Dr. Juan Urbano Jr.
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Office: BH 3.06
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Class Meeting Time: Online
Office Hours: By appointment in my office, by office phone, or online via Skype. Students may need to download Skype from the internet. It is a free program for computer-to-computer phone calls and video conferencing. Skype charges fees for phone-to-computer or computer-to-phone calls.

Course Description and Goals
Welcome to U.S. Government and Politics (online). As an introductory course, we will discuss a multitude of concepts and theories that date back from the founding of the United States. We will discuss the issues the founders debated amongst themselves including representation, the franchise, and property. More contemporary issues covered in this course include: political behavior, party ideologies, political institutions and their functions, and civil liberties and civil rights.

Online Classroom Policies:
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior online or in person may be instructed to leave the virtual classroom, office, meeting space, etc.

The instructor will assume that you have made an earnest effort to understand the material. This will allow you to be prepared to engage the material in more detail or address misunderstandings during any online sessions and in person.

Learning Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Students should be able to understand key concepts of the constitution and the reasons we have a bicameral legislature
2. We will cover the differences between parties and elections. Students will learn the general ideas of why presidential elections have higher participation, theories on gerrymandering, and pros and cons of the electoral college
3. Students should be able to articulate the complexities of the American democracy in passing legislation through an ever-increasing polarized electorate.
Contact Preferences
If you would like instruction and clarification beyond the information given, please feel free to come to schedule an appointment my office, an appointment to call me at my office, or an appointment via Skype. Please use email to voice any questions/comments you may have that will involve a ‘quick’ response. Effort will be made to address you email within 48 hours, if you do not receive an email within than time frame please send me another email. I do not answer emails on the weekends and I will not answer exam questions on the day of or the day before an exam. A face-to-face or in-call meeting is the most effective means of communication for more complex issues and allows me to work with you at your individual level of understanding.

Students with Disabilities/Religious Needs:
If you are a student with a disability or have special needs, please let me know during the first week of class. In addition, students observing religious holidays that conflict with class exams/presentations must let me know during the first week of class.

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, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Honesty:
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) If unsure of what honesty entails or if for more information regarding the penalties for academic dishonesty, please refer to the University Catalog.

Academic Advising:
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Intellectual Property Issues
Course materials prepared by myself, including the course syllabus, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by me are my property alone. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without my consent is prohibited. On request, I usually grant permission for students to audiotape lectures, on the condition that the individual making
the recording only uses these audiotapes as a study aid. Unless explicit permission is obtained by me, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. Any individual or organization violating my copyright on course materials and lectures could be subject to charges of academic misconduct and/or to civil action for copyright violations.

Grading
Your POLS 2305 grade is broken down in the following fashion:

- Discussion Board Postings   5%
- Writing Assignments    10%
- Online homework assignments  15%
- 4 Exams, Best 3 are counted,    75%
  Final is the make-up exam and is cumulative

A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=Below 60

Grade Appeals
Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts’ website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

Exams
A total of 4 exams are administered online during the semester (including the final) and will test students on the content COVERED IN DISCUSSION AND IN THE ASSIGNED READING MATERIALS. Each of the student’s highest 3 exam scores count as 25% of the total grade (totaling 75%) and the lowest score is dropped from the student’s grade. The make-up exam will be the fourth/final exam that will be administered during the time and date of the class final. The final will be cumulative.

Online Homework Assignments
You will have 10 online homework assignments. You must use your CONNECT code that is in your textbook in order to be able to access the homework. The homework will be available for you to complete a week before it is due and you can attempt the homework as many times as you like.

Writing Assignments
I will announce when I would like to have a writing assignment due from you. It will be about 1-2 pages long and will deal with a contemporary issue that we may be addressing in our class at that time. I prefer to wait to assign you the topics on these assignments because I want to choose an issue that is important during our readings.

Discussion Board
You will also be expected to contribute throughout the course on our blackboard’s discussion board page. Participation on the discussion board can include, but not be limited to: posting articles that speak to our readings, replying to postings with insightful comments or critiques, posting articles that refute the first posting, posting videos that may elaborate on our readings, ect…If you post an article or a video I expect for it to contain useful and quality information, not just unrelated nonsense things your Facebook friends posted.

**Required Text:** (Available at campus bookstore)

**You must have access to blackboard as well.**

**TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR**
As the topic of American government is ever changing, I reserve the right to adapt our course calendar if new issues arise that begs for our attention.

Week 1 June 1-5:
Introduction, review course syllabus
Chapter 1-Democracy and American Politics
Chapter 2-The Founding and The Constitution
Chapter 3-Federalism
***Online homework 1-On chapter 3

Week 2 June 8-12
Chapter 4-Civil Liberties
***Online homework 2 on Chapter 4
Chapter 5-Civil Rights
***Online homework 3 on Chapter 5

**Friday, June 12**
**Exam 1 Covering Chapters 1-5**

Week 3 June 15-19
Chapter 6-Public Opinion and Political Socialization
Chapter 9-Participation, Voting Behavior, and Campaigns
***Online homework 4 & 5 on Chapters 6 & 9
Chapter 8-Nominations and Elections
***Online homework 6 on Chapter 8
Chapter 10-Interest Groups
Chapter 11-Media and Politics

**Monday, June 22**
**Exam 2 Covering Chapters 6, 8-11**
Week 4 June 22-26
Chapter 7-Political Parties
Chapter 12-Congress
***Online homework 8
Chapter 13-Presidency
***Online homework 9
Chapter 15-The Judiciary
***Online homework 10

Monday, June 29
Exam 3 Covering Chapters 7, 12, 13, 15

June 30 & July 1, study days
Final Exam, July 2-Cumulative Exam