State and Local Government

Course Description
The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the politics, government, and administration of American states, counties, cities, and special districts, with special emphasis on Texas. (Meets the University core requirement and the Texas State statutory requirement in Texas government.)

Student Learning Objectives
By the end of the semester the course will have met these objectives:

1. By having the students engage in critical thinking activities related to the Constitution, the political and philosophical foundations of the nation, governmental institutions, and political behavior.
2. By having students engage in written, verbal or visual activities related to the Constitution, the political and philosophical foundations of the nation, governmental institutions, and political behavior.
3. By having students engage in course related activities that connect personal responsibility and political ideology to encourage ethical decision making.
4. By having students engage in course related activities that connect social responsibility to civil rights, civil liberties, and to voting and voting behavior.

Grading Criteria

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 89</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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Major Course Requirements
The exams will be multiple choice and true and false. There is also a short video analysis paper based on a documentary viewed in class. Guidelines for this paper are provided separately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
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<td>Exam 4</td>
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<td>Exam 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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If you arrive later than 10 minutes after the exam has started, you will not be able to take the exam that day.

Required Texts:

Study Tools
You can access the CourseMate through the publisher’s website at: [www.cengagebrain.com](http://www.cengagebrain.com)

The textbook provides an access code. You will need to enter this access code to be able to access CourseMate. It will then ask you for the Course Key. You will also need to enter the Course Key number listed below.

WILL BE PROVIDED

Instructions for Registering for CourseMate:

1. Log on to cengagebrain.com
2. Look for Home page
3. On Right-hand side, look for “Have another product to register” Click on this one.
4. Enter the CourseMate access code that came with your textbook.
5. A pop-up screen will appear called “Course and Materials.” Open CourseMate.
6. Click on “Enroll in Course.”
7. Enter Course Key number above

If you are having problems, you may also contact Technical Support at:

1-800-354-9706

They can help you enroll.

This website includes quizzes, chapter outlines, flashcards and several learning modules that you can use. I highly recommend that you use this resource to study for exams.

**Course Policies**
You are expected to come prepared for class and to make thoughtful contribution in class. If you do not understand something, ask. It is very important that we discuss issues related to government and their impact on the community. You should be exposed to a variety of opinions that may differ from your own. Respect those opinions and use them to help you reflect on why people hold different views.

Class lectures provide the basis for the course. Concepts and information that I deem important will be presented in class. Regular and consistent attendance is essential if you want to do well in the course.

**Class Attendance**
All students are expected to attend EVERY class. The major valid excuses for missing a class are illness and death. Notes and grades are available through Blackboard.

**Participation**
Students are able to earn a maximum of 10 percent based on participation points. I will take random roll call using sign-in sheets approximately 10 times during the semester. The participation points will be awarded as follows based on unexcused absences. If you have an excused absence (university-related, illness with M.D. excuse), you must bring me documentation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Absences</th>
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<td>0 - 2</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>3 - 4</td>
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<td>5 - 6</td>
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<td>7 - 8</td>
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<td>9 - 10</td>
<td>60%</td>
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**Makeup Exams**
Make-up exams will be allowed only for emergencies and with advance approval. These exams will be different from the regular exams and may require documented proof of emergency.
- You need to contact me to determine if you can take a make-up exam.
- If you have an unexcused reason for missing the exam, you will be able to take the missed exam on the day of the final exam.

**Incomplete Grades**
A grade of incomplete will be given only for extreme emergencies and will necessitate appropriate documentation. You must request a grade of “incomplete” and sign a form agreeing to the terms for a grade of I. However, you must have completed 75% of the coursework.

**Academic Etiquette**
There are certain rules that apply to my classes. It is difficult to learn in an environment that is not conducive to learning. Such activities include: talking to neighbors during class, reading newspapers, walking in late and going up the central aisle, napping, walking out of class prior to being dismissed. It is disrespectful to me and to the class. If you do not abide by these rules, you will be asked to leave my class. **Please turn off your cell phones or put them on vibrate during my class.**

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism.**
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, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a grade of F.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. **Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the**
Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. June 14 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of "W" this term.

Classroom/professional behavior
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 may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

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, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

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.
GRADE APPEALS PROCESS

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’s Office.
### Syllabus and PROVISIONAL COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/1</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Syllabus presentation</td>
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<td>• Expectations</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Historical Texas</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Texas’ political culture</td>
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<td>• Historical Texas: politics and government</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maxwell et al., Prologue</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/2</td>
<td><strong>Historical Texas continued</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Culture, People, Demographics</strong></td>
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<td>• Texans and Texas pride</td>
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<td>• Population of Texas</td>
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<td>• Past and future growth trends</td>
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<td>• Demographic characteristics</td>
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<td>• Impact on government programs (Murdock Report)</td>
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<td>• Concept of political culture</td>
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<td>• America’s political culture</td>
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<td>Maxwell, et al. Chapter 1</td>
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<td>6/3</td>
<td><strong>American Federalism</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Defining and interpreting</td>
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<td>• Constitutional structure</td>
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<td>• Division of powers</td>
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<td>• Limits on states</td>
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<td>Maxwell et al., Chapter 2 and notes</td>
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<td>6/4</td>
<td><strong>Test 1</strong></td>
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<td>6/8</td>
<td><strong>Video, <em>The Storm</em>, class discussion</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Texas Constitution</strong></td>
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<td>• Functions of State Constitutions</td>
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<td>• History of Texas Constitutions</td>
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<td>6/9</td>
<td><strong>Texas Constitution continued</strong></td>
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<td>6/10</td>
<td><strong>Political Parties and Factions</strong></td>
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<td>6/11</td>
<td><strong>Test 2</strong></td>
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<td>6/15</td>
<td><strong>Video: Hacking Democracy, class discussion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6/16</td>
<td><strong>Voting and Elections in Texas</strong></td>
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<td>6/17</td>
<td><strong>Voting and Elections continued</strong></td>
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<td>6/18</td>
<td><strong>Test 3</strong></td>
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<td>6/22</td>
<td>Video: <em>Last Man Standing</em>, class discussion</td>
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<td>THE LEGISLATURE</td>
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<td>6/24</td>
<td>• Image of Texas legislature</td>
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<td>• Functions of legislature</td>
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<td>• Legislative process</td>
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<td>• Legislative district lines</td>
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<td>• Policy making</td>
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<td>Maxwell et al., Ch. 7, 8</td>
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<td>6/25</td>
<td>Test 4</td>
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<td>6/29</td>
<td>Law and the Courts</td>
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<td>6/30</td>
<td>• Function of state courts</td>
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<td>• Role of courts in policy making</td>
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<td>• Texas courts</td>
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<td>• Criminal law</td>
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<td>• Civil law</td>
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<td>6/30</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/1</td>
<td>• Comparison of state and city governments</td>
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<td>• Forms of city government</td>
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<td>• Participation in city politics</td>
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<td>• County governments</td>
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<td>• County responsibilities</td>
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<td>• Constitutional provisions</td>
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<td>• Policy making</td>
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<td>• State and local taxes</td>
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<td>• Sources of revenue</td>
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<td>• Texas tax system</td>
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<td>• State and local spending</td>
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<td>• Federal aid</td>
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<td>• Distribution of benefits</td>
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<td>• Borrowing money</td>
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<td>7/2</td>
<td>Test 5</td>
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