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

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. If you are comfortable using an e-book, you may purchase digital access from the bookstore or directly through the publisher. The publisher also provides a two-week courtesy access period. We will discuss this further in class.*

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

*Note: To ensure that your assignment grades properly transfer to Blackboard, you should always access the course and your assignments from Blackboard, rather than from Connect. Follow the assignment links from Blackboard; this will allow your two accounts to connect.*

Student 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 Student Learning 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 – 100 points**
  - In a concentrated course format such as the Maymester, attendance is vital to student success. Students are expected to attend all class sessions in full. Attendance will be taken at multiple points each day.
  - Attendance goes beyond your mere presence in the classroom. Attendance also requires your attention to course matters. As such, electronic devices (other than laptops or tablets for notetaking) should be silenced and put away. Their presence detracts from the learning environment.

- **Online Assignments – 200 points**
  - There will be twelve online assignments offered throughout the class session. The lowest two of the twelve will be dropped.
  - Online assignments will be conducted through McGraw-Hill’s Connect system. You are required to register for Connect in time to complete the first assignment. More information will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

- **Short Writing Assignments – 200 points**
  - There will be four writing assignments offered throughout the class session.
  - Writing assignments will be submitted on Blackboard.
  - Late work is not accepted, and you cannot make up writing assignment.

- **Exams – 500 points**
  - There are four noncumulative, multiple-choice exams for the course. These will be taken in-class.
  - If a student finds him or herself in an emergency situation and will have to miss an exam, that student must notify the professor via email prior to the start of the exam. If a student has made appropriate notification, the student may make up one exam during office hours.

  **Total Course Points = 1,000 points**

**Grading Scale**

\[
\begin{align*}
A &= 900 - 1,000 \\
B &= 800 - 899 \\
C &= 700 - 799 \\
D &= 600 - 699 \\
F &= 599 \text{ points and below}
\end{align*}
\]
Course Policies

Attendance/Tardiness
Due to the intense nature of the Maymester format, attendance is mandatory at all class sessions. Attendance will be taken at multiple points during each class session 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 do not present to sign the attendance sheet when it circulates, you will be counted absent for that portion of the course. In the event that you cannot attend, stay the entire class, or must arrive late for class, you will need to discuss the circumstances with the professor.

Late Work and Makeup Exams
Late work is not accepted in this course. Deadlines are stated in the syllabus and are posted on Blackboard/Connect. Students are responsible for tracking their own assignments and due dates.

If you miss one exam and notify me via email prior to the start of that exam that you will be missing it, you may make arrangements to take a makeup during my office hours. Students may not make up more than one exam during the course.

Student athletes should notify the professor at the beginning of the semester of their participation in campus athletics. Athletes are responsible for notifying the professor of any travel dates and for completing assignments before scheduled travel.

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.

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., Jane Doe – POLS 2306.001 or Maymester). During Maymester, I am still receiving email from my five spring sections; providing your course information greatly aids me in helping you quickly and efficiently.
- 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. There is a good chance that I will not receive emails sent from 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 and put it away (off the tabletop) 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 notetaking 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. According to the TAMUCC Student Code of Conduct, plagiarism is “[i]ntentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgment of the source” (Code of Conduct, http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/Article%20III.pdf). In this course, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment will be handled with the utmost gravity; not only will offenses receive lowered grades in the course, but they will also be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, in accordance with TAMUCC guidelines.

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 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
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.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.
Course Schedule
Please note: Readings should be completed before class on the date they are listed. (For example, you should come to class on Tuesday, January 26 having read Ch. 1, “Introduction to Texas History and Politics.”)
This course is offered with an online component (1-24% of course time). On certain class meetings, we will dismiss at 3:00 PM; the remaining course time is scheduled for online activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, May 15</td>
<td>Course Introduction; Syllabus Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture:</td>
<td>Texas Political Culture (Ch. 1, “Introduction to Texas History and Politics; Fernandez, “What Makes Texas Texas”*)</td>
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<td>Texas History (Ch. 1, cont.)</td>
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<td>The Texas Constitution (Ch. 2, “The Texas State Constitution and the American Federal System”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments:</td>
<td>Connect Quizzes – Chapters 1, 2, and 6 (due 11:59 PM)</td>
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<td>*Reading available online in Blackboard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 16</td>
<td>Lecture: Federalism and Local Government (Ch. 6, “Local Governments in Texas”)</td>
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<td>Activities:</td>
<td>In-class Viewing of FRONTLINE: “The Storm” (<a href="http://www.pbs.org/video/1555897742/">http://www.pbs.org/video/1555897742/</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments:</td>
<td>Writing Assignment 1 (due 11:59 PM)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Study Guide for Exam 1</td>
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<td>Wednesday, May 17</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 1</strong> conducted in class from <strong>12:00 PM to 12:50 PM</strong>.</td>
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<td>• Bring: pencil(s) and eraser(s). A Scantron will be provided for you.</td>
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<td>• Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam.</td>
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<td>Lecture:</td>
<td>The Texas Legislature (Ch. 3, “The Texas Legislature”)</td>
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<td>The Governor (Ch. 4, “The Executive Department and the Office of the Governor”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments:</td>
<td>Connect Quizzes – Chapters 3 and 4 (due 11:59 PM)</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic and Assignments</td>
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<td>Thursday, May 18</td>
<td><strong>Lecture:</strong> The Plural Executive (Ch. 4, cont.)</td>
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<td>Texas Courts (Ch. 5, “The Court System in Texas”)</td>
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<td><strong>Assignments:</strong> Connect Quizzes – Chapters 5 <em>(due 11:59 PM)</em></td>
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<td>Writing Assignment 2 <em>(due Friday at 11:59 PM)</em></td>
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<td>Study Guide for Exam 2</td>
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<td><em><strong>Note: The last day to drop a Maymester course is Saturday, May 20.</strong></em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, May 22</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 2</strong> conducted in class from <strong>12:00 PM to 12:50 PM.</strong></td>
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<td>• Bring: pencil(s) and eraser(s). A Scantron will be provided for you.</td>
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<td>• Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no</td>
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<td>additional students will be able to begin the exam.</td>
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<td><strong>Lecture:</strong> Political Parties (Ch. 9, “Political Parties in Texas”)</td>
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<td>Voting and Elections (Ch. 7, “Voting and Political Participation in Texas”)</td>
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<td><strong>Assignments:</strong> Connect Quizzes – Chapters 9 and 7 <em>(due 11:59 PM)</em></td>
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<td>Tuesday, May 23</td>
<td><strong>Lecture:</strong> Campaigns and Elections (Ch. 8, “Elections and Campaigns in Texas”)</td>
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<td><strong>Activities:</strong> In-Class Viewing of <em>Last Man Standing</em></td>
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<td><strong>Assignments:</strong> Connect Quiz – Chapters 8 <em>(due 11:59 PM)</em></td>
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<td>Writing Assignment 3 <em>(due 11:59 PM)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Study Guide for Exam 3</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic and Assignments</td>
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| **Wednesday, May 24** | **EXAM 3** conducted in class from **12:00 PM to 12:50 PM**.  
  - Bring: pencil(s) and eraser(s). A Scantron will be provided for you.  
  - Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam.  
  
  Lecture: **Interest Groups** (Ch. 10, “Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas”)  
  **Government Finance** (Ch. 13, “Financing State Government”)  
  
  Assignments: **Connect Quizzes – Chapters 10 and 13 (due 11:59 PM)** |
| **Thursday, May 25** | **Lecture:** **Policy Issues in Texas** (Ch. 11, “Public Policy in Texas”; Ch. 12, “The Criminal Justice System in Texas”)  
  
  Assignments: **Connect Quiz – Chapters 11 & 12 – combined quiz (due 11:59 PM)**  
  **Writing Assignment 4 (due 4:00 PM Friday)**  
  **Study Guide for Exam 4** |
| **Friday, May 26** | **Today is the final exam date for Maymester courses.**  
  **EXAM 4** conducted in class from **1:00 PM to 1:50 PM**.  
  - Bring: pencil(s) and eraser(s). A Scantron will be provided for you.  
  - Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam.  
  
  **This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students are responsible for using the most current version.** |