

**DOUGLAS D. JONES**

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**Campus Office Hours: MW 9:15-9:45am, 11-11:30am, 12:45 -1:15pm**

**Online Office Hours: MTW 6:00 - 7:00pm**

**BRAZOSPORT COLLEGE**

**GOVT 2305 Federal Govt.**

**Section 01 - 3 credit hours**

**MW 9:45-11:00am**

**Spring 2024**

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Origin and development of the United States 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.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES (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 checks and balances between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
4. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
5. Analyze the election process, including the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
6. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

## REQUIRED BOOK

**The textbook for this class is available for free online in web view and downloadable PDF files.** If you prefer, you can also get a print version at a low cost from the BC Bookstore (on campus or online at <http://www.brazosport.edu/bookstore>) or other provider.

OpenStax. 2021. *American Government*. ISBN: 978-1-951693-38-1 (digital). ISBN: 978-1-711493-95-4 (paperback).

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State textbook policy - "A student of this institution is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer."

## COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Students can access course material by clicking on the Virtual Campus button at the bottom of the BC webpage or type <https://online.brazosport.edu> into your internet web browser. User name is first initial of first name, last name, and last 4 digits of your Student ID number (ex: jdoe1234). Initial password is lowercase letters bc followed by your six digit PIN number (ex: bc123456). (Your PIN number is the number issued by the registrar that you use to register online through myBC.) Once logged into the Virtual Campus, the course is listed as GOVT2305-DJONES-1FTF.

Students who have difficulty logging in for the first time or have other technical issues such as browser problems can contact the Brazosport College Information Technology Center by emailing [helpdesk@brazosport.edu](mailto:helpdesk@brazosport.edu) or by phoning the IT Helpdesk at 979-230-3266.

## QUIZZES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Regular quizzes are open-note assignments in the Virtual Campus consisting of 10 (mostly multiple-choice with an occasional true-false) questions worth one point each. There is an enforced one hour time limit for completing each quiz so you should have plenty of time to be able to look up information as needed. Quizzes are set to allow a second attempt on missed questions. ***The first attempt will be used for grade purposes.*** Second attempt is solely to allow you to see questions that were missed. *Late work will receive reduced credit.*

## EXAMINATIONS

There will be four in-class exams and an optional comprehensive in-class final exam. If a student takes five exams, the four highest scores will be used in calculating course grade. The four regular exams are closed-note assignments consisting of 50 (mostly multiple-choice with a few true-false) questions worth two points each plus 10 bonus current event (multiple-choice) questions worth one point each. Each exam module will have a PowerPoint presentation containing current political and economic events located next to the study guide at the bottom of the module. The optional final is a closed-note exam consisting of 100 (mostly multiple-choice with a few true-false) questions worth one point each plus 10 bonus current event (multiple-choice) questions worth one point each.

## DISCUSSION

One of the features of the Virtual Campus is the ability to share perspectives through use of the discussions tool. There will be eight discussions to complete (two for each course module). Discussions are generally open-ended assignments to consider a topic most have probably not spent a lot of time thinking about. Your response does not need to be a lengthy writing exercise but it does need to demonstrate your THOUGHTFUL reflection on the topic. Some discussions are about an article or video posted in the Virtual Campus. For those discussions, you definitely need to address the information presented in the article/video before giving your personal thoughts on the topic. Demonstrate conclusively that you did in fact read the article/watch the video you are analyzing. **Use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) products for discussions will result in a zero for that discussion.** *Late work will receive reduced credit.*

*Course participants should respond to one another with respect at all times. Differing viewpoints are likely to be expressed and are welcome as long as each posting is stated in appropriate, respectful language. If you disagree with an idea stated in a classmate's posting, your response should focus on the substance of the idea without attacking or insulting the person who expressed the thought you take issue with. In short, we should be able to disagree without being disagreeable.*

## GRAMMAR

This is an academic course at an institution of higher education. Ensure that all written course communications (including email) are grammatically correct. This includes but is not limited to capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure and spelling. Do not write discussions in a style like you are texting a friend. You should be communicating with your instructor and fellow classmates in a professional manner. **Discussions should be approached as if you are writing a document for management at work.**

## GRADING

All course assignments must be turned in on or before the due date in order to receive full credit. Course grades will be determined as follows:

Exam 1	15 %
Exam 2	15 %
Exam 3	15 %
Exam 4	15 %
Virtual Campus Quizzes	15 %
Virtual Campus Discussions	10 %
Active Class Participation	15 %

**Note: If a student stops attending/participating in the course, he/she will NOT be administratively withdrawn by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the withdrawal process before the college deadline for such action.**

Grade scale is as follows:

90.0 – 100	A	70.0 – 79.9	C
80.0 – 89.9	B	60.0 – 69.9	D
		< 60	F

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Honesty is the cornerstone of academic integrity of any educational institution. It is the foundation upon which the student builds personal integrity and establishes a standard of personal behavior. Brazosport College assumes that students eligible to perform on the college level are familiar with the ordinary rules governing proper conduct including academic honesty. The principle of academic honesty is that all work presented by you is yours alone. Academic dishonesty is a violation of the

Brazosport College Standards of Student Conduct and is punishable as prescribed by Board of Regents policies. Academic dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to, cheating on a test or assignment, plagiarism and collusion. **Students guilty of scholastic dishonesty shall receive a grade of zero for that course component and could possibly be subject to dismissal from the class with a failing grade by the Dean of Student Services.** The full policy regarding the Student Code of Conduct can be found in the BC Student Guide. This is available online at <http://www.brazosport.edu>.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Student responsibilities include:

- Reading and understanding the course syllabus
- Upholding the Brazosport College Student Code of Conduct
- Attending class
- Completing assignments
- Communicating with the instructor

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Brazosport College is committed to providing equal education opportunities to every student. BC offers services for individuals with special needs and capabilities including counseling, tutoring, equipment, and software to assist students with special needs. For student to receive any accommodation, documentation must be completed in the Office of Disability Services. Please contact the Special Populations Counselor at 979-230-3236 for further information.

## MENTAL HEALTH

To help you on your educational pathway, Brazosport College provides all students with access to TimelyCare. If you're stressed, challenged, or need help, download the TimelyCare app. It's your free virtual health and well-being service platform, available 24/7, 365 days of the year. Search "TimelyCare" in your app store. Then, register with your student email to access your health care services.

## TITLE IX STATEMENT

Brazosport College faculty and staff are committed to supporting students and upholding the College District's non-discrimination policy. Under Title IX and Brazosport College's policy FFDA (Local), discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression is prohibited. If students experience an incident of discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct, they are encouraged to report it.

If a faculty or staff member "is informed of a student's pregnancy or related condition" by the student or "a person who has a legal right to act on behalf of the student," the employee must "promptly" tell the student or representative how to notify the Title IX Coordinator of the student's pregnancy or

related conditions and must provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information to the student or representative, unless the employee "reasonably believes" the Title IX Coordinator already knows.

While students may talk to a faculty or staff member at BC, please understand that they are "Responsible Employees" and must report what is told to them to college officials. Students can also contact the Title IX Coordinators directly by using the contact information below. Additional information is found on the Sexual Misconduct webpage at [www.brazosport.edu/sexualmisconduct](http://www.brazosport.edu/sexualmisconduct).

Alex Crouse, Director of Student Life and Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
979-230-3355; [alex.crouse@brazosport.edu](mailto:alex.crouse@brazosport.edu)

Brad McGonagle, Vice President, HR and Title IX Coordinator  
979-230-3459; [brad.mcgonagle@brazosport.edu](mailto:brad.mcgonagle@brazosport.edu)

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I want every student to succeed in learning course material so please contact me if you are having difficulty with the work in this course.

### COURSE OUTLINE

#### Module 1

Introduction to Politics, Government, and American Society

Biggest share of whites in U.S. are Boomers, but for minority groups it's Millennials or younger  
Asian Americans are the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the U.S.

The Constitution

chapter 2

Chapter 02 - The Constitution and Its Origins

chapter 2

The math behind the push to abolish the Electoral College

Federalism

chapter 3

Chapter 03 - American Federalism

chapter 3

Links provided to websites containing verbatim transcriptions of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and all ratified amendments (reference resource)

Discussion: Introductions – due by January 22

Discussion: U.S. Constitution – due by February 1

open-note Quiz: Intro to Politics, Govt. and Amer. Society – available January 18-20

open-note Quiz: Constitutional Convention – available January 25-27

open-note Quiz: Constitution – available January 25-27

open-note Quiz: Federalism – available February 1-3

**Exam 1 – Wednesday, Feb 7**

## Module 2

Public Opinion	chapter 6
Chapter 06 - The Politics of Public Opinion	chapter 6
How to Read Polls	
Voting and Elections	chapter 7
Chapter 07 - Voting and Elections	chapter 7
10 New Rules of American Politics	
Trump paid me to find voter fraud. Then he lied after I found 2020 election wasn't stolen.	
Far too little fraud to tip election to Trump	
Cost of Voting in the American States: 2020	
Trump's data-hungry, invasive app is a voter surveillance tool of extraordinary power	
Your phone and TV are tracking you, and political campaigns are listening in	
Facebook Already Knows Who You're Voting For	
Political Parties	chapter 9
Chapter 09 - Political Parties	chapter 9
Interest Groups	chapter 10
Chapter 10 - Interest Groups and Lobbying	chapter 10
Interest groups & lobbying – Khan Academy video	

Discussion: Process of Voting – due by February 16

Discussion: Facebook Already Knows Who You're Voting For – due by February 23

open-note Quiz: Public Opinion & Voting and Elections – available February 15-17

open-note Quiz: Political Parties – available February 22-24

open-note Quiz: Interest Groups – available February 22-24

## **Exam 2 – Wednesday, February 28**

*(\*\*\*Tuesday, March 5 – Texas Democratic and Republican primary election\*\*\*)*

## Module 3

The Courts	chapter 13
Chapter 13 - The Courts	chapter 13
Overview - Rule of Law	
Supreme Court and Constitutional Interpretation	
Theories of constitutional interpretation regarding presidential eligibility	
Civil Liberties	chapter 4
Chapter 4 - Civil Liberties	chapter 4
Civil Rights	chapter 5
Chapter 5 - Civil Rights	chapter 5
Medical exploitation of Black people in America	
Key facts about race and marriage, 50 years after Loving v. Virginia	

Discussion: Theories of Constitutional Interpretation – due by March 8

Discussion: Medical Exploitation of Black People – due by March 28

open-note Quiz: Federal Courts – available March 7-9  
open-note Quiz: Civil Liberties – available March 21-23  
open-note Quiz: Civil Rights – available March 28-30

### **Exam 3 – Wednesday, April 3**

*(\*\*\*Monday, April 1 is the last day to withdraw from a class for the semester\*\*\*)*

#### Module 4

Congress	chapter 11
Chapter 11 - Congress	chapter 11
The changing face of congress in 7 charts	
The Politics of Numbers: Why 435 Does Not Add Up	
Congress members literally cross the aisle less than they used to	
The Presidency	chapter 12
Chapter 12 - The Presidency	chapter 12
Domestic Policy	chapter 16
Chapter 16 - Domestic Policy	chapter 16
New data paint an unpleasant picture of poverty in the US	
US poverty statistics ignore millions of struggling Americans	
American founders and public health issues	
Foreign Policy	chapter 17
Chapter 17 - Foreign Policy	chapter 17

Discussion: Poverty in the U.S. – due by April 19  
Discussion: Individual Liberty and Public Health – due by April 26

open-note Quiz: Congress – available April 11-13  
open-note Quiz: Presidency – available April 11-13  
open-note Quiz: Domestic Policy – available April 18-20  
open-note Quiz: Foreign Policy – available April 25-27

### **Exam 4 – Wednesday, May 1**

***Optional Final Exam –Monday, May 6 (10:30am-12:30pm)***