



**Govt 2305: Federal Government**  
Course Syllabus: Spring 2017

*"Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide responsible, exemplary learning opportunities."*

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Office Hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
	by appt.	by appt.	by appt.	by appt.	by appt.	by appt.

*The information contained in this syllabus is subject to change without notice. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.*

**Course Description:** 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.

**Required Textbook(s):**

We The People, 11th Edition by Thomas E. Patterson

**Publisher: McGraw-Hill**

**ISBN Number: 0-07-776344-0 (Be sure it has the CONNECT code; no physical book needed)**

**Recommended Reading(s):** none

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

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 checks 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.

### **Lectures & Discussions:**

I have divided the semester into three units; each unit is broken down according to Chapters/Days. Begin every Lesson by opening the appropriate module on Blackboard. Then proceed through each Lesson by clicking on the arrows by the page number in the top right-hand corner of the screen.

### **Evaluation/Grading Policy:**

LearnSmart activity	10%
Pre tests	5%
Post tests	10%
Discussions	20%
EXAMS	30%
Assignments	25%
TOTAL	100%

### **Explanation of Grading Scale:**

A = The letter grade of A represents that, in all areas of evaluation, the student has demonstrated an excellent understanding of the course subject matter and an exemplary ability to effectively communicate it. The student has also excelled in the ability to educate himself/herself. Through all assignments and discussions, the student has consistently demonstrated accurate factual knowledge, analytical skill, interdisciplinary association, and practical application of the subject matter to daily living habits and problems.

B = The letter grade of B represents that, in some areas of evaluation, the student has demonstrated competency of the subject matter. The student could improve in one or all of the following areas: the accuracy of factual recollection, the aptitude to critically analyze a text, an awareness of the association of the subject matter, the communication and consistent application of his/her knowledge.

C = The letter grade of C represents that the student has demonstrated an average knowledge of the basic facts of the subject matter and has demonstrated a rudimentary ability to gain knowledge through his own study. The student requires further education and practice of critical thinking skills. The student also needs to strengthen his/her ability to explain the subject matter clearly and effectively.

D = The letter grade of D represents that the student requires further educational instruction in basic content, application, and communication of the subject matter. The student's factual knowledge and skills in communication and application are adequate for the attainment of a degree at NTCC, but further education is necessary for the mastery of the subject.

F = The letter grade of F represents that the student has not demonstrated an elementary level of knowledge of the subject matter. The student also has not demonstrated the skills or discipline necessary to learn the subject matter.

Grading and Evaluation: A student's grade will be based upon performance in five areas (including the tests):

1. CONNECT ASSIGNMENTS, Pretests, Posttests, Learnsmart activities and assignments: Each chapter has a number of assignments that can be accessed within the respective folder for that day. Your grade will be a composite on your performance for all of those assignments.

## 2. Discussion of Political Issues

The discussion is another opportunity to practice critical thinking. Do not merely give your opinion regarding the topic or the statements made in the discussion posts. Do not simply agree with a classmate's position. Critically analyze the article and the posts and explain your opinion by providing well-reasoned arguments for your position.

Each discussion post is due on a certain day. Late posts will not be accepted for credit. A student must contribute at least three substantive posts to each discussion forum. A substantive post consists of analytical questions, intelligent comments, illustrations of pertinent personal experiences, etc. Simple written agreement concerning an issue or repetition of ideas does not count as a substantive post. Please note the following points:

1. The first substantive post must be your original response to the forum topic, questions, and article (Minimum of 250 words).

2. The second and third substantive post must be responses to other students' posts. In order to receive full credit, all posts must be respectful in tone, thorough (at least 100 words in length), substantive, and written according to the rules of proper English grammar and spelling. No texting. Failure to abide by these rules will result in academic penalties. No late posts, for any reason, will be accepted for credit.

3. The discussion forum will be graded based on the tone, thoroughness, substantive nature, grammatical quality, and quantity of the student's posts. Each discussion forum will account for 10% of the student's final grade.

## 3. Tests (See below)

### **Tests/Exams:**

Each Unit will culminate with an online test. The questions may be multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, true/false or short answer. It is anticipated that each test will be 50 questions and students will have two hours to complete. Students need to have a thorough understanding of the material before taking the test. While you may use your textbook you will simply not have enough time to look for all the answers.

Students need to have reliable internet access as a test will not be restarted because of technical error. It is also recommended that students not wait until the very last moment to take a test as this can cause a great deal of traffic on the server and could slow things down or lead to technical malfunctions. Here are the scheduled test dates:

Test 1: Chapters 1-5: Due February 23

Test 2: Chapters 6-11: Due April 12

Test 3: Chapters 12-17: Due May 10

**Assignments:**

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date and time stated. No late work will be accepted for credit and no make-up work will be permitted except for medical emergencies, official college activities, or personal emergency situations. A medical emergency is defined as sickness requiring hospitalization or isolation. All medical emergencies must be verified by a doctor's note. An official college activity is any activity that the college has mandated for students. A personal emergency is limited to death of a relative or unforeseeable and immediate hardship. All excuses for make-up work must be verified by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to schedule make-up work due to a medical or personal emergency. The instructor may permit or deny make-up work.

**Govt 2305 - Assignment Due Dates Week 1 - February 2**

- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 1. Political Thinking and Political Culture
- Discussion #1 Week 2 - February 2
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 2. Constitutional Democracy Week 3 - February 9
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 3. Federalism: Forging a Nation Week 4 - February 16
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 4 Civil Liberties: Protecting Individual Rights
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 5. Equal Rights: Struggling Toward Fairness Week 5 - February 23
- TAKE TEST #1 – Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 6. Public Opinion and Political Socialization
- Discussion #2 Week 6 - March 1
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 7. Political Participation Week 7 - March 15
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 8. Political Parties: Candidates and Campaigns Week 8 - March 22
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 9. Interest Groups: Organizing for Influence Week 9 - March 29
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 10. The News Media: Communicating Political Images
- Discussion #3 Week 10 - April 5
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 11. Congress Week 11 - April 12
- TAKE TEST #2 = Chapters 6-11
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 12. The Presidency: Leading the Nation Week 12 - April 19
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 13. The Federal Bureaucracy
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 14. The Federal Judicial System: Applying the Law Week 13 - April 26
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 15. Economic and Environmental Policy
- Discussion #4 Week 14 - April 26
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 16. Welfare and Education Policy Week 15 - May 3
- All Assignments in Folder: Chapter 17. Foreign Policy: Protecting the American Way Week 16 - May 10
- TAKE TEST #3 – Chapters 12-17

## **Student Responsibilities/Expectations:**

### **Assignment Requirements:**

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date and time stated in the Lectures and Discussion Schedule and Syllabus. Analytical Questions, Discussion Forum posts, Quizzes, the Special Assignment, and the Final Exam are due by 11:59 pm on their scheduled date. No late work will be accepted for credit and no make-up work will be permitted except for medical emergencies, official college activities, or personal emergency situations. A medical emergency is defined as sickness requiring hospitalization or isolation. All medical emergencies must be verified by a doctor's note. An official college activity is any activity that the college has mandated for students. A personal emergency is limited to death of a relative or unforeseeable and immediate hardship. All excuses for make-up work must be verified by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to schedule make-up work due to a medical or personal emergency. The instructor may permit or deny make-up work.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Since this course is an online course, the attendance policy is the following: a student must log in at least once a week (7 day period) for the duration of the course. If a student does not sign in for a week (7 day period), the instructor may begin drop procedures for a student. The instructor will keep records of attendance. If the attendance policy is broken, the instructor will examine the reasons for the student's absences, the student's work in the class, and determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in the class. If the student breaks the attendance policy, the instructor may begin withdrawal procedures (up to the college's withdrawal deadline) or may fail the student for the course (after the college's withdrawal deadline has passed).

### **Email and Blackboard Policy:**

Students are expected to check daily the campus email account and the course Blackboard for any course changes, announcements, and assignments. Failure to check regularly the campus email and the course Blackboard may result in missed work and academic penalties. To access the course website on Blackboard, follow these steps:

1. Log on to the NTCC My Eagle Portal at [mycampus.ntcc.edu](http://mycampus.ntcc.edu).
2. Your portal Login name is your first name initial + your last name + last 3 digits of your social security number. The Password is your date of birth in an 8 digit format mmddyyyy.
3. Under the "Launch Pad" click on the Blackboard Icon. It looks like this:
4. After logging in, under the My Courses list, select the link associated with this class.
5. Blackboard Mail is found on the left-hand side of the course home page.

### **NTCC Academic Honesty Statement:**

"Students are expected to complete course work in an honest manner, using their intellects and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty policy stated in the Student Handbook."

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is defined as using or imitating another's words, ideas, or work in general without proper citation of that source. Plagiarism is easy to commit and also easy to catch. Although students generally plagiarize due to academic laziness or naïveté, plagiarism is always inexcusable. Instances of plagiarism will be dealt with on an individual basis. The instructor may penalize the student for the specific assignment by assigning a grade of zero, or he may fail the student for the entire course. The discipline regarding plagiarism is up to the discretion of the instructor.

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**Academic Ethics**

The college expects all students to engage in academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuit. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. Refer to the student handbook for more information on this subject.

**ADA Statement:**

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to arrange an appointment with a College counselor to obtain a Request for Accommodations form. For more information, please refer to the NTCC Catalog or Student Handbook.

**Family Educational Rights And Privacy Act (FERPA):**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student's name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.