

**Government of the United States
POLS 2311
The University of Texas at Arlington
Department of Political Science
Fall 2010**

Professor: Daniel Sledge

Meeting Time: 5.30pm Tuesday/Thursday

Class Location: 116 UH

Office: 408 UH

Email Address: dsledge@uta.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1.30pm-2.30pm and by appointment.

Description of Course Content: This course offers an introduction and broad overview of the constitution and government of the United States. It deals with the organization, procedures, and duties of the branches of the government.

Student Learning Outcomes: Student test results should demonstrate that they understand core features of American Government.

Requirements: Students are expected to complete class readings during the assigned weeks.

Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials: This class has one required textbook: *American Government: Power and Purpose, Eleventh Edition*, by Lowi, Ginsberg, Shepsle, and Ansolabehere. All course readings will come from this book.

Descriptions of major assignments and examinations with due dates: Grading in this class will be based on three examinations. The first two examinations will take place during class on Tuesday, October 12th and on Tuesday, November 9th. The Final Exam will be cumulative, and will be held during the final exam week.

Grading Policy:

F: Below 60%

D: 60-70

C-: 70-72, C: 73-76, C+: 77-79

B-: 80-82, B: 83-86, B+: 87-89

A-: 90-92, A: 93-98, A+: 99-100%

Cell Phones: The use of cell phones, for whatever purpose, is both disruptive and disrespectful. Please silence the ringer on your phone

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Academic Integrity: I take academic integrity seriously and will report any violations that I become aware of. It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. According to the UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, "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."

Student Support Services Available: The University of Texas at Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to resources for any reason, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107 or visit www.uta.edu/resources for more information.

Electronic Communication Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University "MavMail" address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system. All students are

assigned a MavMail account. ***Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly.*** Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/>. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

To obtain your NetID or for logon assistance, visit <https://webapps.uta.edu/oit/selfservice/>. If you are unable to resolve your issue from the Self-Service website, contact the Helpdesk at helpdesk@uta.edu.

Part I: Foundations of Government in the United States

Week 1: Course Introduction

Thursday, August 26: No required reading

Week 2: The Declaration of Independence, the Revolutionary War, and the Articles of Confederation

Tuesday, August 31 and Thursday, September 2: Chapter 2, “Constructing a Government,” pgs. 30-43 in *American Government: Power and Purpose*. “The Declaration of Independence” and “The Articles of Confederation” in *American Government: Power and Purpose*, Appendix starting pg. A3.

Week 3: The Constitution, Federalism, and the Separation of Powers

Tuesday, September 7 and Thursday, September 9: Chapter 2, pgs. 43-65; Chapter 3, pgs. 66-97; “The Constitution of the United States,” Appendix starting page A13.

Week 4: The Bill of Rights and Civil Rights

Tuesday, September 14 and Thursday, September 16: pgs. 98-163; “Amendments to the Constitution,” starting page A24.

Part II: Institutions

Week 5: The Congress

Tuesday, September 21 and Thursday, September 23: pgs. 166-221

Week 6: The President

Tuesday, September 28 and Thursday, September 30: pgs. 222-271

Week 7: The Courts

Tuesday, October 5 and Thursday, October 7: pgs. 310-357

Week 8: Exam 1, beginning of Part III: Politics

Tuesday, October 12: **Exam 1; in class.**

Thursday, October 14: no reading

Week 9: Elections

Tuesday, October 19 and Thursday, October 21: pgs. 408-467

Week 10: Political Parties

Tuesday, October 26 and Thursday, October 28: pgs. 468-511

Week 11: Interest Groups and the Media

Tuesday, November 2 (Election Day) and Thursday, November 4: pgs. 512-549

Week 12: Exam 2 and beginning of Part IV: Governance

Tuesday, November 9: **Exam 2; in class**

Thursday, November 11: no reading

Week 13: Economic Policy

Tuesday, November 16 and Thursday, November 18: pgs. 586-633

Week 14: Social Policy

Tuesday, November 23: pgs. 634-667

Thursday, November 25: Thanksgiving

Week 15: Foreign Policy

Tuesday, November 30 and Thursday, December 2: pgs. 668-706

Week 16: Conclusion

Tuesday, December 7 and Thursday, December 9: no reading, review of important concepts.