

COURSE: HP 238D/N-D, United States Government
CREDIT: 3 Semester Hours
SEMESTER: Spring 2026 Session 2 (March 16 – May 8, 2026)
TIME: Monday and Friday 9:30 to 10:50 A.M.
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Teddy D. Bitner
Office 816 425-6164, Cell Phone: 816-914-5119
Email: teddy.bitner@calvary.edu

I. DESCRIPTION

A study of the ideological foundation of the government of the United States including the framing and adoption of the Constitution, the essentials of the constitutional system, and the organization, procedures, and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. (Prerequisite: EN112)

This course is offered in two formats: in-person and online. Students registered for in-person attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. For both in-person and online students, assignments and interaction outside of the class period are done in the learning management system.

II. OBJECTIVES

A. Basic understanding of the following elements will be achieved:

1. Understand the basic principles of the United States government. (PLO 1,4) (Assessments A,B,C,D,E)
2. Examine the mechanics of American governmental processes. (PLO 1,4) (Assessments A,B,C,D,E)

B. Specific competencies to be achieved. The student will:

1. Understands basic U.S. Government documents, their origins, evolution, and the changing interpretations, and how they attempt to balance the needs of the individual and the group. (PLO 2, 4) (Assessments A, B, E)
2. Understands civic ideas and democratic principles implicit in basic documents (human dignity and individual rights, justice, general welfare, freedom equality, rule of law, etc.). (PLO 1,2,3,4) (Assessments A, B, C, D, E)
3. Understand how events today and in the past have been shaped by democratic ideals and by the American people's efforts to put those ideals into practice. (PLO 2,4) (Assessments A, B, E)
4. Knows a range of diverse primary sources, literature, and other media (local, national and international) to illustrate and explore citizenship in other times and places. (PLO 2, 4) (Assessments A, C, D)
5. Understands the role and impact of citizen participation in civil society and in the political arena. (PLO 1,2,3,4) (Assessments A, B, D)

6. Understands different types of government and institutional systems, including those of the U.S., and how those systems interact. (PLO 2, 3, 4) (Assessments A, B, D, E)
7. Understands the effects of political theories and philosophies. (PLO 2,3,4) (Assessments A, B, E)
8. Understands the role and impact of citizen participation in civil society and in the political arena. (PLO 1,2,3,4) (Assessments A, B, E)
9. Understands rights and responsibilities, rules, types or authority, and governmental structures of schools, communities, states, the country, country and other nations. (PLO 2, 4) (Assessments A, B, E)
10. For future educators – recognizes learners' developing sense of fairness and order, and uses this sense as an entry point to examining and analyzing rights and responsibilities, rules, types of authority and governmental structures of their schools and community. (PLO 1,2,3,4) (Assessments A, B, E)

III. REQUIREMENTS (ASSESSMENTS)

- A. Reading. You will be expected to complete the assigned reading. Readings from Bridges are not narrowly linked to specific reading sections in Wilson, but generally relate to multiple areas in the course. Consequently, you may read Bridges at your own pace.
- B. Examinations. Two (2) examinations will be given (including the final). Each exam will cover only material for that half of the course. The exams will be posted on the course Canvas page, and you will be able to access and take the exams over a period of approximately one week. Tests will be open book / open note and will include true-false, multiple choice, matching, fill-in questions. Extra credit questions will generally be essay.
- C. Paper. You will be required to prepare a research paper. Topic will be associated with American government. The paper should be no less than eight (8) pages and no more than twelve (12) pages of text (excluding the title page, etc.) and is due not later than indicated in the schedule below. The grade for the paper will be calculated based on the rubric included in the Canvas portal for this class. The paper must include three scholarly references. Internet references may also be used (but not popular citations, blogs or Wikipedia). Students who use the Clark Academic Center (CAC) to review a draft of their paper and provide a copy of the draft signed by a CAC tutor will receive a 5% bonus on the paper. All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition.
- D. Book Report. You will write an eight-page book report on Thomas Sowell's *Conflict of Visions: Ideological Origins of Political Struggle*. All class papers must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition. The book report will be organized as follows:
 - a. Introduction

- b. Summary of the book (what did Sowell cover in his book)
 - c. Major themes (what point[s] is Sowell trying to make?) that you identified during your reading
 - d. Your assessment of Sowell's themes (do you agree with him, why or why not)
 - e. Conclusion
- E. Lectures and Discussion Questions. All students will answer discussion questions and participate in each discussion. After attending (or watching for online students) the lecture you will answer discussion questions normally associated with the lecture. You will comment on at least one classmate's post. Discussion questions are normally due to be completed within one week of posting.

IV. METHODS

- A. Conduct of the class will include a combination of lecture, discussion and question / answer. Student interaction during the conduct of each class session is strongly encouraged.
- B. Grading and Attendance. Attendance accounts for 20% of your overall grade. I expect students to attend class regularly. My attendance policies are:

In class students: there are 16 class sessions in the cycle; each class session is worth 1.25% of your grade. I will deduct 1.25% from your grade for each unexcused absence.

For online students, I will take attendance once a week on Friday. Attendance is based on academic activity, which includes responding to discussion questions, submitting research papers, book reports or similar assignments, or taking an examination. I will deduct 2.50% from your grade for each week in which an online student fails to demonstrate academic activity.

In computing the final grade, I will weigh the work of the course in the following proportions:

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| First Examination | 15% |
| Final Examination | 15% |
| Discussion Questions | 20% |
| Paper | 15% |
| Book Report | 15% |
| Attendance | 20% |

V. MATERIALS

James Q. Wilson (et al), *American Government: Institutions and Policies (Sixteenth Edition)*, Boston: Cengage Learning, 2019. ISBN: 978-1337568395. Retail price is \$77.49. Used copies may be available from booksellers for approximately \$39.16.

Thomas Sowell, *Conflict of Visions: Ideological Origins of Political Struggles (Revised Edition)*, New York: Basic Books, 2007. ISBN 978-0465002054. Retail price is \$23.33. Used copies may be available from booksellers for \$18.00.

The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

VI. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

| <u>Lesson</u> | <u>Dates</u> | <u>Subject</u> | <u>Reading</u> (Reading: <i>Wilson</i>) |
|---------------|--|--|---|
| 1 | Module 1 - March 16-20, 2026 | What American Should Know about Government | Chapter 1 |
| 2 | | The Constitution | Chapter 2 |
| 3 | Module 2 – March 23-27, 2026 | Federalism | Chapter 3 |
| 4 | | American Political Culture | Chapter 4 |
| 5 | | Civil Liberties | Chapter 5 |
| 6 | Module 3 – March 30-April 3, 2026 | Civil Rights | Chapter 6 |
| 7 | | Public Opinion | Chapter 7 |
| 8 | Module 4 – April 6-10, 2026 | Political Participation | Chapter 8 |
| 9 | | Political Parties | Chapter 9 |
| 10 | | Elections and Campaigns / Book Report Due | Chapter 10 |
| 11 | Module 5 – April 13-17, 2026 | Interest Groups | Chapter 11 |
| 12 | | The Media | Chapter 12 |
| 13 | | Congress Mid-Term Exam Due | Chapter 13 |
| 14 | Module 6 – April 20-24, 2026 | The Presidency | Chapter 14 |
| 15 | | The Bureaucracy | Chapter 15 |
| 16 | | The Judiciary | Chapter 16 |
| 17 | Module 7 – April 27-May 2, 2026 | Domestic Policy | Chapter 17 |
| 18 | | Economic Policy | Chapter 18 |
| 19 | | Foreign and Military Policy / Paper Due | Chapter 19 |
| 20 | Module 8 – May 4-8, 2026 | American Democracy, Then and Now | Chapter 20 |
| 21 | | Makeup / Final Exam Due | |

Suggested research paper topics:

| | | |
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| Biblical leadership and government | War on Terror | Political Action Committees |
| Balance between response to terrorism and individual rights | Joint Chiefs of Staff | Special Interest Groups |
| Second Amendment issues | Special Operations Forces | Role of religion in presidential campaigns |
| Campaign finance reform | Central Intelligence Agency | Lobbyists |
| Role of talk radio | Airport Security | Foreign influence in presidential elections |
| “Drive by” Media | Campus Security | Illegal immigration |
| Electoral College | Conceal Carry Laws | Operation Iraqi Freedom |
| Presidential elections in the 21 st Century | The Environmental Movement | The “Powell Doctrine” |
| Reinstituting the Draft | Secular Religion and the American government | The “Surge” |
| <i>Griswold v. Connecticut</i> | Congressional staffers | Federal Bureau of Investigation |
| <i>Roe v. Wade</i> | Congressional committees | Defense Department |
| <i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> | Nonviolent resistance | Homeland Security Department |
| | John Locke and the US Constitution | |

Special Notes:

Grades on late assignments will be reduced by 4% for each day the assignment is late.

I will accept late assignments until midnight on the last day of the cycle. I will not accept assignments beyond that point. Students may contact the registrar to apply for additional time to complete the class.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the Accommodations Support Coordinator (aso@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.

Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person’s or AI entity’s ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.

The Clark Academic Center (cac@calvary.edu) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for Calvary University students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.

Syllabus

15800 Calvary Rd.
Kansas City, MO 64147

Rubric for History Assignments

| | Above Standards = 3 | Meets Standards = 2 | Approaches Standards = 1 | Fails to Meet Standards = 0 |
|---------------|---|--|--|--|
| Knowledge | Recalls details of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to articulate and reflect on the details in written form effectively. | Recalls details of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to describe the details in written form. | Recalls the general outline of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is able to describe the general outline in written form. | Fails to recall the general outline of previously learned material, including relevant facts and theories. Student is unable to describe the general outline in written form. |
| Comprehension | Answers are relevant to questions. Grasps the meaning of previously learned material. Correctly explains, interprets, and summarizes as appropriate. | Answers are mostly relevant to questions. Exhibits the ability to grasp the meaning of previously learned material. Displays the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate. | Answers generally relate to questions. Exhibits marginal grasp of the meaning of previously learned material. Struggles with the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate. | Answers do not correlate with questions. Exhibits no grasp of the meaning of previously learned material. Fails to display the ability to explain, interpret, and summarize as appropriate. |
| Application | Applies rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws as required by questions. | Generally, applies rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws as required by questions. | Demonstrates comprehension of rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws present in the material, struggles with finding and articulating appropriate applications. | Demonstrates a failure to comprehend rules, methods, concepts, principles, and laws present in the material. Fails to articulate applications with finding and articulating appropriate applications. Fails to understand the idea of application. |
| Analysis | Dissects and differentiates constituent parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences strong critical thinking skills with logical and thoughtful development of analytical conclusions. | Identifies and describes parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences good critical thinking skills with reasonably developed analytical conclusions. | Identifies most parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Evidences basic critical thinking skills with marginally developed analytical conclusions. | Fails to identify parts of a concept, theory, or idea and relate those parts to the whole. Demonstrates the lack of basic critical thinking skills with poorly developed analytical conclusions. |
| Synthesis | Masters the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are sophisticatedly and cohesively synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis effectively. | Sees the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are cohesively synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis effectively. | Approaches the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Artifacts are marginally synthesized to undergird the central argument. Able to articulate the results of synthesis. | Fails to comprehend the whole of a concept, theory, or idea by means of its constituent parts. Fails to synthesize artifacts to undergird the central argument. Unable to articulate the results of synthesis. |
| Evaluation | Assesses and critiques theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of | Describes and articulates theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of | Approaches and recites theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of | Fails to comprehend theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, literary works, or other forms of |

| | Above Standards = 3 | Meets Standards = 2 | Approaches Standards = 1 | Fails to Meet Standards = 0 |
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| | creative expression. Masters the data, synthesizes theory and outcomes, and draws insightful conclusions based on the evidence. | creative expression. Comprehends the data, synthesizes theory and outcomes, and draws appropriate conclusions based on the evidence. | creative expression. Recognizes the data, considers the theory and outcomes, and draws some conclusions based on the evidence. | creative expression. Fails to consider the data, unable to apply or synthesize the theory and outcomes, and fails to draw conclusions based on the evidence. |
| Citations and Plagiarism | Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, all paraphrased material is cited, evidence of frequent and accurate citations throughout the paper. All source material appears in the Bibliography / References. | Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, paraphrased material generally is cited, with adequate frequency. All source material appears in the Bibliography / References | Refers to right sort and numbers of Scriptures and/or outside references with proper form, careful and full presentation and adequate, informative content. All direct quotes are cited, paraphrased material generally is marginally cited, student shows evidence of struggling with paraphrasing. Most source material appears in the Bibliography / References | The student fails to cite direct sources (cut and paste from Wikipedia or other sources). Student fails to properly paraphrase and cite material. Student does not list source material in the Bibliography / References, or the paper completely lacks a Bibliography / References. |
| Spelling / Grammar / Syntax | Writes clearly, follows the accepted norms of spelling, grammar, and syntax with no errors | Generally writes clearly and follows the accepted norms of spelling, grammar, and syntax with minor errors. | Does not write clearly, exhibits several spelling, syntax, and grammar errors | Does not write clearly, fails to follow spelling, grammar, and syntax guidelines and acceptable use. |
| Format Style (Turabian, APA, MLA) | The assignment has been submitted neatly and according to relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA. | The assignment follows nearly all of the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA. | The assignment displays evidence of formatting challenges, but generally follows the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA. | The assignment displays evidence of formatting challenges and fails to follow the relevant submission guidelines per Turabian, APA, or MLA. |
| Academic Level Satisfied | Content / answers are insightful, original, scholarly, developed with exceptional detail, and appropriate to degree level. | Content / answers are appropriate, original, scholarly, developed with adequate detail, and appropriate to degree level. | Content / answers approach original scholarship, developed with some detail, and appropriate to degree level. | Content / answers do not display original scholarship, adequate detail, or appropriate to degree level. |