

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

GOVT 421

AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey of American constitutional development from British and colonial origins to the present, emphasizing the history of the Supreme Court and the development of the constitutional framework.

RATIONALE

American Constitutional History provides the student with an overview of the American Founding. The course focuses on the fundamental, constitutional origins of our governmental system. The student will explore the relationship between biblical, constitutional principles and modern American politics.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Blackboard [recommended browsers](#)
- D. Microsoft Word
- E. Turabian formatting information:
<https://www.liberty.edu/academics/casas/academicsuccess/index.cfm?PID=11954>

IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Articulate the various historical influences on American constitutional principles.
- B. Compare the importance of biblical, constitutional principles as they relate to American government.
- C. Analyze the various components of the Constitution and related documents.

- D. Examine how constitutional principles have been undermined in modern American politics.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations

- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (3)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 400 words, be supported by at least 2 sources (with one being the text), and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be 200–250 words and be supported by at least 2 sources (with one being the text).

- D. Short Papers (3)

The student will write three 2–3-page research-based papers in current Turabian format that focus on 1) the constitutional heritage of our governmental system; 2) the faith of our Founding Fathers; and 3) the major constitutional principles of our legal system. The papers must include at least 3 references in addition to the course textbooks and the Bible.

- E. Research Paper 1

The student will write a research-based paper that focuses on the right to privacy. This assignment will be completed in 2 parts. The first part will consist of creating a thesis statement, an intended outline, and an annotated bibliography. After receiving feedback from the instructor, the student will submit the 4–5-page final draft of the paper. The paper must be in current Turabian format and include at least 5 references in addition to the course textbooks and the Bible.

- F. Research Paper 2

The student will write a research-based paper that focuses on 2 major Supreme Court cases regarding freedom of religion. This assignment will be completed in 2 parts. The first part will consist of creating a thesis statement, an intended outline, and an annotated bibliography. After receiving feedback from the instructor, the student will submit the 5–7-page final draft of the paper. The paper must be in current Turabian format and include at least 5 references in addition to the course textbooks and the Bible.

VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES**A. Points**

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (3 at 75 pts ea)	225
Short Papers (3 at 100 pts ea)	300
Research Paper 1: Preparation	50
Research Paper 1: Final	150
Research Paper 2: Preparation	50
Research Paper 2: Final	225
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 900–1010 B = 800–899 C = 700–799 D = 600–699 F = 0–599

C. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

COURSE SCHEDULE

GOVT 421

Textbooks: Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution* (1995).
Lutz, *The Origins of American Constitutionalism* (1988).
McClellan, *Liberty, Order, and Justice* (2000).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Lutz: chs. 1–5 McClellan: chs. 1–2 1 presentation	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions Short Paper 1	10 0 100
2	Eidsmoe: chs. 1–3, 21 1 presentation	DB Forum 1	75
3	Eidsmoe: ch. 4 Lutz: chs. 6–9 McClellan: ch. 2 1 presentation	Short Paper 2	100
4	Eidsmoe: ch. 20 McClellan: ch. 3 1 presentation	DB Forum 2 Research Paper 1: Preparation	75 50
5	Lutz: chs. 10–12 McClellan: ch. 4 1 presentation	Short Paper 3 Research Paper 2: Preparation	100 50
6	McClellan: ch. 5 1 presentation	DB Forum 3	75
7	McClellan: chs. 6–7 1 presentation	Research Paper 1: Final	150
8	Eidsmoe: ch. 22 Lutz: Conclusion McClellan: pp. 594–601 1 presentation	Research Paper 2: Final	225
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course module/week (except Module/Week 1) begins on Tuesday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Monday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.