

**JOE PHILLIPS, JD, PhD**

- **CONTACT (email-only):** [jphillips1@lit.edu](mailto:jphillips1@lit.edu)

To contact me, please email me from your LIT Account. There is sometimes a delay with Blackboard Messenger.

- **OFFICE HOURS:** M & W, 10 AM – 12 NOON  
T & TH, 11 AM – 12 NOON  
Online conferences may also be available.
- **OFFICE LOCATION:** TBA

THE PROFESSOR MAY REVISE THE SYLLABUS OR BLACKBOARD POSTS TO ADDRESS CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES.



**LAMAR INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY**

**CREDIT:** 3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 hours lab)

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION:** Face-to-Face Classroom

**PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:** TSI Complete for Reading

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, the 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:** Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.
3. Describe the separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS:** American Government 3rd Edition Krutz, Waskiewicz  
Free Web Version ISBN-13: 978-1-951693-38-1: <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>.

Additional Materials that I post and reference on Blackboard.

I will provide questions for each text assignment to guide your study.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** See “ABSENCES” and “TARDINESS” in “ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS” (below).

**DROP POLICY:** If you wish to drop this course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will receive an “F” in the course. See “DROPPING THE COURSE” in “ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS” (below).

**STUDENT EXPECTED TIME REQUIREMENT:** For every hour in class (or unit of credit), students should expect to spend at least two to three hours per week studying and completing assignments. For a three-credit-hour class, students should allocate six to nine hours per week outside of class in a sixteen-week semester.

## COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC	TEXT, VIDEOS & LECTURES	ASSIGNMENTS Due Dates TBA
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Section 1</b> <b>Aug. 26</b> <b>– 30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Course-Syllabus-Instructor</li> <li>▪ Course Navigation &amp; Etiquette</li> <li>▪ Doing Well in Course</li> <li>▪ BEGINNING QUESTIONS               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Why Study Government?</li> <li>➢ Political Culture</li> <li>➢ Your Political Identity &amp; Civic Journey</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Syllabus</li> <li>▪ Course Performance Packet</li> <li>▪ Culture, Identity &amp; Civic Summary</li> <li>▪ <a href="https://youtu.be/YxDfxXJtLw?si=0wTxkLv51a6oMvV2">https://youtu.be/YxDfxXJtLw?si=0wTxkLv51a6oMvV2</a></li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>MAPPING</b> Your Political Identity &amp; Civic Journey</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Section 2</b> <b>Sept. 2</b> <b>(Hol.) – 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roots of Revolution</li> <li>▪ Articles of Confederation's Failure</li> <li>▪ CASE STUDY               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Analyzing the Declaration of Independence</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roots of Revolution Summary</li> <li>▪ Articles of Confederation Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summary</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>QUIZ 1:</b> Section 2</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Section 3</b> <b>Sept. 9</b> <b>– 13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Constitution &amp; Its Origins               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ The Federalist—Anti-Federalist Debate</li> <li>➢ Limited Government: Powers &amp; Rights</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Amending the Constitution</li> <li>▪ CASE STUDY               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Marbury v. Madison (judicial review)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Origins &amp; Amendment Summary</li> <li>▪ U.S. Constitution</li> <li>▪ Federalist No. 10</li> <li>▪ Federalist No. 51</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summary</li> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOvsZyqRfCo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOvsZyqRfCo</a></li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ESSAY 1:</b> Redesigning the Constitution</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Section 4</b> <b>Sept. 16</b> <b>– 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Landmark Supreme Court Cases               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Gitlow v. New York (incorporation doctrine)</li> <li>➢ Mapp v. Ohio (exclusionary rule)</li> <li>➢ Miranda v. Arizona (interrogation warnings)</li> <li>➢ Brandenburg v. Ohio (free speech)</li> <li>➢ District of Columbia v. Heller (firearms)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>EXAM 1:</b> Sections 1- 4</li> </ul>
<b>Week 5</b> <b>Section 5</b> <b>Sept. 23</b> <b>– 27</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Civil Rights &amp; Civil Liberties               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Philosophy &amp; Movements</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Korematsu v. U.S. (Japanese Americans)</li> <li>➢ Brown v. Board of Education (14<sup>th</sup> Amend.)</li> <li>➢ 1964 Civil Rights Act</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Civil Rights &amp; Liberties Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ESSAY 2:</b> 'Most Important Right' &amp; How to Protect</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Section 5</b> <b>Sept. 30</b> <b>– Oct. 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Civil Rights &amp; Civil Liberties (continued)</li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Obergefell v. Hodges (same-sex marriage)</li> <li>➢ Harvard v. UNC (affirmative action)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Civil Rights &amp; Liberties Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZTioTkHcB0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZTioTkHcB0</a></li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>QUIZ 2:</b> Sections 5-6</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Section 6</b> <b>Oct. 7</b> <b>– 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Federalism: Forging a Nation</li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ McCulloch v. Maryland (Supremacy Clause)</li> <li>➢ National Fed. of Ind. Business v. Sebelius ('Obamacare')</li> <li>➢ CoVid-19 Epidemic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Federalism Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>QUIZ 3:</b> Section 7</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Section 7</b> <b>Oct. 14</b> <b>– 18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Legislative Branch: Balancing National Goals &amp; Local Interests               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Article I</li> <li>➢ Making Law</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDY               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Comparing a Parliamentary System</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legislative Branch Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summary</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> <li>▪ <b>Core Assessment Instructions</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ESSAY 3:</b> Evaluating the Filibuster</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>

DATE	TOPIC	TEXT, VIDEOS & LECTURES	ASSIGNMENTS Due Dates TBA
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Section 8</b> <b>Oct. 21</b> <b>– 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Executive Branch: Leading the Nation                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Article II</li> <li>➢ War Powers</li> <li>➢ Impeachment</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Executive Orders</li> <li>➢ Trump v. U.S. (presidential immunity)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Executive Branch Summary</li> <li>▪ Federalist No. 70</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>EXAM 2:</b> Sections 5-8</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Section 9</b> <b>Oct. 28</b> <b>– Nov. 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Judicial Branch: Applying Law                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Article III</li> <li>➢ Court Structure &amp; Jurisdiction</li> <li>➢ Philosophy of 'Justice'</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDY                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Appointing v. Electing Judges</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Judicial Branch Summary</li> <li>▪ Federalist No. 78</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summary</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ESSAY 4:</b> Supreme Court Term Limits</li> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Section 10</b> <b>Nov. 4</b> <b>– Nov. 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interest Groups – Monopolies – Patents</li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Citizens United v. FEC (campaign contributions)</li> <li>➢ Monopolies on Life-Saving Drugs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interest Groups Summary</li> <li>▪ Monopolies Summary</li> <li>▪ Patents Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> <li>▪ <b>CORE ASSESSMENT (GROUP WORK)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Section 11</b> <b>Nov. 11</b> <b>– 15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public Opinion – Public Polls – Media                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Media bias or neutrality</li> <li>➢ Polling the 2016 &amp; 2024 Elections</li> <li>➢ 'Fake News'</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Polarization</li> <li>➢ Social Media</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public Opinion Summary</li> <li>▪ Polling Summary</li> <li>▪ Media Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>EXAM 3:</b> Sections 9-12</li> <li>▪ <b>CORE ASSESSMENT (GROUP WORK)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Section 12</b> <b>Nov. 18</b> <b>– 22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Political Parties                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Ideological Spectrum</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDY                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Gerrymandering</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Political Parties Summary</li> <li>▪ Case Study Summary</li> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcUDBqYodIE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcUDBqYodIE</a></li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>DISCUSSION POST</b></li> <li>▪ <b>CORE ASSESSMENT (GROUP WORK)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 14</b> <b>Nov. 25</b> <b>– 26</b> <b>Nov. 27–</b> <b>29</b> <b>(Holiday)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Core Assessment Group Work</b></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>CORE ASSESSMENT (WORK)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 15</b> <b>Section 13</b> <b>Dec. 2</b> <b>– 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voting &amp; Elections                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Apathy</li> <li>➢ Social Capital</li> <li>➢ Social Movements</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ CASE STUDIES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Voter Registration Rules</li> <li>➢ Mandatory Voting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voting &amp; Elections Summary</li> <li>▪ <a href="https://youtu.be/P9VdyPbbzII?si=XXBkJCmmTs7sRsJ">https://youtu.be/P9VdyPbbzII?si=XXBkJCmmTs7sRsJ</a></li> <li>▪ Case Study Summaries</li> <li>▪ Class PPT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>MEDIA ASSESSMENT</b></li> <li>▪ <b>CORE ASSESSMENT (WORK)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 16</b> <b>Section 14</b> <b>Dec. 9</b> <b>– 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Core Assessment</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Group Presentations</b></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>CORE ASSESSMENT PROJECTS DUE</b></li> <li>▪ <b>EXAM 4:</b> Sections 13-15</li> </ul>

**COURSE EVALUATION:** Final grades are calculated according to the following criteria:

- QUIZZES & EXAMS.....50%
- WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS.....30%
- CORE ASSESSMENT.....20%

**GRADE SCALE** – LIT does not use +/- grading scales:

- 90-100: A
- 80-89: B
- 70-79: C
- 60-69: D
- 0-59: F

**SEE “LATE POLICY” and “EXTRA CREDIT” in “ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION” (below).**

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Students found to be committing academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or collusion) may receive disciplinary action. Students need to familiarize themselves with the institution's Academic Dishonesty Policy available in the Student Catalog & Handbook at

<http://catalog.lit.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=80#academic-dishonesty>.

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:** Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use of these technologies and incorporate AI into classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI / ChatGPT in their courses.

**SEE “PLAGIARISM and AI CONTENT” in “ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION” (below).**

**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:** The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc., can be found online at <https://lit.edu/online-learning/online-learning-minimumcomputer-requirements>. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or Wi-Fi is necessary to maximize online technology and resources.

**DISABILITIES STATEMENT:** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email [specialpopulations@lit.edu](mailto:specialpopulations@lit.edu). You may also visit the online resource at Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology ([lit.edu](http://lit.edu)).

**STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT:** It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand, and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the LIT Catalog and Student Handbook. The LIT Catalog and Student Handbook may be accessed at [www.lit.edu](http://www.lit.edu). Please note that the online version of the LIT Catalog and Student Handbook supersedes all other versions of the same document.

**STARFISH:** LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance and raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish will help you be a successful student at LIT.

## ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

- **ABSENCES**: Students are allowed three absences for the semester. **After that point, unexcused absences result in the loss of five (5) points from the final grade for each absence.** Attendance is regularly recorded in Starfish, so you can check it throughout the semester. Communication is the key to avoiding the grade penalty. I may excuse additional absences on a case-by-case basis. But, without communication, additional absences definitely will be penalized.
- **TARDINESS**: Habitual tardiness is disruptive and inconsiderate of classmates. **Students receive one absence after three tardies, and this process repeats for every three late appearances to class. Being tardy on the day of an exam or other in-class assignment may result in not being allowed to take the exam or participate in the assignment.**
- **SLEEPING IN CLASS**: There will be a warning, **afterwards the student's grade will be penalized.**
- **RESTROOM**: Please address restroom needs before class. If you must, you may leave during class without asking permission. **But regularly leaving during a class or across multiple classes will result in being counted absent.**
- **LATE WORK IS GENERALLY NOT ACCEPTED**: Unforeseen circumstances may rarely arise, justifying an exception. Please contact me if this happens so that arrangements can be made. **THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR HABITUALLY TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS LATE.**
- **PLAGIARISM and AI CONTENT**: **I reserve the right to fail an assignment that has been plagiarized or AI generated, in whole or part.** You must express yourself through your words. **I check all written assignments for AI-generated content.**
- **EXTRA CREDIT**: There will be a small number of opportunities for optional extra credit. I will never give an extra credit opportunity to one student and not others.
- **BLACKBOARD**: It is important to show your activity on Blackboard, so I know you are up to date on the course. Please log onto Blackboard at least twice per week.
- **GRADING**: Assignments will be graded within one week of submission. For each assignment and test, I will provide guidance on how to do well.
- **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**: Laptop computers may be used during class, but cellphones may not be used. **If cellphone usage is observed, there will be a warning. Afterwards, the student's grade will be penalized. You may not record classes.**
- **FOOD**: Food is allowed in class if it does not interrupt class instruction. Please clean up afterwards. Do not leave class to pick up food (e.g., Door Dash).
- **RESPECTFUL PARTICIPATION**: Disrespectful participation in class discussions and group work will not be tolerated. Students may have differing viewpoints, which leads to critical thinking, scholarly debates, and learning.
- **DROPPING THE COURSE**: Please do not drop the course without talking to me first. I may offer extra credit opportunities during the semester and resources to help. Students have previously dropped when there was a good chance that they would pass.
- If you decide to drop the course, please ensure that you take appropriate administrative measures and confirm the drop. Not logging into Blackboard or turning in assignments does not automatically drop you. **The deadline to drop without a penalty is September 27, 2024. The deadline to drop with a penalty is November 1, 2024.**