

Early College at Montcalm Community College

Class Syllabus

Survey of United State Government

Instructor: Mr. Gage

- 989-328-2111 Ext. 322
- Dean.gage@montcalm.edu
- Office: Morford 214

Textbooks:

- The Early College Government Text:

https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_american-government-and-politics-in-the-information-age/index.html

Also Required:

- Weekly readings and reflection on other materials such as:
 - American Heritage Publication
 - Time Magazine
 - Printed article from the instructor
 - News report
 - Video

Course Description:

This course is an extensive study of the civics, politics, and the inner workings of the United States government. This course intends to introduce you to your government and help you become better acquainted with its workings. Historical and philosophical underpinnings are examined throughout the course. This is an overview of the structures, processes, and interactions involved in decision making at the national, state, and local levels in this republic.

Course Goals/Competencies

1. Explain the origins, and the purpose of government.
2. Evaluate what power is and how it relates to politics.
3. Appraise the historical and philosophical underpinnings of the American Constitution.
4. Identify the basic principles of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.
5. Evaluate the concept of Federalism.
6. Characterize the structure and function of the federal government, including details particular to each branch.

7. Analyze the American campaign and the election process.
8. Explain the key events and concepts in the development and functioning of the two party system.
9. Analyze the historical and contemporary struggles for civil liberties and civil rights.

Course Outcomes

- Students will increase their knowledge of the structure and functioning of the American Political System.
- Students will increase written communication skills.
- Students will increase oral communication skills.
- Students will become better readers and critical thinkers.
- Students will increase their interpersonal, organizational, and time management skills.

Course Requirements:

- Lectures, assigned readings, and **note taking** are the primary learning tools.
- Many small group works and in-class activities and dynamics related to issues and current events.
- One main overarching group project.
- Students are expected to be aware, keep on the news, and do independent research on current political issues/events.
- Frequent regular testing (both objective and essay) is used to evaluate learning.
- Weekly homework assures student preparation.
- Frequent research and essay projects will foster increased written communication skills.

Graded Activities:

- Ten Article reflections @ 20 points each.
- Nine Section exams @ 50 points each.
- Two research essay projects @ 30 points each.
- Several group work activities, three of which will be graded @ 50 points each.
- Homework assignment as assigned
- One semester group project @ 100 points.
- One Inclusive/Comprehensive essay Final Exam @ 100 points

Things to Remember:

- I expect classroom manners: respect yourself, your fellow classmates, and your instructor.
- Cell phone texting during class is extremely rude and causes students to miss valuable information. **You will not move forward to full college status if seen texting in class!**

- I expect folks to attend class regularly, be attentive, participate in discussion, and ask questions.
- Please see the handbook for attendance requirements.
- Students will be expected to be familiar with Canvas. A fair share of work will be required to be turned in there.
- I expect to be promptly notified of anticipated absences by phone or email.
- Check your email daily!!!!!!!
- I do not except late assignments.
- You are allowed re-submits for all essay work. That means you have to turn the first one in.
- Make up tests and work is at my discretion and convenience. Make up tests will generally be taken at the student services in Doser. This has to be scheduled by you!! You would have one week from the absence to make up a test.
- Cheating, copying, and plagiarism are not tolerated.
- Students are expected to complete all assignments.

Course Calendar

Week Of	Week	Topic	Readings
29 Aug	1	Introduction, review Syllabus Soft skills, Section 1 (Principles of Government). Pre-Test	
5 Sept	2	Soft skills, Sec. 1 continued, Section 1 exam	
12 Sept	3	Soft skills, Section 2 (History of our Constitution, Structure of our government). Group work, Article reflection 1	Chapter 1 of text Article reading
19 Sept	4	Soft skills, Section 2 continued, Section 2 exam, Research Essay Project 1 Topic.	
26 Sept	5	Soft skills, Section 3 (Federalism), Article/Video reflection 2, Group work, Section 3 exam	Chapter 2 of text In class video
3 Oct	6	Section 4 (Political Culture), Group work, Section 4 exam, Article reflection 3	Chapter 3 of text
10 Oct	7	Section 5 (Legislative Branch) Article reflection 4	Chapter 10 of text Article reading
17 Oct	8	Section 5 continued, Group work, Section 5 exam	
24 Oct	9	Section 6 (Executive Branch), Group work, Article reflection 5	Chapter 11 of text Article reading
31 Oct	10	Section 6 continued, Group work, Section 6 exam, Article reflection 6, Research Essay Project 2 Topic	Article reading
7 Nov	11	Section 7 (Judicial Branch) Group work	Chapter 13 of text
14 Nov	12	Section 7 Continued, Group work, Section 7 exam, Article reflection 7	Article reading
21 Nov	13	Section 8 (Political parties), Guest speaker, Group work	Chapter 7 of text
28 Nov	14	Section 8 continued, Group work, Section 8 exam, Article reflection 8	
5 Dec	15	Section 9 (Civil Liberties, Civil Rights) , Section 9 exam, Group work, Article reflection 9	Chapter 14 and 15 Article reading
12 Dec	16	Final Group project Presentations, Essay Final Exam, Article reflection 10	Article reading

Assignment Calendar

Assignment	Due Date
Section 1 exam	Friday 9/9/16
Article reflection 1	Friday 9/16/16
Graded Group Presentation 1	Tuesday 9/20/16
Section 2 exam	Friday 9/23/16
Article/video reflection 2, Section 3 exam	Friday 9/30/16
Research Essay Project 1	Monday 10/3/16
Article reflection 3, Section 4 exam	Friday 10/7/16
Graded Group Presentation 2	Tuesday 10/11/16
Article reflection 4	Friday 10/14/16
Section 5 exam	Friday 10/21/16
Article reflection 5	Friday 10/28/16
Article reflection 6, Section 6 exam	Friday 11/4/16
Research Essay Project 2	Monday 11/14/16
Graded Group Presentation 3	11/15/16
Article reflection 7, Section 7 exam	Friday 11/18/16
Article reflection 8, Section 8 exam	Friday 12/2/16
Article reflection 9, Section 9 exam	Friday 12/9/16
Final Group Project Presentations	Monday 12/12/16
Final Group Project Presentations	Tuesday 12/13/16
Essay Final Exam, Article reflection 10	Friday 12/16/16