“Ambition must be made to counteract ambition.”
James Madison, Federalist Paper #51

“If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.”
James Madison, Federalist Paper #51

“Liberty cannot be established without morality, nor morality without faith.”
Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course provides students a comprehensive introduction to the workings of the American Government. It covers the political theories (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism, etc.) as they relate to the structure of American government and its various institutions (Presidency, Congress, and the Courts), as well as the types of governing systems and regimes, the founding philosophy, factions, and civil liberties and civil rights. We also spend a significant amount of time reviewing early American political thought and a great amount of time is also dedicated to discussing the exemplary French philosopher, Alexis de Tocqueville and his masterpiece, Democracy in America. We will also review the Georgia Constitution per legislature’s mandate.

You will learn how to think logically, independently, and analytically. Above all else, hopefully this class will teach you to be a virtuous, or as Aristotle writes, a serious citizen. The college education is intended to teach you how to be a complete human person, through higher-order thinking and learning. Therefore, this class introduces you to the concepts and instruments on becoming a great thinker. My class teaches you how to utilize your critical thinking skills, rather than only to memorize. Keep this in mind throughout the semester. If you apply your full effort and actively participate, this course will elevate you above your peers. I strive to create an engaging class atmosphere and I will make it as interesting as possible. This is not a class for lazy students. My class is for students that want a challenge and want to rise above the nameless crowd and to be more than just a shadow in a cave.
STUDENT-LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the term, you are expected to illustrate that you:

1. Understand the basic governing structure and institutions of the American government.
2. Understand the philosophical roots and nature of the United States.
3. Understand the guiding principles of the United States.
4. Understand the founding documents of the United States.
5. Can think analytically, critically, and creatively.
6. Have increased your ability to read philosophical and/or primary texts.
7. Have increased your ability to discuss in a highly scholarly way, deeply political and philosophical issues.
8. Are able to find current events news on-line and to demonstrate breadth and depth of current events concerning the American government.
9. Understand the meaning of Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, and why it is important to the US even today.
10. Are able to relate concepts and issues Tocqueville writes about to contemporary issues.

COURSE GRADES

Quizzes/On-line assignments: 15%
Class Participation: 15%
Exam I: 10%
Exam II: 15%
Exam III: 20%
Final Exam: 25%

I expect class participation by all students. This goes beyond attendance. Simply coming to class gets you no points. You are required to ask questions and actively engage your classmates and myself. I am strict with participation but I want everyone to earn an A. However, if you do not talk regularly in class, and participate in on-line discussions, your participation grade will be negatively affected. You will have daily quizzes on the reading material. The readings should be completed before the class period for which they are assigned. You can use separate notes that you took from your readings during your quiz.

Additionally, you will have several class days on-line, rather than in class. Therefore, you will have substantial on-line assignments throughout the semester. These assignments will be two-fold: posting discussion points on-line and, more substantial assignments consisting of short-essay questions. These will be timed and **no late submissions will be accepted. If you miss an assignment, I reserve the right to give you an automatic “F” in the class.** These assignments will be posted on our D2L class page and you will be notified of these days on the syllabus below.

You have four exams this semester. All of them will be in-class exams, consisting of short answer and essay questions. These exams will force you to think creatively and analytically about the American government and its basic political philosophy as well as political philosophy in general, especially de Tocqueville. **If you miss an exam, you will receive an automatic “F” in the class.**
You are required to stay up to date on current events involving the American government. There are some links under “required course materials” to help keep you informed. You may pick one of the links below to follow for current events, or several of them. Note, you will have a quiz question each day from current news concerning the American government. Quizzes will be on news related to American politics or American interests only, keep that in mind as you read the news.

ANY MORE THAN 4 ABSCENCES WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESULT IN A FULL LETTER DROPPED FROM YOUR FINAL GRADE AND POSSIBLY YOUR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CLASS.

I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO COUNT ANY TARDIES AS AN ABSENCE; SO, DO NOT COME TO MY CLASS LATE.

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED; NO MAKE UPS ARE ALLOWED EXCEPT UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES, AT MY DISCRETION; FAILURE TO TURN IN ANY ASSIGNMENT MAY RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC F IN THE CLASS AND/OR A WITHDRAWAL.

IMPORTANT: A major purpose in your taking this class is to meet the Georgia legislative requirement demonstrating competence in the U.S. and Georgia Constitution in order to graduate. Therefore, passing the Georgia Constitution Assignment is required. FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS


Additional Materials

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Monday, August 18: Introduction to the course and each other
Readings to be completed for today’s class, None.

Wednesday, August 20: Introduction to Tocqueville
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 3-9.

Friday, August 22: Tocqueville Discussion
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 10-15.

Monday, August 25: Introduction to Politics/Government
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 19-27.

Wednesday, August 28: Introduction to Politics/Government
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 27-45.

Friday, August 30: Political Regimes
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 45-56 & 100-104.

Monday, September 1: Holiday—No Class
Readings to be completed for today’s class, NONE.

Wednesday, September 3 (On-line Class 1): Complete Assignment 1 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Federalist Papers Lecture Notes on D2L, Federalist Paper No. 10

Friday, September 5 (On-line Class 2): Complete Assignment 2 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Federalist Paper No. 47, Federalist Paper No. 51.

Monday, September 8: Political Regimes
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 165-180.

STUDY GUIDE FOR EXAM I POSTED ON D2L

Wednesday, September 10: Political Regimes
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 180-186.

Friday, September 12: Exam I
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Study for Exam I.

Monday, September 15: The Constitutional Process
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 187-205.

Wednesday, September 17: The Constitutional Process
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 203-220.

1 Subject to change at my discretion without much notice. Changes will be announced on-line. Further, you are responsible for notifying me if you see any reading mistakes in the syllabus; in other words, if a reading is missing, or pages are wrong, or you have the same reading listed twice, you need to let me know so I can fix the problem. If you do nothing, you will be held accountable.
Friday, September 19: The Constitutional Process
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 220-235.

Monday, September 22: The Constitutional Process
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 235-249.

Wednesday, September 24: The Constitutional Process
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 250-264.

Friday, September 26: The Constitutional Process
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 264-277.

Monday, September 29: The Executive Branch and The Presidency
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 278-288.

Wednesday, October 1 (On-line Class 3): Complete Assignment 3 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 288-302 & 399-400.

Friday, October 3: (On-line Class 4): Complete Assignment 4 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 403-416.

Monday, October 6: The Executive Branch and The Presidency
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 417-428.

**STUDY GUIDE FOR EXAM II POSTED ON D2L**

Wednesday, October 8 (On-line Class 5): Complete Assignment 5 on D2L and Post Discussions
GRU Middle School MUN (Please come and observe in-lieu of class time today: agendas will be given later in semester).
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 428-439.

Friday, October 10: Exam II
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Study for Exam II.

Monday, October 13: The Executive Branch and The Presidency
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 439-443 & 463-464 & 472-476.

Wednesday, October 15: The Executive Branch and The Presidency
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 479-492.

Friday, October 17: FALL PAUSE (NO CLASS)
Readings to be completed for today’s class, NONE.

Monday, October 20: The Executive Branch and The Presidency
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 493-503.

Wednesday, October 22: The Congress
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 504-510.

Friday, October 24: The Congress
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 510-517.
Monday, October 27: The Congress
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 517-532.

Wednesday, October 29: The Congress
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 535-545.

Friday, October 31: The Congress
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 546-557.

Monday, November 3: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 558-573.

STUDY GUIDE FOR EXAM III POSTED ON D2L

Wednesday, November 5 (On-line Class 6): Complete Assignment 6 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 573-588.

Friday, November 7 (On-line Class 7): Complete Assignment 7 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 589-604.

Monday, November 10: Exam III
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Study for Exam III.

Wednesday, November 12: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 604-617.

Friday, November 14 (On-line Class 8): Complete Assignment 8 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 617-629.

Monday, November 17: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 629-635.

Wednesday, November 19: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 639-645.

Friday, November 21: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 646-661.

Monday, November 24 (On-line Class 9): Complete Assignment 9 on D2L and Post Discussions
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Georgia Constitution

Wednesday, November 26: Thanksgiving Break (No Class)
Readings to be completed for today’s class, NONE.

Friday, November 28: Thanksgiving Break (No Class)
Readings to be completed for today’s class, NONE.

Monday, December 1: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 661-665.

STUDY GUIDE FOR FINAL EXAM POSTED ON D2L
Wednesday, December 3: The Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 665-673.

Friday, December 5 (Last Day of Class): Concluding Tocqueville
Readings to be completed for today’s class, Tocqueville, pgs. 673-676.

**Monday, December 8: Final Exam—1:00 – 3:00 PM.**

**CLASS ETIQUETTE**

As a courtesy to your fellow students and myself, please do not carry on conversations with one another during my lectures. Do not speak unless you raise your hand and I recognize you. I also consider sleeping in class, for any reason, to be inappropriate. Do not use foul, sexual, profane, or any offensive language on-line or in class. These behaviors will be publicly reprimanded and punished with extreme prejudice. Tardiness is unacceptable. This is college – please do not come late to my class unless you have informed me beforehand. I am a compassionate professor, so please come to me beforehand if personal issues or conflicts arise.

Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated (Review your student handbook on this subject or other concerns and questions). If I even think you are cheating or have plagiarized, you will receive an F in the class and a formal complaint will be filed with the University.

**For students with disabilities, please review your handbook for proper procedures and university policies. You must follow University protocol for accommodations.**

*No cell phone, lap-tops, or any other technologically smart devices allowed during class unless otherwise noted.*

**Dress code:** Style of dress is primarily a matter of individual judgment and taste. However, students are expected to be neat and clean and to exercise good judgment in their appearance pursuant to (or consistent with) our professional setting. Colleges and programs may have a more discipline-specific dress code for students enrolled in that college. Please wear clothing that is appropriate for the classroom setting.

Please be respectful at ALL time and refrain from any types of slander, offensive comments, harassment and or discriminatory comments and or behaviors towards your fellow classmates and towards me. Any offenses against this will result in the most serious punishment possible. Please review your student handbook for more details concerning this. If you have any questions, and/or concerns, please contact me.

I take seriously and follow GRU’s policy on discrimination and harassment which reads:

*Georgia Regents University (GRU) is strongly committed to ensuring that its learning and working environments are free of harassment and discrimination because of a person’s race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or disability. GRU shall respond in a swift and effective manner, with a goal of eliminating such conduct.*

My classroom and office are Safe Zones and I seek to provide a diverse and all-inclusive environment. Behave accordingly.

If someone in class has seriously offended you regarding this conduct, please notify me immediately.