Please read this syllabus in full. You are responsible for its contents throughout the length of this course.

Portions of this course will be conducted online. Please be careful to note which days class meets on campus and which days instruction will take place online.

Course Description
This course serves to introduce the politics, constitutions, and political institutions of the state of Texas. Students will explore the relationship between the federal, state, and local branches of government.

Required Text (Available at campus and off-campus bookstore.)
Please note: Access to McGraw-Hill Connect is required for the course.

Class Websites
Blackboard – https://bb9.tamucc.edu/
McGraw-Hill Connect –

Learning Objectives
Upon completion of the course, students should be able to complete the following:
• Recall basic facts related to the foundations of the Texas state government.
• Describe key political concepts related to U.S. institutions such as the legislature, the governor, and the judiciary.
• Demonstrate their understanding of key concepts relating to the political behavior in the state of Texas such as voting, elections, and political parties.

Core Objectives
The four Core Objectives related to this course are Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. By the end of the semester, the course will have met these objectives:
• 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.
• 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.
• By having students engage in course-related activities that connect personal responsibility and political ideology to encourage ethical decision making.
• By having students engage in course-related activities that connect social responsibility to civil rights, civil liberties, and to voting and voting behavior, and the policy making process.

**Major Course Requirements**
Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:

- **Attendance:**
  - 20 class meetings x 2 points per class = 40 points
    - (We have a total of 21 class meetings, but you are allowed one absence without penalty.)

- **Exams:**
  - 3 exams x 150 points = 450 points
  - There are three noncumulative, multiple-choice exams for this course. They are taken in class.
  - NO individual make-ups are given for missed exams. In place of individual make-ups, students who miss an exam will have the opportunity to make up a single missed test during the final exam period by taking a cumulative make-up exam. The cumulative make-up is not an opportunity to replace a low exam score. Students may only make-up one exam.

- **Online Course Components:**
  - Details on the online components for the course will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.
  - 6 Connect exercises x 20 points = 120 points
    - (Out of 7 Connect exercise, I drop your lowest score.)
  - 8 original discussion board posts x 20 points = 160 points
  - 16 discussion board responses x 5 points = 80 points
  - 10 Connect quizzes x 15 points = 150 points
    - (Out of 12 Connect quizzes, I drop your two lowest scores.)

  Total course points available = 1,000 points

**Grading Scale**

- A = 900 – 1,000 points
- B = 800 – 899 points
- C = 700 – 799 points
- D = 600 – 699 points
- F = 599 points and below
Course Policies

Attendance/Tardiness
Because a significant portion of this course will be conducted online, attendance in regular class sessions is vital. Attendance will be taken daily via sign-in sheet. (The act of forgery of a classmate’s signature will be addressed using the Academic Integrity policy discussed within this syllabus.) If you are not present to sign the attendance sheet when it circulates, you will be counted absent for the day. One absence is allowed for the semester without a negative impact on your attendance grade.

Late Work and Makeup Exams
Late work is not accepted in this course.

If you miss one exam, you will be eligible to take a cumulative makeup exam at the end of the semester during the course’s final exam period. No individual makeup exams are allowed until the end of the semester.

Extra Credit
I do not offer any individual extra credit opportunities in this course. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please do not request individual extra credit at any point during the semester.

The class will have one extra credit opportunity worth 25 points offered during the semester. More details will be given in class.

Email Policy
Email is a form of professional communication and should be treated as such. I will use email and Blackboard to communicate with you throughout the semester, and you are expected to regularly check your Islander email account.

Please respect the following policies regarding email communication:

- Email should include your first and last name, your class number, and your section number (e.g., Kaitlin Nelson – POLS 2306.002). I teach multiple classes and sections during the semester. Providing this information allows me to locate your information and respond in a timely manner.

- All email to the professor must be sent from your official TAMUCC email address. This is to ensure your privacy and to avoid spam filters. I will not respond to emails originating from Gmail, Yahoo, or other domains.

- I do my best to respond quickly, but please allow 24 hours for responses.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage
Please silence your cell phone during class. If you need to use your phone (or other electronic device) during class time for any reason, please leave the room. However, if you are leaving on a regular basis to use your phone, you will be counted absent. (If there are special circumstances, please let me know.)
Laptop computers and tablets are permitted in the class for note-taking purposes. If your computer usage is distracting to fellow students or the professor, you will be asked to discontinue.

**Classroom Decorum**
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 Integrity**
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.)

**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. You will need to check online for the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**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 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 #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.tamu.edu/students/studentinfo.html](cla.tamu.edu/students/studentinfo.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane, where classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, university facilities (i.e., email, websites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and secondary means of contact.

**Academic Calendar Reminders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W 8/26</td>
<td>Classes begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/2</td>
<td>Last day to late register or add a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/7</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 11/6</td>
<td>Last day to drop a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 11/26 – F 11/27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 11/30</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from the University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 12/1</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 12/2</td>
<td>Reading Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 12/3 – F 12/4; M 12/7 – W 12/9</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 12/10 – F 12/11</td>
<td>Grading Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa 12/12</td>
<td>Fall Commencement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 12/14</td>
<td>Fall Grades Due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Schedule

Please note: Readings should be completed before class on the date they are listed. (For example, you should come to class on Monday, August 31 having read Ch. 1, “Introduction to Texas History and Politics.”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Location</th>
<th>Topic (Reading) Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W 8/26</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Course Introduction and Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 8/28</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Discussion Board: Introductions&lt;br&gt;Review Ch. 1 slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 8/31</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Texas History and Politics&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 1, “Introduction to Texas History and Politics”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/2</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Texas Constitution&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 2, “The Texas State Constitution and the American Federal System” – pp. 27-45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/4</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Connect Exercise 1&lt;br&gt;Review Ch. 2 slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/7</td>
<td>NO CLASSES</td>
<td>LABOR DAY HOLIDAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/9</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Federalism&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 2, “The Texas State Constitution and the American Federal System,” – pp. 46-54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/11</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>View “FRONTLINE: The Storm”&lt;br&gt;Discussion Board: Posts and responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/14</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Connect Exercise 2&lt;br&gt;Review Ch. 3 slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/16</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Texas Legislature&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 3, “The Texas Legislature”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/18</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Connect Exercise 3&lt;br&gt;Review Ch. 4 slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/21</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>The Governor&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 4, “The Executive Department and the Office of the Governor of Texas” – pp. 97-102, 107-126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/23</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>The Plural Executive&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 4, “The Executive Department and the Office of the Governor of Texas,” – 102-106)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 9/25</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Connect Exercise 4&lt;br&gt;Review Ch. 5 slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/28</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Texas Courts&lt;br&gt;(Ch. 5, “The Court System in Texas”)&lt;br&gt;In-Class Exam Review&lt;br&gt;Exam 1 Connect Quizzes due 11:59 PM on M 9/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 9/30</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>EXAM 1 in class&lt;br&gt;(Chs. 1-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Class Location</td>
<td>Topic (Reading) Assignment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| F 10/2    | Online         | Connect Exercise 5  
Review Ch. 7 slides                                                                 |  
| M 10/5    | Classroom      | Voting & Political Participation  
(Ch. 7, “Voting and Political Participation in Texas”)                                     |  
| W 10/7    | Classroom      | The Voting Rights Act of 1965  
In-Class Viewing of The March @50 (Episode 2: Voting Rights)                                 |  
| F 10/9    | Online         | Discussion Board: Posts and responses                                                      |  
| M 10/12   | Online         | Discussion Board: Posts and responses                                                       
Review Ch. 8 slides                                                                             |  
| W 10/14   | Classroom      | Campaigns and Elections  
(Ch. 8, “Elections and Campaigns in Texas”)                                                  |  
| F 10/16   | Online         | Connect Exercise 6                                                                          |  
| M 10/19   | Classroom      | In-Class Viewing of Last Man Standing                                                       |  
| W 10/21   | Classroom      | In-Class Viewing of Last Man Standing                                                       |  
| F 10/23   | Online         | Discussion Board: Posts and responses                                                      |  
| M 10/26   | Classroom      | Political Parties  
(Ch. 9, “Political Parties in Texas”)                                                         |  
| W 10/28   | Classroom      | Political Parties  
(Ch. 9, “Political Parties in Texas,” cont.)                                                   |  
| F 10/30   | Online         | Exam Review  
Exam 2 Connect Quizzes due 11:59 PM on F 10/30                                               |  
| M 11/2    | Classroom      | EXAM 2 in class  
(Chs. 7-9)                                                                                     |  
| W 11/4    | Classroom      | Local Government  
(Ch. 6, “Local Governments in Texas”)                                                          |  
| F 11/6    | Online         | Discussion Board: Posts and responses                                                       
Review slides for Chs. 10 and 12                                                                 |  
| M 11/9    | Classroom      | Interest Groups  
(Ch. 10, “Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas”)                                               |  
| W 11/11   | Classroom      | Financing State Government  
(Ch. 12, “Financing State Government”)                                                            |  
| F 11/13   | Online         | Connect Exercise 7  
Review Ch. 11 slides                                                                               |  
| M 11/16   | Classroom      | Intro to Public Policy; Welfare Policy  
(Ch.11, “Public Policy in Texas” – pp. 275-280, pp. 283-284)                                       |  
| W 11/18   | Classroom      | Educational Policy  
(Ch.11, “Public Policy in Texas” – pp. 285-292)                                               |  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Location</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M 11/23</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Health Care Policy; Social Policy</td>
<td>(Ch.11, “Public Policy in Texas” – pp. 284-285, pp. 293-296)</td>
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<td>Exam Review</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Exam 3 Connect Quizzes due 11:59 PM on Sa 11/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 11/27</td>
<td>NO CLASSES</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 11/30</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>EXAM 3 in-class</td>
<td>(Chs. 6, 10-12)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cumulative Make-Up to be given during Final Exam time slot.</td>
<td>Final Exam time slot to be announced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students are responsible for using the most current version.*