

COURSE SYLLABUS

POLS 1113: Intro to American Government

Summer 2025

COURSE INFORMATION: [Where to be and when](#)**Section:** 905**CRN:** 30338**Start Date:** June 2, 2025**End Date:** July 27, 2025**Format:** Online***Class Meetings*****Day(s) and Time(s):** Online Only**Campus/Room Number:** Online Only

At times, a crisis, emergency, or weather-related event, may interrupt college operations that affect teaching and learning. If TCC campuses are closed, all operations will switch to remote work and our class will: as this is an asynchronous class, not much about the schedule will change. If changes to the schedule are ultimately necessary, these will be posted on blackboard and emailed out to all students. All course work will remain asynchronous and online.

CONTACTING YOUR PROFESSOR: [How to get ahold of me](#)**Instructor:** Dr. Jamie Smith**Campus/Office Number:** SEC 4225**Student Hours:** by appointment**Phone:** 918-595-8206**Email:** Jamie.Smith10@tulsacc.edu

Email is the best way to contact me. I will return emails with 24 hours. Response times will be longer for emails sent after business hours and on weekends.

TCC Email

You were assigned a TCC email when you enrolled (ex: jane.doe@tulsacc.edu). You will do best in this course if you use that college-assigned email to send to and receive email me about this course. You can access your college email via MyTCC (<https://mytcc.tulsacc.edu>).

Please keep in mind that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prevents me from discussing your grades or course performance with anyone but you. Only when you use your college email can I be (legally) sure that you are you. Similarly, I will not respond—even if they come from your college assigned email—to emails from parents, grandparents, spouses, or anyone else except in the most extreme circumstances.

Email Guidelines

1. Use appropriate address and sign off. Address emails to Dr. Smith and use your first and last name as a sign off. This will help me find you quickly in blackboard.
2. Include your course section number in the email. This is a three-digit number that can be found in the syllabus or the course title on blackboard. I teach anywhere from three to seven sections of a course in a semester. You will get your answer so much faster if you tell me specifically what course you're in so I can find you quickly.
3. Use a clear and concise subject line. Rather than something like "course question" use something like "question about syllabus quiz".
4. Be professional in the body of your email. This means make sure you use professional language (no sarcasm, rude language, or all caps, etc.). Make sure you use appropriate spelling and grammar.
5. Be kind. Give me the benefit of the doubt. I am not trying to trip you up. If there is something out of place, it was an accident. Let me know and I will get it fixed.

6. Give me time to answer emails. Usually, I will answer them within 24 during the week but I try not to check emails on the weekend, unless there is an exam due during that period. There is almost nothing that happens over the weekend that we can't effectively address on Monday.
7. Please do not email me assignments, all assignments should be turned into the appropriate folder on blackboard.
8. Please do not email the whole class roster. This often creates confusion for your classmates. Please email me directly and then if necessary, I will address the class as a whole.
9. Because of federal privacy law, I will only answer emails from you and those emails must come from your TCC email.

STUDENT SUPPORT: [Resources to support your success in this course](#)

Student Well-being

Being successful in this course is dependent on many factors, including your personal well-being. TCC recognizes each student has a multitude of needs, roles and responsibilities. We believe college is a time of tremendous growth and fulfillment but acknowledge the stress you accrue when managing your academic, personal, and professional life. You are a priority, and there are several TCC support staff waiting to assist you in your academic journey. It is your responsibility to reach out to me if you are experiencing any type of difficulty that may impact your success in this course. I encourage you to do so and look forward to supporting you on your road to success!

Technical Support

Call the [Student Support Center](#) at 918-595-2000 or email StudentSupportCenter@tulsacc.edu for help with technology, such as Blackboard, TCC email, or MyTCC.

Academic & Student Services

Information about [Student Resources](#) is available on the TCC Website, and Safety and Wellness information is available on the [MyTCC Safety and Wellness](#) page.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES: [What this course is about](#)

Course Catalog Description

A study of the principles, structure, processes, and functions of the United States federal government. Lecture 3 hours. No laboratory.

Dr. Smith's Expanded Course Description

Political Science 1113 is an introduction to the American federal government and the politics in which it operates. We will focus on the structure and function of the national government, leaving questions about and comparisons of state governance to another course. Instead, we will focus on questions like what is government? How can we have a government that is powerful enough to meet our needs but not so powerful it becomes tyrannical? How much power does the president actually have? Why do we have just two main parties? But this course is also, for many of you, a first experience with the study of political science. Sometimes, when non-political scientists hear this term, they think of political punditry—the loud *opinions* you see on cable news in primetime. Rather, political science applies the scientific method to understanding the parts and whole of the political world. It is nonpartisan and data driven. In this course, we will be focused on the ever-growing body of knowledge generated by the scientific contributions of political science research rather than the political positions and partisan opinions of pundits or casual observers. We will bring the knowledge accrued over more than a century of this study to discuss the concepts and questions embodied by the course. As we begin to examine and apply these contributions to American federal government, we will explore three themes: the Constitution—how we got it and its limits and limitations; the branches of government—their powers, limitations, and failures; and the action of citizens—how people can and do affect the government.

Course Prerequisites

N/A

Next Course in Sequence

N/A

TEXTBOOKS, SUPPLIES, & OTHER RESOURCES: Books and supplies you will need to succeed in this course

Required Textbook(s)

Title: American Government 3e

Author: Krutz et al

Publisher: Open Stax

ISBN: 1-947172-65-4

The textbook for this course available online for free. You can find it for free at

<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>. Hard copies may be purchased at the bookstore.

All assignments are submitted online. Therefore, you will also need access to the internet and a device on which to complete assignments (e.g., computer, tablet, or at minimum a smart phone).

Higher education fosters intellectual and personal growth through exposure to and interaction with a wide range of ideas, creative expressions, and information. Students can expect to engage with and think critically about ideas and perspectives which may be very different from their own, and which may be challenging or uncomfortable. Students are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns about course materials with their instructor.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: What you will get out of this course

Institutional Learning Outcomes:

Tulsa Community College graduates value cultural diversity, ethical behavior, and the unique role of public education in sustaining a free society. The following institutional learning outcomes function independently and in concert. TCC graduates demonstrate: 1. Communication Skills; 2. Critical Thinking; 3. Personal Responsibility; and 4. Social Responsibility.

General Education Statement:

This course fulfills the **U.S. Government** requirement for the General Education Curriculum at Tulsa Community College. It is designed to teach the specific information required by the discipline and to make connections with other courses that will broaden your perspectives on the world around you. These connections allow you to gain vital workplace skills and to develop strategies that can be used for life-long learning. Education is more than the acquisition of facts; it is being able to use information in meaningful ways to enrich ourselves and the lives of the people around us. We become truly educated by making connections between ourselves and the ways in which various disciplines organize human experience differently. Therefore, this course, when combined with other General Education courses, will enable you to develop deeper understandings of your community and to challenge previously held assumptions about the world and its inhabitants.

Program Learning Outcomes:

To access program learning outcomes specific to your degree or certificate, go to the [online catalog](#) and click Programs, then select your program from the list and scroll down to Program Learning Outcomes.

Dr. Smith's Course Goals:

1. Understand what the Constitution does and does not tell us about the American system
2. Identify groups and individuals with whom you are aligned and communicate why
3. Advocate for candidates and causes in a factual and articulate way
4. Demonstrate empathy for those in a different political situation than yourself

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Examine fundamental political processes, institutions, actors and ideas
2. Critically evaluate major arguments in the discipline
3. Effectively debate, in both oral and written forms, logical arguments
4. Recognize how factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, class and region influence political narratives
5. Analyze major political events and historical political figures.

WHAT TO EXPECT: [How the class will work](#)

This is an online course and will, therefore, rely on individual work and dedication. Students will individually watch lectures and read the textbook, take notes, and complete assignments. Assignments include discussion boards, quizzes, journal reflections and exams.

GRADING POLICY AND ASSIGNMENT LIST: [What you'll be graded on and how](#)

Category	Description	Value
Perusall Annotations	For each chapter, you will be given a reading or video in an annotation program called Persuall. You can access Persuall through blackboard. You are expected to annotate each assignment <u>at least three times</u>. Your annotations should show evidence of critical thinking about the assigned piece and clearly illustrate that you've read the whole piece. In annotating the piece, you can see and respond to other students' annotations. Responding to another student by answering a question they pose, providing an example, or, <i>within reason</i>, seconding their confusion <u>will</u> count as one of your three annotations. Some readings may be controversial and some of you will, likely, disagree with each other. That's fine! Politics is a murky entity that deals with issues that often have more than one "right" answer. Some of the topics discussed may be sensitive for some people in the class and you should be sympathetic towards that. Intellectual exchange and disagreement is expected; however, any personal attacks, insults, or disrespectful behavior will result in a grade of zero for anyone who exhibits this kind of behavior. Disrespect or intolerance toward your fellow students or any marginalized group will not be tolerated. Repeated infractions will result in an F for the course.	150 Points 15 @ 10 points each
Journals	Thoughtfully engaging and evaluating arguments is a key part of effective political participation. Therefore, throughout the semester, you will be asked to respond to provided prompts in informal journals. Each journal assigns an article, video, podcast, or other media for you to consume and respond to. These media will often express a specific opinion or viewpoint. The selection these topics or pieces is not an endorsement of the perspectives in the pieces, it's merely an effort to get you to grapple with real world applications of the content we will cover in the course. Each journal will also give you a specific question related to the media to prompt your response. You will write a response of at least 300 words in length that addresses the prompt. You are not expected to agree with the perspective of all (or any) of the authors. Many of the topics addressed in these pieces do not have a "right" answer. Rather, you are asked to engage the content and the specifics of the arguments. A quality response will provide an articulate argument that explains why you agree or disagree with the perspective offered in the piece or the prompt. Again, disrespect or intolerance toward your fellow students or any marginalized group, advocacy of violence, and inappropriate language will not be tolerated.	100 points 5 @ 20 points each
Chapter Quizzes	To help prepare you for the course exams, each chapter will have a quiz. The quiz will use matching, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions. Performance on these quizzes can be used to understand the concepts on which you have a strong grasp and those on which you may want to brush up before the exam. Each quiz will open two weeks before we begin the chapter. You may take each quiz up to three times and your highest score will be counted toward your final grade. (These questions come from a pool so you may receive different questions on each attempt.) The lowest quiz score will be dropped from your final grade.	150 points 15 @ 10 points each

	Answers that do not come from course content (i.e., the lecture videos and/or textbook) will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Multiple violates will result in an F for the course (see academic integrity policy for more). Each lesson has a set of review questions that serve as a study guide for the exams and quizzes in this course. It would be a good idea to answer these questions as we work through each chapter to better facilitate your learning.	
Constitution Test	We will center the Constitution in this study of American government. To assess how much you learned from that exercise, you will take an exam that covers the specifics of the Constitution. This test will cover Articles I-III, the Constitution and federalism, and the Amendments.	100 points
Exams	To assess your understanding of the material in the course, you will a midterm and final exam. Each exam will cover only the content from that unit. Exams will consist of matching, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and/or ordering questions. You can compile your answers to the key questions from each lesson on Blackboard as a study guide. If you submit that study guide on Blackboard, you may use that study guide on the exam. You may take each exam twice, but the scores for your attempts will average. The only exception is if your first attempt is higher. In that case, I will count your first attempt so that your second attempt can only help you. Answers that do not come from course content (i.e., the lecture videos and/or textbook) will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Multiple violates will result in an F for the course (see academic integrity policy for more).	500 2 @ 250 points each

Feedback and Grades: *when can you expect feedback and grades on your assignments*

Feedback and grades on chapter quizzes is available to you instantaneously, though you will only be able to see which questions you missed and broad feedback. After the quiz closes, you will be able to see all questions, answers, and feedback. On exams, feedback is available to you after submission. This feedback includes missed questions and some direction on what to review for your next attempt. After the assignment closes, you will also be able to see the right answers and your answers. For written work, you will receive feedback and grades on those assignments within two weeks of the due date.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

Course Grading Scale	
A	900 to 1000 points
B	800 to 899.9 points
C	700 to 799.9 points
D	600 to 699.9 points
F	599.9 points or fewer

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

For detailed information about Incomplete (I) grades and Academic Withdrawal (AW) policies, refer to the [Grade and Record Policies](#) from the TCC catalog. Attendance Policy information is included in the Syllabus Attachment.

You will always do best in this course when you both watch lecture/read the text and participate. Yet, life sometimes gets in the way. Please reach out and let me know if problems arise that may prevent you from completing assignments and/or participating in any way. Please note that I am required to assign a grade of WN (Withdrawal for Nonattendance) if you do not attend class during the open drop period. This is the first week of the course for 16-week

courses or the first three days in 8-week courses. If something will prevent you from attending during this period, it is imperative that you reach out and let me know so that you are not dropped from the course.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND MAKE-UP WORK: [How late work and make up work will be graded](#)

In your professional lives, you will be expected to complete work on a deadline. To help prepare you for this, this course has firm deadlines. Late perusal annotations, quizzes, and exams are not accepted. Late journals may be turned in for four days after the due date with a 10% deduction for each day it is late.

Most work in this course has a window in which it can be completed. The hope is that you will be able to work ahead or around of complications that may arise. However, if you know miss an assignment or exam, you should reach out to me and explain the circumstances. In many cases, [if you reach out ahead of time](#), we can find a compromise. However, if this becomes a pattern, you may want to consider if now is the best time to complete this course.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL: [What to do if you can't or don't want to complete the course](#)

See [Course Enrollment and Withdrawal](#) for information on withdrawing from a course. I will only give an AW upon request due to an inability to complete the course work and in accordance with TCC policy.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: [What is cheating and what are the consequences](#)

Students at Tulsa Community College are expected to behave as responsible members of the College community and to be honest and ethical in their academic work. To falsify or fabricate the results of one's research; to present words, ideas, data, or work of another as one's own; or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process of higher education and violates [TCC's Academic Integrity Policy](#). Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy are addressed based on their severity as outlined in the currently policy included in the Student Handbook.

. The following are examples of academic dishonesty violations in this course with their respective sanctions:

- MINOR VIOLATIONS (e.g., including only weblinks rather than full works cited)
 - Letter grade reduction
- MODERATE VIOLATIONS (e.g., overreliance on quotes, failure to cite sources)
 - Revise assignment for max of 50%
- MAJOR VIOLATIONS (e.g., purchased papers; use of AI, LLMs, or chat bots on any assignment; quiz or exam answers that are copied from other students or google, etc.)
 - Zero for the assignment
- MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS
 - Grade of "F" for the course

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Per the ID Badge Policy, all students and employees must wear their official TCC ID badge while on campus. Students requiring a badge can visit any Student Life office.

Each student is responsible for being aware of the information contained in the [TCC Catalog](#), the [Student Handbook](#), and the [Academic Calendar](#). All information may be viewed on the [TCC website](#).

SYLLABUS CHANGE: [How you'll know if things change](#)

Occasionally, changes to the syllabus may be necessary. Students will be notified of any changes to the syllabus in writing on Blackboard and via your TCC email. Keep in mind that given the uncertainty caused by the global pandemic and Oklahoma weather, things may have to change suddenly. I will do my best to keep everyone informed in the event that we need to make a quick change to content delivery or due dates.

SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT: [Where to find information about TCC policy](#)

The [Syllabus Attachment](#) provides critical student information for all TCC courses and is considered to be a part of this syllabus. Students are responsible for reading the statements contained within.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR: [What we'll cover \(and what's due\) when](#)

Week	Date	Lesson Topic	Reading	Assignments**
Unit One: Foundations of American Government – What kind of government do we have?				
Week 1	June 4	Getting Started and Basics of Politics and Governance	Syllabus Chapter 1	Perusall: Syllabus Academic Integrity Quiz Perusall: Hobbes/Locke (4 pages) Chapter 1 Reading Quiz
	June 8	The Constitution	Chapter 2	Perusall: Brutus II (10 pages) Intro Post and Two Replies on Welcome Board Chapter 2 Reading Quiz
Week 2	June 11	Congress	Chapter 11	Perusall: Filibuster (video) Chapter 11 Reading Quiz
	June 15	President	Chapter 12	Perusall: Linz (24 pages) Journal 1: Should Congress be more powerful? Chapter 12 Reading Quiz
Week 3	June 18	Bureaucracy	Chapter 15	Perusall: Political Bureaucracy (~10 pages) Chapter 15 Reading Quiz
	June 22	Courts	Chapter 13	Perusall: Court Legitimacy (~10 pages) Journal 2: should federal judges be elected? Chapter 13 Reading Quiz
Week 4	June 25	Federalism	Chapter 3	Perusall: Federalism (video) Journal 3: Should states have more power? Chapter 3 Reading Quiz
	June 29	Midterm Exam		
Unit Two: Political Behavior -- For the people, by the people....but where are the people?				
Week 5	July 2	Civil Liberties	Chapter 4	Perusall: Due Process (~7 pages) Chapter 4 Reading Quiz
	July 6	Civil Rights	Chapter 5	Perusall: 14 th Amendment (video) Chapter 5 Reading Quiz
Week 6	July 9	Public Opinion	Chapter 6	Perusall: Opinion Leaders (24 pages) Chapter 6 Reading Quiz
	July 13	Voting and Elections	Chapter 7	Perusall: Dark money (4 pages) Journal 4: Should people be required to vote Chapter 7 Reading Quiz

Week 7	July 16	Media	Chapter 8	***Constitution Test*** Perusall: Horserace Coverage (~10 pages) Chapter 8 Reading Quiz
	July 20	Parties	Chapter 9	Perusall: FPTP (video) Journal 5: Should states adopt RCV Chapter 9 Reading Quiz
Week 8	July 23	Policy	Chapter 16	Perusall: Appropriations (~6 pages) Chapter 16 Quiz
	July 27	Final Exam		