

EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

El Paso, Texas

GOVT 2305 — American Government and Politics CRN: TBA

Fall 2008

Syllabus Part I

I. Course Number and Instructor Information.

The course is taught by Chief Justice Richard Barajas (Ret.), Director, Center for Advanced Studies, 1309 N. Stanton Street, El Paso, Texas 79902. Voice: (915) 532-3238; Fax: (915) 533-8248; E-mail: rbarajas71@cathedral-elpaso.org. Office hours are 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at the Cathedral Center for Advanced Studies, or by appointment and/or e-mail.

This course in American Government and Politics, an introduction to the American political process, is a three-hour course at the El Paso Community College. It has been designated as GOVT 2305 in the El Paso Community College course catalog. It meets during first period in Room 205, but may meet in another designated location at your professor's discretion. The course is designed to teach the student how American government is structured and how it operates. Emphasis is placed on the United States Constitution, the respective branches of government and their bureaucracies, the relationships between the institutions of governments, the media, political parties, and interest groups. In addition, critical analysis of federalism, civil rights and civil liberties, social justice and social policy, the environment, education, and housing will be made. Finally, the study of linkage institutions and their impact on the development of public policy and the policy agenda will be studied. Students are expected to stay informed about current events by reading the online editions of either the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*. The course is in compliance with rules and regulations as promulgated by the El Paso Community College and its accrediting agencies.

II. Text and Instructional Materials:

Textbook: Ginsberg, Lowi & Weir, *We the People, An Introduction to American Politics*, 6th ed. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company 2002. ISBN 978-0-393-92852-5.

Readings: Woll, Peter, *American Government, Readings and Cases*, 17th ed, New York, NY; HarperCollins College Publishers, 2004.

Computer applications, in particular Microsoft PowerPoint®, Microsoft Access®, Microsoft Excel®, Adobe Acrobat®.

Use of the Internet, as assigned

III. Course Requirements.

GRADING SCALE: For purposes of both your final grade will be determined by applying the EPCC Standard Grading Scale as follows:

- A - 90-100%
- B - 80-89%
- C - 70-79%
- D - 60-69%
- F - 59% and below

FINAL GRADE: The final grade you receive for this course will be derived and determined using the following criteria:

Daily Grade, to include but not be limited to quizzes, analysis of political cartoons and assigned collateral materials, group projects and Internet Assignments (30%);
Class Participation (10%);
Chapter Tests (30%);
Final Examination (30%).

TOTAL: 100%

MAKE-UP TESTS/QUIZZES: Make-up work for scheduled tests/quizzes will be allowed only for excused or requested absences. You will be unable to make up unscheduled pop-quizzes. It is YOUR responsibility to contact your professor for all make-up tests/quizzes. Absent prior approval, your failure to make up any assigned tests/quizzes or homework by the second day back to school will result in a failing grade for that work. Make-up tests/quizzes will be given in the classroom at 7:35 am, unless otherwise notified. Make-up work will not be permitted for an unexcused absence. Consequently, an "F" or a failing grade of "0" will be recorded for any work for which a grade was given during the unexcused absence.

TARDY ASSIGNMENTS: Scheduled assignments not accounted for by the designated time will result in a reduction of no more than 20% of the maximum grade allowed for that particular assignment, exclusive of the merit of the assignment. Tardy assignments, with the above reduction, will be accepted up to and including the day on which the succeeding chapter lecture commences. Scheduled assignments which are tardy as a result of an excused absence must be accounted for on the day of your return. Total failure to account for a tardy scheduled assignment will result in an "F" or a failing grade of "0" for that particular assignment. It is YOUR responsibility to insure that all assignments have been submitted.

IV. Instructor's Policies.

IN GENERAL. I take the responsibility to instruct each of you seriously. You will be permitted to leave the classroom only in the event of an emergency. Independent of the above guidelines, each student is expected to comply with the various provisions and code of conduct as found in the student catalog for the El Paso Community College.

ACADEMIC HONESTY. This is a college course. Academic honesty is highly valued at the El Paso Community College. A student must always submit work that represents his or her original works or ideas. If any words or ideas are used, that do not represent the student's original work or ideas, the student must cite all relevant sources. The student should also make clear the extent to which such sources were used. Words or ideas that require citations include, but are not limited to, all hardcopy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originate from an identifiable source. You are required to read, understand, and follow the Academic Integrity Code at all times.

DISABILITY. Each student has been prescreened for recognized disabilities and reasonable accommodations have been made. To the extent that additional accommodations to aid in meeting the academic requirements of the El Paso Community College may be necessary, all students claiming any disability should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities and submit written documentation to the instructor prior to the commencement of the second week of the semester.

ATTENDANCE: You are required to be present in class and at your desk, each scheduled class day prior to the second bell of your class period. You are required to notify your instructor before all anticipated class absences, whether for academic or athletic trips, or illness.

TARDINESS. Punctuality is demanded, is expected, and is your responsibility. Tardiness seriously interferes with class progress and is clearly a disturbance for the instructor as well as the class. As a result, you are expected to be in the classroom and at your desk when the second, i.e., the tardy bell rings. It is my custom to direct that the doors to the classroom be closed upon the ringing of the second bell; consequently, your failure to be in class when the "tardy" bell rings will result in a detention slip being issued. In my world, court starts on time, and ends on time. Class will also.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. Your rights and status as a student is defined and explained by specific policies in the El Paso Community College Catalog. You are required to read, understand, and follow the El Paso Community College Student Code of Conduct at all times.

El Paso Community College
Syllabus
Part II
Official Course Description

SUBJECT AREA	<u>Government</u>
COURSE RUBRIC AND NUMBER	<u>GOVT 2305</u>
COURSE TITLE	<u>American Government and Politics</u>
COURSE CREDIT HOURS	<u>3 3 : 0</u> Credits Lec Lab

I. Catalog Description

Surveys the basic concepts of the American national government, the theory of democracy, the structure and function of political institutions, and contemporary issues and policies. Emphasizes the U.S. Constitution. **Prerequisite: READ 0309 or by placement exam. (3:0).**

II. Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, The American Government student will be able to:

- A. Understanding the importance of reading for background information, preparing for class using out-of-class time and listening for pertinent class material as presented by the instructor.
- B. Express verbally or in writing an understanding of the vocabulary, political concepts and political values as pertains to the American political system.
- C. Express verbally or in writing an understanding of the intellectual and political foundations of the American federal system.
- D. Express verbally or in writing an understanding of the major components and structure of the American governmental system (executive, legislative and judiciary) and describe the processes which are used to govern.
- E. Express verbally and in writing an understanding of the political dynamics of parties, interest groups and the bureaucracy and the interaction of those institutions with the American governmental structure.
- F. Express verbally or in writing an understanding of the political policies and outcomes based on the Bill of Rights, civil law, foreign and domestic policy, monetary policies, and public opinion.

III. Evaluation

Students may be evaluated using various techniques not limited to but may include testing and examinations, research papers, community projects, extra credit and other written and electronic assignments.

American Government has a College Level Examination Program (CLEP) challenge exam available for those students who wish to gain credit through examination. Check with an academic Counselor to sign up for this exam.

- A. Grading will follow current EPCC catalog standards. The assignment of letter grades to numerical or percentage scores is to be determined by the Instructor and is noted in Part I of the Syllabus.

Grade scale:

A = Excellent	I = Incomplete (See current college catalog)
B = Above Average	W = Withdrew or withdrawn (See current college catalog)
C = Average	
D = Below average	
F = Failing	

- B. Attendance Policy: Unless noted otherwise by the Instructor (Syllabus, Part I), the current college catalog policy on Attendance and Course Pursuit will apply to this course.

IV. Disability Statement (American with/Disabilities Act [ADA])

EPCC offers a variety of services to persons with documented sensory, mental, physical, or temporary disabling conditions to promote success in classes. If you have a disability and believe you may need services, you are encouraged to contact the Center for Students with Disabilities to discuss your needs with a counselor. All discussions and documentation are kept confidential. Offices located: VV Rm C-112 (831-2426); TM Rm 1400 (831-5808); RG Rm B-201 (831-4198); NWC Rm M-54 (831-8815); and MDP Rm A-125 (831-7024)

V. 6 Drop Rule

Students who began attending Texas public institutions of higher education for the first time during the Fall 2007 semester or later are subject to a 6-Drop limit for all undergraduate classes. Developmental, ESL, Dual Credit and Early College High School classes are exempt from this rule. All students should consult with their instructor before dropping a class. Academic assistance is available. Students are encouraged to see Counseling Services if dropping because exemptions may apply. Refer to the EPCC catalog and website for additional information.

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El Paso, Texas

GOVT 2305 — American Government and Politics
CRNs: 32-36, 32257

Summer 2008, Session I Calendar

May (Week 1)	28	Orientation
	29	Lecture: Chapter 1
	30	Chapter Test: Chapter 1 Lecture: Chapter 2
	31	Lecture: Chapter 2
June (Week 1)	2	Lecture: Chapter 2 Chapter Test: Chapter 2
	3	Lecture: Chapter 3
	4	Lecture: Chapter 3
	5	Lecture: Chapter 3 Chapter Test: Chapter 3
	6	Lecture: Chapter 4
June (Week 2)	9	Lecture: Chapter 4
	10	Lecture: Chapter 4 Chapter Test: Chapter 4
	11	Lecture: Chapter 5
	12	Lecture: Chapter 5
	13	Lecture: Chapter 5 Chapter Test: Chapter 5
June (Week 3)	16	Lecture: Chapters 6, 7
	17	Lecture: Chapters 6, 7
	18	Lecture: Chapters 6, 7 Chapter Test: Chapters 6, 7
	19	Chapters 9, 10, 11
	20	Chapters 9, 10, 11

June (Week 4)	23	Lecture: Chapters 9, 10, 11 Chapter Test: Chapters 9, 10, 11
	24	Chapters 12, 13, 15
	25	Chapters 12, 13, 15
	26	Chapters 12, 13, 15
	27	Final Exam