



**POSC 2305 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT
Spring 2024 Semester**

Instructor: Dr. William T. Hoston
Section # and CRN: POSC 2305 Z05-2420-25079
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Office Hours: By Appointment Only, Zoom Appointments
Mode of Instruction: 100% Online
Face-to-Face, Jan 16, 2024 – April 26, 2024

Catalog Description: Surveys the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution; the structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; federalism; areas of political participation; the national election process; public policy civil liberties and civil rights.

Course Description: This course will explore the political structure and dynamics of the federal government, providing a broad-based introduction to the ideas and institutions that shape politics in the contemporary United States. We will focus on the major areas in the discipline of political science such as the framework of government, political attitudes of citizens, the Constitution and the debates of the founding era, the institutions of modern American government, the political behavior of the American mass public, and the evolution of minority politics. Overall, the goal of this course is to help each student develop a comprehensive understanding of the forces that shape federal government and politics.

Prerequisites: None.
Co-requisites: None.

Attendance: **This is a fully online course; you are required to login to the course at least 3-5 times per week and perform the course requirements. There will be no synchronous zoom sessions.¹ The instructor will prepare course materials for students in advance of students' access. Students may access the course materials at a time of their choosing. This approach makes the learning experience more accessible to all students.**

Required Texts: Krutz, Glenn. 2021. *American Government*, 3e. Houston, TX: OpenStax.

Book chapters are available in the Module Folder titled (I.B. Course Readings - Spring 2022).
Provided as a Pdf file.

Reasons for no synchronous zoom sessions:

- More challenging to schedule shared times for all students.
- Some students may face technical challenges or difficulties if they do not have fast or powerful Wi-Fi networks accessible.

Student Learning Outcomes:

	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Program Learning Outcome # Alignment	Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment
1	Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the U.S.	SLO #5	Critical Thinking
2	Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.	SLO #3	Critical Thinking
3	Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in the United States.	SLO #1	Critical Thinking
4	Differentiate the structure and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government	SLO #3	Critical Thinking
5	Assess the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.	SLO #3	Critical Thinking
6	Analyze the election process in the United States.	SLO #3	Critical Thinking
7	Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States.	SLO #5	Social Responsibility
8	Write a research paper on a divisive constitutional Issue for the United States.	SLO #2	Communication
9	Write an essay exam on the debates and divisions surrounding a key policy issue in the United States.	SLO #2	Communication
10	Properly document a research paper with a reference list and in-text citations.	SLO #2	Personal Responsibility

Core Outcome Objectives:

Federal Government addresses the following core objectives to ensure students develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in their lives. The core objectives meet the Texas Core Curriculum objectives for the Government/Political Science Foundational Component Area.

- Critical Thinking Skills - to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Communication Skills - to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
- Social Responsibility - to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
- Personal Responsibility - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

Grading: The final grade for the course will be based on the completion of reading materials, lecture notes, assignments, exams, attendance, discussion board participation, and adhering to deadlines for assignments. No makeup examinations will be allowed except under documented emergencies (See Student Handbook). **The last day to drop/withdraw for the Spring 2024 semester is April 26, 2024.** A grade of “I” is given only in cases of documented emergency and/or special circumstances. Students must have a passing grade prior to be considered for an “I”. Exceptions can be waived only under very limited circumstances, such as travel to represent the University, serious documented illness, or a real family emergency. All excuses that are accepted as valid by the instructor should be accompanied by documentation.

Since this is a fully online course, it is expected that students have readily available access to a reliable Internet connection for the duration of the 15-week course. Technological mishaps will not excuse missing or late assignments.

Grade Groveling Policy: Students concerned about their grades should endeavor to attend all class sessions and complete all work to the best of their ability. Students **earn** high grades, based on demonstrating mastery of the subject matter and not based on what they want or need for their overall GPA. Therefore, no grade groveling will be entertained and no “do-overs” allowed.

S&%t happens: The “S&%t happens” clause means to be truthful about absences, tardiness, and late assignments. Things happen in life, be truthful about them, and we can work on addressing them to ensure you pass this course.

Major Course Requirements:

Method of Determining Final Course Grade; There will be five major grades for the course.

Course Grade Requirements	Value (in points)	Total (value of grade)
1) Exam One	100	20% by February 16
2) Exam Two	100	25% by April 2
3) Exam Three	100	35% by April 26
4) Writing Assignment	100	10% by April 12
5) Certificate of Plagiarism	NG	NG, Extra Credit
6) Discussion Board (3 Total)	100	10% January 31, March 6, and April 10
Total		100%

Grading criteria and conversion: A=90→100; B=80→89; C=70→79; D=60→69; F=below 60

In this course, the PVAMU Honor Academic Code is in effect for all assignments and papers. Students must pledge that, “I affirm on my honor that I will abstain from dishonesty in all scholastic work and personal interactions.” For any questions about specific applications of the PVAMU Honor Academic Code, please refer to the PVAMU Student Life Handbook.

Plagiarism, cheating, and all other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. All submitted work must be your own, and any use of sources (both assigned or “outside”) must be documented.

Exams: All exams will consist of approximately 25-40 multiple-choice questions and 2-3 essay questions. The exams dictate the student being able to apply the materials taught in the course. The exams will cover only lectures and assigned reading materials. We will not cover every chapter line by line. **It is the students’ responsibility to read each chapter, articles thoroughly and take extensive notes.**

Discussion Board:

The online discussion board will be used to facilitate interactive discussion between students. This forum will be used to engage students in critical debate on the weekly topic, provide an outlet for students to pose questions and receive valuable feedback for further debate, and allow students to share valuable links and resources. All students are required to participate at *least once* per week on the proposed question(s).

First post should be received no later than **Wednesdays by 5p.m.** Subsequent posts no later than the following Monday. Students can post as many times as they would like. I would like to see substantive responses. **The first post should be a minimal of 2-3 sentences.** I do not want to see any “one” word posts or those with “no coherent” thought. The goal is to evoke critical discourse on the discussion board.

Feedback and Expectations on Examinations and Assignments:

Students will receive grades for *Examinations* within 5-7 days; **Grades will be posted on E-Courses.**

As a student, it is your responsibility to keep up with the required assignments and alert me as to any unavoidable non-communication. Although it is difficult to estimate how much time each individual student will need to spend each week to master the course materials, a typical student should expect to spend at least 9 hours each week on the readings, activities, etc. in the class. Students who stop participating in the class, without officially withdrawing from the course, will fail the course. All assignments will be graded within 7 days of submission. Questions will be answered within 48 hours.

6 Drop Rule Limitation:

Students who entered college for the first time in Fall 2007 or later should be aware of the course drop limitation imposed by the Texas Legislature. Dropping this or any other course between the first day of class and the census date for the semester/session does not affect your 6-drop rule count.

Important Websites: Students are encouraged to maintain a certain level of knowledge on current political events. Information can be obtained from the following sites:

Political Institutions:

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>
The House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/>
The Senate: <http://www.senate.gov/>
The Courts: <http://www.uscourts.gov/>

News and Media:

The New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/>
CNN: <http://www.cnn.com/POLITICS/>
FOX: <http://www.foxnews.com>
MSNBC: <http://www.msnbc.com>

Important Dates:

January 16	First Day of Class
January 16 – January 24	Attendance Reporting Period (NS/SH)
January 31	12 th Class Day
January 31	Last Day to Drop/Withdraw w/o Academic Record
March 11-16	Spring Break
March 26	Final Date to Apply for Spring 2023 Graduation
April 26	Last Class Day

Emails:

- (1) Please do not mark emails URGENT that are not.
- (2) Please read the syllabus to make sure your question was not covered.

I normally respond to student emails within a 12-hour time framework, depending on the time emails are sent. However, in most cases, I respond within 1-3 hours.

Important Things to Do:

- (1) Check PVAMU email daily. All correspondence go to the PVAMU email.
- (2) Check Announcements.

Keys to Passing the Course:

1. Please read the syllabi thoroughly. The answer to your question is most likely found in this document.
2. Stay abreast of the readings for the course. All readings are located in the module folders.
3. Review each folder; Print all materials and place in a binder. This will help with organization.
4. **Perform all discussion boards and exams on time. Week 3, Week 8, and Week 13.**
5. All materials are open from the first day of the course. Make a note of the due dates.
6. **Make sure you participate on the discussion board. It is worth 10% of your overall grade.**
7. Make-Up Exam Policy: There will be NO make-up exams in the absence of an extreme documented medical or personal emergency. In the case of such an emergency, student must notify the professor prior to the date of the exam. Early notification and/or proper documentation do not necessarily guarantee that a make-up exam will be granted. This decision will be at my discretion. Special considerations and make-up exam will not be granted for any technical-related issues. If the student misses the make-up exam, they will receive a zero for that exam without exception.
8. Emails: Make sure to communicate formally. Do not send emails with abbreviations, text message language, etc. Keep all emails professional, Header and Footer. Please type the name of the course (POSC 2305. John Doe) and your name in the subject line.

Spring 2024 Semester Calendar
Tentative Course Outline: (Subject to Change)

Week One: Readings: Assignment(s):	American Government and Civic Engagement Chapter 1
Week Two: Readings: Assignment(s):	(Cont.) American Government and The Constitution Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
Week Three: Readings: Assignment (s):	American Federalism Chapter 3 Discussion Board Due, January 31
Week Four: Readings: Assignment (s):	(Cont.) American Federalism Assignment Chapter 3 Review for Exam #1
Week Five: Readings: Assignment (s):	Exam #1: February 16 by 5pm
Week Six: Readings: Assignment (s):	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Chapter 4 and Chapter 5
Week Seven: Readings: Assignment (s):	(Cont.) Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Chapter 5
Week Eight: Readings: Assignment (s):	The Politics of Public Opinion and The Media Chapter 6 and Chapter 8 Discussion Board Due, March 6
Week Nine: Readings: Assignment (s):	SPRING BREAK
Week Ten: Readings: Assignment (s):	The Legislative Branch – Congress Chapter 11 Review for Exam #2
Week Eleven: Readings: Assignment (s):	Exam #2: April 2 by 5pm (Weekday after Easter)
Week Twelve: Readings: Assignment (s):	Voting and Elections Chapter 7 Writing Assignment, Research Paper: due April 12 See “Assignments”
Week Thirteen: Readings: Assignment (s):	Political Parties Chapter 9 Discussion Board Due, April 10

Week Fourteen:

Readings:

Assignment (s):

The Presidency

Chapter 12

Review for Exam #3

Weeks Fifteen:

Exam #3 (Final Exam): April 26 by 5pm

Writing Assignment (See Instructions):

In the landmark case, *Shelby County V. Holder (2013)*, the US Supreme Court struck down major provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act relating to the procedure of “pre-clearance. “Since the ruling, states like Texas, Georgia and North Carolina, can now make changes to their voting laws, such as photo ID requirements, that do not need to be pre-approved by the federal government. Supporters of this ruling say the pre-clearance rules are no longer needed and besides, states need new laws to protect against voter fraud. Opponents say that these laws are just a new form of voter suppression tactics that hit the poor and racial minorities hardest.

Discussion Board:

Discussion Week Three (January 31 by 5p.m.)

Lawmakers and legalization advocates of marijuana across the country are demanding remedies to address decades of demonstrably racist policing, from laws that automatically expunge criminal records for marijuana dealing and possession to policies that would give minority communities assistance in building cannabis businesses. Are you in favor or against the legalization marijuana? Do you believe legalization should overture the racist policing and policies of the past? Explain.

Discussion Week Eight (March 6 by 5p.m.)

Should we regulate Freedom of Speech on social media platforms?

Discussion Week Thirteen (April 10 by 5p.m.)

In your opinion, (a) should Black eligible voters withhold their vote for either political party until they introduce substantive legislation that advances the Black community and culture? (b) The U.S. Congress must pass voting rights legislation to offset Republican-led state legislatures that are passing legislation to restrict voting. What is the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021? How will it ensure equal voting rights?

Read this syllabus like a contract. It specifies what can be expected from the course, as well as the obligations of each student in preparing for and attending class. Students are expected to be aware of all the materials contained in the syllabus.

John B. Coleman Library

The John B. Coleman Library's mission is to enhance the scholarly pursuit of knowledge, to foster intellectual curiosity, and to promote life-long learning and research through our innovative services, resources, and cultural programs, which support the Prairie View A&M University's global mission of teaching, service, and research. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty. Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/library/>; Phone: 936-261-1500

Academic Advising Services

Academic Advising Services offers students a variety of services that contributes to student success and leads towards graduation. We assist students with understanding university policies and procedures that affect academic progress. We support the early alert program to help students get connected to success early in the semester. We help refer students to the appropriate academic support services when they are unsure of the best resource for their needs. Faculty advisors support some students in their respective colleges. Your faculty advisor can be identified in PantherTracks. Advisors with Academic Advising Services are available to all students. We are located across campus. Find your advisor's location by academic major at www.pvamu.edu/advising. Phone: 936-261-5911

The University Tutoring Center

The University Tutoring Center (UTC) offers free tutoring and academic support to all registered PVAMU students. The mission of the UTC is to help provide a solid academic foundation that enables students to become confident, capable, independent learners. Competent and caring staff and peer tutors guide students in identifying, acquiring, and enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to reach their desired goals. Tutoring and academic support are offered face-to-face in the UTC, in virtual face-to-face sessions (<https://www.pvamu.edu/student-success/sass/university-tutoring-center/>), and through online sessions (<https://www.pvamu.edu/pvplace/>). Other support services available for students include Supplemental Instruction, Study Break, Academic Success Workshops, and Algebra Study Jam. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 307; Phone: 936-261-1561; Email: pvtutoring@pvamu.edu; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/student-success/sass/university-tutoring-center/>

Writing Center

The Writing Center provides well-trained peer tutors to assist students with writing assignments at any stage of the writing process. Tutors help students with various writing tasks from understanding assignments, brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, researching, and integrating sources. Students have free access to Grammarly online writing assistance. Grammarly is an automated proofreading and plagiarism detection tool. Students must register for Grammarly by using their student email address. In addition, students have access to face-to-face and virtual tutoring services either asynchronously via email or synchronously via Zoom. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 209; Phone: 936-261-3724; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/student-success/writing-center/>; Grammarly Registration: <https://www.grammarly.com/enterprise/signup>

Academic Early Alert

Academic Early Alert is a proactive system of communication and collaboration between faculty, academic advisors, and PVAMU students that is designed to support student success by promptly identifying issues and allowing for intervention. Academic Early Alerts help students by providing a central location to schedule advising appointments, view advisor contact information, and request assistance. Students who recognize that they have a problem that is negatively affecting their academic performance or ability to continue school may self-refer an Academic Early Alert. To do so, students will log in to PV Place and click on Academic Early Alert on the left sidebar. Phone: 936-261-5902; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/student-success/early-alert/>

Student Counseling Services

The Student Counseling Services unit offers a range of services and programs to assist students in maximizing their potential for success: short-term individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention, outreach, consultation, and referral services. The staff is licensed by the State of Texas and assists students who are dealing with academic skills concerns, situational crises, adjustment problems, and emotional difficulties. Information shared with the staff is treated confidentially and in accordance with Texas State Law. Location: Hobart Taylor, 2nd floor; Phone: 936-261-3564; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/healthservices/student-counseling-services/>

Office of Testing Services

Testing Services serves to create opportunities by offering a suite of exams that aid in the students' academic and professional success. Currently, we administer entrance (HESI A2), college readiness (TSI assessment), Prior Learning (CLEP, DSST), and proctored exams. Location: Wilhelmina Delco, 3rd Floor, Rm. 305; Phone: 936-261-3627; Email: aetesting@pvamu.edu; Website: www.pvamu.edu/testing

Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services. As a federally-mandated educational support unit, the Office of Disability Services serves as the repository for confidential disability files for faculty, staff, and students. For persons with a disability, the Office develops individualized ADA letters of request for accommodations. Other services include learning style inventories, awareness workshops, accessibility pathways, webinars, computer laboratory with adapted hard and software, adapted furniture, proctoring non-standardized test administrations, ASL interpreters, ALDs, digital recorders, Livescribe, and a comprehensive referral network across campus and the broader community. Location: Hobart Taylor, Rm. 1D128; Phone: 936-261-3583; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/disabilityservices/>

Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS)

Distance Learning, also referred to as Distance Education, is the employment of alternative instructional delivery methods to extend programs and services to persons unable to attend college in the traditional manner. The Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS) supports student learning through online, hybrid, web-assist, and 2-way video course delivery. For more details and contact information, visit: <https://www.pvamu.edu/dlearning/distance-learning-2-2/students-2/>; Phone: 936-261-3283

Veteran Affairs

Veterans Services works with student veterans, current military and military dependents to support their transition to the college environment and continued persistence to graduation. The Office coordinates and certifies benefits for both the G.I. Bill and the Texas Hazlewood Act. Location: Evans Hall, Rm. 102; Phone: 936-261-3563; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/sa/departments/veteranaffairs/>

Office for Student Engagement

The Office for Student Engagement delivers comprehensive programs and services designed to meet the co-curricular needs of students. The Office implements inclusive and accessible programs and services that enhance student development through exposure to and participation in diverse and relevant social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, leadership development, and campus governance. Location: Memorial Student Center, Rm. 221; Phone: 936-261-1340; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/studentengagement/>

Career Services

Career Services supports students through professional development, career readiness, and placement and employment assistance. The Office provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, resume and letter writing, and career exploration workshops and seminars. Services are provided for students at the Northwest Houston Center and College of Nursing in the Medical Center twice a month or on a requested basis. Distance Learning students are encouraged to visit the Career Services website for information regarding services provided. Location: Anderson Hall, 2nd floor; Phone: 936-261-3570; Website: <https://www.pvamu.edu/careerservices/>

University Rules and Procedures

Academic Misconduct

Academic dishonesty is defined as any form of cheating or dishonesty that has the effect or intent of interfering with any academic exercise or fair evaluation of a student's performance. The college faculty can provide additional information, particularly related to a specific course, laboratory, or assignment.

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with the *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*, which can be found on the [Academic](#)

[Integrity webpage](#). Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. As listed in the *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*, the University Online Catalog, and the Student Code of Conduct, the following are examples of prohibited conduct. This list is not designed to be all-inclusive or exhaustive. In addition to academic sanctions, any student found to have committed academic misconduct that is also a violation of criminal law may also be subject to disciplinary review and action by the Office of Student Conduct (as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct).

Forms of Academic Dishonesty:

1. **Cheating:** Deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not learned, giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations. Examples: unauthorized use of notes for a test; using a "cheat sheet" on a quiz or exam; any alteration made on a graded test or exam which is then resubmitted to the teacher;
2. **Plagiarism:** Careless or deliberate use of the work or the ideas of another; representation of another's work, words, ideas, or data as your own without permission or appropriate acknowledgment. Examples: copying another's paper or answers, failure to identify information or essays from the internet and submitting or representing it as your own; submitting an assignment which has been partially or wholly done by another and claiming it as yours; not properly acknowledging a source which has been summarized or paraphrased in your work; failure to acknowledge the use of another's words with quotation marks;
3. **Collusion:** When more than one student or person contributes to a piece of work that is submitted as the work of an individual;
4. **Conspiracy:** Agreeing with one or more persons to commit an act of academic/scholastic dishonesty; and
5. **Multiple Submission:** Submission of work from one course to satisfy a requirement in another course without explicit permission. Example: using a paper prepared and graded for credit in one course to fulfill a requirement and receive credit in a different course.

Nonacademic Misconduct

The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, (2) the inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or (3) campus behavior that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. The Office of Student Conduct will adjudicate such incidents under nonacademic procedures.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment of students and employees at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating the university's sexual harassment policy will be subject to disciplinary action. In accordance with the Texas A&M University System guidelines, your instructor is obligated to report to the Office of Title IX Compliance (titleixteam@pvamu.edu) any instance of sexual misconduct involving a student, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which the instructor becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. The faculty and staff of PVAMU actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like assistance or have questions, they may contact the Title IX Coordinator at 936-261-2144 or titleixteam@pvamu.edu. More information can be found at www.pvamu.edu/titleix, including confidential resources available on campus.

Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services or the Dean of Students' Office for additional information and to request accommodations.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Prairie View A&M University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity in its programs and activities. The University is committed to supporting students and complying with The Texas A&M University System non-discrimination policy. It seeks to establish an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you experience an incident of discrimination or harassment, we encourage you to report it. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are individuals who can meet with you. The Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and can be reached at Harrington Science Building, Suite 109 or by phone at 936-261-1744 or 1792.

Class Attendance Policy (See the University Online Catalog for Full Attendance Policy)

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports the full academic development of each learner, whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video and/or the internet. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in the assignment of a grade of "F." Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University's attendance policy in each course syllabus.

Student Academic Appeals Process

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rest with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the University Online Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint.

Technical Considerations

Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:

- Intel PC or Laptop with Windows 10 or later version; Mac with OS High Sierra*
- Smartphone or iPad/Tablet with Wi-Fi*
- High-speed Internet access
- 8 GB Memory
- Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15" monitor, 800x600, color or 16 bit
- Sound card w/speakers
- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari, or Firefox

Note: Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups in the Web browser preferences

* Smartphones, Google Chrome books, and Android tablets may not be supported. iPads are the only tablets supported.

Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:

- Sending and receiving email
- A working knowledge of the Internet
- Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
- Acrobat PDF Reader
- Windows or Mac OS
- Video conferencing software

Netiquette (online etiquette)

Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussion boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated. Do not use ALL CAPS for communicating to others AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING. Avoid slang terms such as

"wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you." Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post, and the message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.

Video Conferencing Etiquette

When using Zoom, WebEx, or other video conferencing tools, confirm the visible area is tidy, clear of background clutter, inappropriate or offensive posters, and other distractions. Ensure you dress appropriately and avoid using high traffic or noisy areas. Stay muted when you are not speaking and avoid eating/drinking during the session. Before the class session begins, test audio, video, and lighting to alleviate technology issues.

Technical Support

Students should go to <https://mypassword.pvamu.edu/> if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, call the Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services at 936-261-3283 or email ciits@pvamu.edu.

Communication Expectations and Standards

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

Discussion Requirement

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can occur in a seminar fashion. The use of the discussion board will accomplish this. The instructor will determine the exact use of discussion boards.

It is strongly suggested that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application such as Word and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, copy and paste to the discussion board.

COVID-19 Campus Safety Measures

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, PVAMU has adopted policies and practices to limit virus transmission.

- **Self-monitoring** - Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.
- **Face Coverings** - Face coverings (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) are recommended in classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource, and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is challenging to maintain reliably.
- **Physical Distancing** - Physical distancing should be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities where possible.

Personal Illness and Quarantine - Students required to quarantine are to participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities. Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class qualify for an excused absence. To receive an excused absence, students must provide appropriate documentation to the Office for Student Conduct, studentconduct@pvamu.edu