Syllabus	No Assignments Due
Week 2 (1/22-1/28)	Politics and Citizenship	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 1	Quiz #1 Discussion Post #1
Week 3 (1/29-2/4)	The United States' Founding	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 2	Quiz #2 Discussion Post #2
Week 4 (2/5-2/11)	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 3	Quiz #3 Discussion Post #3
Week 5 (2/12-2/18)	Civil Rights	<i>Letter From Birmingham Jail</i>	Writing Assignment #1
Week 6 (2/19-2/25)	The Legislative Branch	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 4	Quiz #4 Discussion Post #4
Week 7 (2/26-3/3)	The Executive Branch	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 5	Quiz #5 Discussion Post #5
Week 8 (3/4-3/10)	The Judicial Branch	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 6	Quiz #6 Discussion Post #6
Week 9 (3/11-3/17)	Spring Break	No Reading Assignments	No Assignments Due
Week 10 (3/18-3/24)	Political Parties Composition and Ideology	No Reading Assignments	Writing Assignment #2
Week 11 (3/25-3/31)	Parties and Interest Groups	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 7	Quiz #7 Discussion Post #7
Week 12 (4/1-4/7)	Public Opinion, Campaigns, and Elections	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 8	Quiz #8 Discussion Post #8
Week 13 (4/8-4/14)	Media and Political Communication	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 9	Quiz #9 Discussion Post #9
Week 14 (4/15-4/21)	Domestic and Foreign Policy	<i>AmerGov</i> Chpt 10	Quiz #10 Discussion Post #10
Week 15 (4/22-4/28)	Amending the Constitution	No Reading Assignment	Writing Assignment #3

Week 16 (4/29-5/7)	Make Up Time	No Reading Assignment	Make Up Assignments due
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### **Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

### **Academic Learning Center:**

The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

### **Counseling/Mental Health Resources:**

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance).

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services.

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). For more information and self-help resources, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

### **Emergency Preparedness:**

JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>

Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

### **Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance:**

According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

### **Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center:**

The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

### **Meeting Basic Needs:**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

### **Military Affairs:**

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

### **Religious Observances:**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to

make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

### **The Six-Drop Rule:**

Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

### **Statement of Harassment and Discrimination:**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu), 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

### **Pregnant/Parenting Students:**

Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will

provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu); 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

### **Students' Rights and Responsibilities:**

The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

#### *Students' Rights*

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

#### *Students' Responsibilities*

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, [Student Code of Conduct](#), on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.



We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

### **No Use of Generative AI Permitted**

GOVT 2305 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity

#### Important Dates:

January 16	First day of class
March 11-17	Spring Break – No classes
March 29	Study Day – No classes
April 13	Last day to drop with an automatic “W”
April 20	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University
April 29	Last day of classes
April 30	Study Day – No classes
May 1-7	Final exams

*The complete academic calendar is available online:*

<https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>

