

**GRAYSON COLLEGE**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Federal Government 2305**  
**Spring 2021**

**Please Note: Due to extenuating circumstances, including public health issues, course and testing delivery methods, instructional schedules, housing contracts, campus procedures and/or operating hours may be altered, interrupted and/or ceased for a limited or extended period of time. Such changes will be posted on the College website.**

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### **Type of Course/Delivery Mode**

This is an Internet course with all assignments and assessments completed online.

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### **Testing Requirements**

Two exams will be administered throughout the semester during scheduled exam periods. The information on the exams can be found in the Course Schedule and Testing Guidelines handouts posted on Canvas.

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### **Professor Contact Information**

Mary M. Linder, M.Ed.

Office: Liberal Arts Building, Office 106A

Office Phone: 903-463-8616

Email: Please email me through Canvas for all course-related correspondence.

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### **Course Pre-Requisites, Co-Requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

HIST 1301 and 1302 or consent of division dean (TASP RW).

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### **Course Description**

Origin and development of the U.S. 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.

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### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

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 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.
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### **Required Textbook and Materials**

There is only one required textbook for this course, the American Government text available for free on [openstax.org](https://openstax.org). (It can be found under their Social Sciences section.) The instructor will provide any required readings not found in your textbook.

### **Suggested Materials**

Notebook paper, index cards, and a planner

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### **Outline of Topics Covered**

- Unit 1: Foundation of Government: The Constitution (Chapters 1 and 2)
  - Unit 2: Federalism: The Federal Government v. State Government (Chapter 3)
  - Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Chapters 4 and 5)
  - Unit 4: Congress (Chapter 11)
  - Unit 5: The Executive Branch (Chapter 12)
  - Unit 6: The Judiciary (Chapter 13)
  - Unit 7: Political Participation (Chapters 7, 9 and 10)
  - Unit 8: Media and Politics (Chapter 8)
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### **Required Assignments & Academic Calendar**

Please see the full assignment calendar located in the Syllabus section of the Canvas course shell. It outlines all specific course assignments and corresponding deadlines for the semester.

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### **Methods of Evaluation/Grading**

The course is composed of the following items: two exams, each worth two hundred (200) points; four module discussions/assignments, each worth fifty (50) points; and four module review quizzes, which are each worth fifty (50) points.

The exams will consist of a mix of any of the following: multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and matching questions. The course is organized topically, and within each topic are many relevant people, places, and events, some of which will be noted on Canvas as “unit terms”. This list will identify possible topics for questions on the exams. Information contained in the assigned reading is also “up for grabs” on the exams.

Assigned readings and/or presentations on YouTube will be used for students to answer one discussion question or complete an assignment for each of the course modules. Please see the discussion posting guidelines on Canvas for details on completing the discussions, as well as the discussion postings grading rubric. For any module assignment, please see the specific instructions provided with that assignment. To prepare for the module review quizzes, as well as the course exams, be sure to review each module’s study materials sections for the assigned reading, links to any YouTube presentations, and all other module materials.

**I have provided four opportunities for students to earn bonus points for certain activities throughout the semester. These are the ONLY planned opportunities so students should make use of them for other opportunities are not guaranteed. In college, there are no substitutes for content mastery (i.e., understanding the subject material).**

Students should take care that they have put their names on their papers prior to submitting them. Any assignment submitted without a name will **NOT** be graded.

The grading for the course is as follows:

A = 716 – 800 points

B = 636 – 715 points

C = 556 – 635 points

D = 476 – 555 points

F = 0 – 475 points

NOTE: Point values are final and final grades will not be rounded or “bumped” even if a student is one (1) point away from the next grade level.

All grades, once complete, will be available in the Grade Center on Canvas. Grades on all coursework should be expected within one (1) week of the assignment deadline. (NOTE: The Module 3 Assignment is a longer assignment and will be graded with two (2) weeks of the assignment deadline.) Final course grades will be available the Monday following the last day of the course.

Students in this class may sign up for a text messaging system through Remind.com to receive updates from the instructor such as reminders about assignment deadlines or other notifications about class. To sign up, follow the information provided in the Canvas announcement. These are push alerts only so you will not be able to respond to these messages. This means you will never be caught in one of those group messages from which there seems no escape. You may also opt out at any time.

NOTE: The use of this messaging system does not mean that students are absolved from keeping track of assignment deadlines. This system may not be used for every assignment or notification, so it is essential for students to keep up with their assignment deadlines.

## Methods of Instruction

This is an online course and will consist of mostly independent study along with class discussions over assigned readings.

### *Communication*

Communication between the instructor and students will be primarily through the course site in Canvas. Frequent announcements, responses to emails, as well as feedback on homework assignments will be provided regularly. Students will primarily communicate with one another through the course discussion tool or through the Class Café discussion link. Please do not abuse the email function through the sending of group messages to your classmates. Any course related questions should be directed to the instructor.

**PLEASE TAKE NOTE: Though the course requirements are outlined in the course policy documents, ALL EMAILS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE INSTRUCTOR should be read promptly and followed for said messages could contain revisions to the course requirements, revisions for which each student will be responsible. Claims of not having read the messages (or any of the posted information on Canvas) will NOT be considered to be a reasonable excuse.**

### *Appropriate Online Behavior*

Just as in a traditional classroom, students in an online classroom are expected to engage in appropriate behavior at all times. The professor will address individually those students who violate this policy. Please maintain respect for all students as well as the professor at all times, including in email correspondence, chat room activities, and discussion postings. Some additional examples of inappropriate behavior include the following:

- The use of crude, vulgar, derogatory, or profane language
- Any racial, gender, ethnic, age-specific, or sexual orientation slurs
- The use of text messaging/Instant messaging “lingo” in discussions, email, or in papers (Ex. “u” for “you”, “omg”, etc.)
- Writing in all capital letters (this is the equivalent of shouting in Cyberspace)
- Posting/emailing anything that is not course-related (Ex. Business advertisements, chain emails, etc.)
- Mass emailing the class. If you have questions of your peers, please make use of the appropriate thread for questions in the discussion board. Course policy questions should be submitted directly to the instructor.

### *Technical Competence*

Students are expected to have a basic understanding of personal computers, Internet browsing, desktop applications such as Microsoft Word, and file management (uploading, downloading, and/or sending files).

### *Computer Hardware and Software Requirements*

Generally, personal computers purchased in the last three years should be adequate to access Canvas. Software requirements include Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.x or higher ([www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)), the latest version of Sun JAVA ([www.java.com](http://www.java.com)), the latest updates to your operating system (Microsoft Windows XP or higher or Apple MAC OS X or higher), and the latest updates to your anti-virus and spyware protection. Students needing assistance with accessing instructional technology should contact the Grayson College Help Desk. For more information, visit [www.grayson.edu](http://www.grayson.edu) and select the Help Desk link.

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### *Alternative Procedures for Submitting Work*

Please do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments. Students should allow enough time before the due date to submit all assignments. Should there be a technical problem, immediately notify the instructor via Canvas email. Alternative arrangements, if permitted, will be discussed at that time. If it is not possible to send email notices, call the instructor's office. The number is available in this syllabus and on the Grayson College website.

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## **Course/Professor's Policies**

### *Attendance Policies*

Academic success is closely associated with regular classroom attendance and course participation. All successful students, whether on campus or online, are expected to be highly self-motivated. All students are required to participate in courses regularly and are obliged to participate in class activities and complete and submit assignments following their professor's instructions. Students taking courses during compressed semester time frames such as minimester, summer sessions, and 8-week courses should plan to spend significantly more time per week on the course. Responsibility for work missed because of illness or school business is placed upon the students. Students should contact the professor upon returning to class to obtain any missed assignments (in accordance with the make-up assignment/exam guidelines in the section to follow).

Though this is an online course, the institution requires the reporting of attendance each week. Students who neglect to complete assigned work will be reported as absent for that week. Reported absences can negatively impact a student's ability to receive financial aid.

### *Withdrawal from Class*

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal from any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in the current semester's schedule of classes. Administrative procedures must be followed. **It is the student's responsibility to initiate the withdrawal process with the Professor.** Students wishing to drop a course should carefully follow these steps:

#### Face to Face Course:

1. You need to meet with the Professor to discuss staying/withdrawing from the course.

2. If the decision to drop has been made, the Instructor will sign a Drop/Withdrawal Form **for the student to submit** to the Financial Aid Office for clearance.
3. After clearance is granted by the Financial Aid Office, the student will submit the drop request to the Admissions and Records Office.
4. After at least 72 hours, the student should check their My Viking to verify that the drop process has been completed. If the student sees a “W,” the process has been completed. If no “W” is visible, the student should contact the Admissions and Records Office.

#### Internet Course:

1. Message the Professor in Canvas with the following information:
  - a. Full Name
  - b. Student ID Number
  - c. Reason for wanting to drop the course
  - d. Best way to contact you (phone or return message in Canvas)
2. The Professor will contact you regarding your decision to drop and discuss staying/withdrawing from the course.
3. If the decision to drop has been made, students will need to contact the Financial Aid Office for clearance.
4. The instructor will submit the drop request to the Admissions and Records Department.
5. After at least 72 hours, the student should check their My Viking to verify that the drop process has been completed. If the student sees a “W,” the process has been completed. If no “W” is visible, the student should contact the Admissions and Records Office.

Completion of the proper paperwork ensures that students do not receive a final grade of “F” in a course for non-attendance after enrollment (see GC Catalog for details). **In accordance with the College’s Developmental Education Plan, students withdrawn from their only developmental course may be withdrawn from all academic courses.** In addition, students’ eligibility to receive financial aid or live in a College dormitory can be affected by withdrawal from courses. When withdrawal occurs, any tuition refund would be made in accordance with state regulations.

#### *Make-up Exams/Late Work*

Make-up exams are possible, but only with the instructor’s approval. It is always best to make arrangements for missed exams in advance if possible. In the event of an unexpected emergency, the student has one (1) week from the date of the scheduled exam to receive approval, after which no approval will be granted except under extenuating circumstances. Any approval given for a make-up exam will only be granted with a **documented excuse** (doctor’s note, towing receipt, etc.).

**No late work will be accepted in the course.** Students are provided with ample time to complete all course assignments and these assignments may be turned in at any time up until the stated assignment deadline. Only under extenuating circumstances will late work be accepted. In all cases, though, students should contact the instructor if they are going to have difficulty meeting a deadline to see if alternate arrangements are possible.

## *Canvas*

**Using Canvas is a necessary component of this course.** All course work is completed on Canvas or submitted through it. Students should make a habit of checking the site regularly for updates and information that is posted. Excuses of not having read any information or changes on Canvas (either posted on the site or sent via email through the site) will NOT be accepted even if failure to have done so affects your course grade. The professor will always give plenty of notice of changes to the course schedule, grading, and the like; however, it is each student's responsibility to remain informed by regularly checking Canvas.

## *Student Responsibility*

You have already made the decision to go to college; now the follow-up decisions on whether to commit to doing the work could very well determine your future career success. Education involves a partnership that requires both students and instructors to do their parts. By entering this partnership, you have a responsibility to log in to class regularly, do the assignments and reading, be engaged and pay attention in class (including online classes), follow directions, and put your best effort into it. You will get out of your experience here exactly what you put into it – nothing more and nothing less.

## *Important Things to Note*

Students should take care to recognize that the college-level environment is very different from the high school environment. There are not as many graded assignments in a college class, which is something to which students may be unaccustomed. Academic performance cannot, in accordance with FERPA guidelines, be discussed with anyone other than the student (unless certain documents have been filed with the Registrar's Office). **Also, in college, learning is what is emphasized instead of simply memorizing to pass a test (meaning you are expected to learn more information than simply what is on an exam).**

Some students have unreasonable expectations. They "need" to take twenty-one hours this semester to graduate in May or they "need" an "A." In other instances they cannot learn Canvas and request that I grant extensions for having missed important notices posted or emailed to the class. In cases like this, they ask me to "understand" their circumstances. I do understand, of course, but there are reasons for all course policies and students who cannot adapt to these requirements may fail the course. To be fair to ALL students, the course requirements must be applied equally to ALL students. That is the only way to be fair. **Fair is not simply giving each student what they want** – it is about setting expectations and applying those expectations and guidelines equally to all students.

Please do not ask me to make exceptions to these policies for personal circumstances. Everyone has reasons to submit work after the final deadline at the end of the semester or to turn in assignments a month or more after they are due or reasons they forgot to attach an assignment to their email. Someone's computer will crash this semester and because they did not back up their data they will lose homework. Someone else may not even have a computer. Another will decide to buy their textbook online and despite what the merchant promised, it will arrive three weeks late (and then may be the wrong textbook). Other folks will wait until the last day or two to complete an assignment and then will have an emergency that keeps them from completing it; therefore, they will get a zero on the assignment. It has been my experience that the reason most students fail a course is because of their own carelessness, not because they cannot master the material. Therefore, be sure to check and recheck your work and be aware of all

deadlines. I do not like seeing my students fail for any reason (including the ones listed above) and it is to help you avoid failing and get a good grade that I post this information.

Another issue of which students need to be aware is that students perform differently in different classes as well as differently between high school and college. Saying to the professor that you are an “A” student in all of your classes does not guarantee an “A” in this course. Some subjects come more easily to students than others and may present different challenges. Work your hardest, turn in your work, and follow all course guidelines and you will do well. But remember, grades are also earned based on performance and not effort. Grades are *earned*, they are not *given*.

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### Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student, or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism is a form of scholastic dishonesty involving the theft of or fraudulent representation of someone else’s ideas or words as the student’s original work. Plagiarism can be intentional/deliberate or unintentional/accidental. Unintentional/Accidental plagiarism may include *minor* instances where an attempt to acknowledge the source exists but is incorrect or insufficient.

Deliberate/Intentional plagiarism violates a student’s academic integrity and exists in the following forms:

- Turning in someone else’s work as the student’s own (such as buying a paper and submitting it, exchanging papers or collaborating on a paper with someone else without permission, or paying someone else to write or translate a paper),
- Recycling in whole or in part previously submitted or published work or concurrently submitting the same written work where the expectation for current original work exists, including agreeing to write or sell one’s own work to someone else,
- Quoting or copy/pasting phrases of three words or more from someone else without citation,
- Paraphrasing ideas without citation or paraphrasing incompletely, with or without correct citation, where the material too closely matches the wording or structure of the original,
- Submitting an assignment with a majority of quoted or paraphrased material from other sources, even if correctly cited, when original work from the student is expected,
- Copying images or media and inserting them into a presentation or video without citation,
- Using copyrighted soundtracks or video and inserting them into a presentation or video without citation,
- Giving incorrect or nonexistent source information or inventing source information,
- Performing a copyrighted piece of music in a public setting without permission,



- Composing music based heavily on someone else’s musical composition.

Grayson College subscribes to turnitin.com, which allows faculty to search the web and identify plagiarized material. Students are prohibited, too, from engaging in self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism is the act of using work created for another course and submitting that work for credit in this course. This includes work submitted previously for one of this instructor’s courses. There are limited circumstances under which the instructor will permit self-plagiarism, and special permission must be received to do so. Those who engage in acts of self-plagiarism (without the necessary permission) will be subject to the penalties listed in this syllabus for all other acts of plagiarism.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask. For everyone’s convenience, I have put together a Power Point Presentation on what constitutes plagiarism. This should not be considered an all-inclusive guide, but it does highlight some of the most common mistakes students make. Though I am providing this tool, it is still the student’s responsibility to make sure they understand what constitutes plagiarism. Any student who is found to have plagiarized on ANY assignment will be subject to the consequences listed in this section. Excuses of “I didn’t know” or “I didn’t understand” will not be accepted. Once again, if you do not understand what plagiarism is, please ask.

Students who are caught submitting plagiarized material or who have engaged in collusion on any course assignment or exam will receive a zero on the first assignment and an “F” in the course for any additional acts of academic dishonesty. Students who are caught cheating on any course assignment or exam will receive an “F” in the course.

## Title IX

GC policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, retaliation, serious medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation and protected veterans status. Furthermore, Title IX prohibits sex discrimination to include sexual misconduct: sexual violence (sexual assault, rape), sexual harassment and retaliation. For more information on Title IX, please contact:

Dr. Molly M. Harris, Title IX Coordinator (903-463-8714)

Ms. Logan Maxwell, Title IX Deputy Coordinator- South Campus (903) 415-2646

Mr. Mike McBrayer, Title IX Deputy Coordinator (903) 463-8753

Website: <http://www.grayson.edu/campus-life/campus-police/title-ix-policies.html>

GC Police Department: (903) 463-8777- Main Campus) (903) 415-2501 - South Campus)

GC Counseling Center: (903) 463-8730

For Any On-campus Emergencies: 911

**Grayson College campus-wide student policies may be found at the following URL on the College website: <https://www.grayson.edu/currentstudents/Academic%20Resources/index.html>**

**Grayson College is not responsible for illness/injury that occurs during the normal course of classroom/lab/clinical experiences.**

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***