POLS 2306 State and Local Politics

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of politics, the constitutions and the political institutions of Texas. The information in this course is more practical than you might think: whether you are an engineering, business, or political science major, as a citizen it is important that you be informed about how government works. Businessmen find it difficult to navigate government that they do not understand, and engineers cannot get a patent unless they know the rules and laws that protect inventions, and citizens have almost no hope of finding out anything by calling a government agency in a phone book.

Learning Objectives: POLS 2306

- 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.

Major Course Requirements

Your grade will consist of four (4) Exams (400 points), twelve (12) Exam Prep Exercises (400 points), twelve (12) Online Quizzes (120 points) and four (4) online assignments (80 points) for a total of 1,000 points. The exams will not be cumulative.
Major Course Requirements (Cont)

4 Exams @ 100 points = 400 (50 Questions @ 2pts for each question)
12 Exam Prep Exercises @ 100 points (total for each exam section) = 400
12 Online Quizzes (online) @ 10 points = 120
4 Online Assignments = 80 points
Total Points Possible= 1,000

Grading Scale:

A: 900-1,000 points; B: 800-899 points; C: 700-799 points; D: 600-699 points; F: 0-599 points.

Required

Textbook:


Online Material: Connect Access Card

Course Policies

Attendance/tardiness:

Attendance will count for 10% of your overall grade. Attendance will be based on interactions in the Discussion Board area and in your interactions with the Bb/Connect System.

Late work and Make-up Exams:

There is no late work accepted in the course. If you have circumstances that prohibit you from completing an assignment, we can discuss the situation.

If you miss an exam, you will be required to make-up the exam at the end of the semester. I do not allow make-ups until the end of the semester. Please be aware of this policy.

Extra Credit:

There is no extra credit in this course.
If you have children or other member of family for which you are the PRIMARY caregiver, please let me know.

Computers are permitted in the class for the purpose of taking notes. If you feel the need to engage in web-surfing, video gaming, watching of tv or any other non-course related activity please leave. I encourage and recommend the use of technology as it applies to the enrichment of students. For the integrity of the classroom any distracting or disturbing behavior will result in the loss of computers for all students in the classroom.

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 first offense result of a zero and subsequent offense of a grade of F for the course. In both cases, paperwork will be filed with the appropriate office(s).

Included in the Integrity of the Student Work and Course is the understanding that you and you alone will access the course in order to complete the assignments. Transmission of your login information to someone else to act on your behalf will result in academic dishonesty charges being filed with the university and vigorously pursued by Dr. Smith.

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 this date to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Preferred methods of scholarly citations

I use and encourage the use of the American Political Science Association citation method.

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.
Statement of Civility (can be in place of classroom/professional behavior)
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

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 she 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 and 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., emails, web sites, 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 a secondary means of contacting each student.
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