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 Outcomes:
On completion of this course students will be able to:
1. Recall basic facts related to the foundations of the Texas state government.
2. Describe key political concepts related to US institutions such as the legislature, the governor, and the judiciary.
3. Demonstrate their understanding of key concepts relating to the political behavior in the state of Texas such as voting, elections, and political parties.

Major Course Requirements
- Course Exams (4 @ 25 pts.) 100 Points

Course exams: Four exams will be given to assess student learning. The exams will be based on slides and lectures uploaded to blackboard. Exams will be released on a weekly basis to correspond to that week’s block of lectures.

Required or Recommended Readings:
No textbook will be assigned for this course. All exam material will be based upon the content of the power point slides as well as additional readings posted on Blackboard.

Lectures and Slides
Slides with recorded lectures, along with slides without recorded lectures, will be posted in the content folder of blackboard. Slides will be stored in their appropriate week’s folder. To hear the audio track, simply run the slideshow full screen and the slides will advance on their own.

Course Policies

Attendance/tardiness
Students should log into Blackboard on a regular basis to download material, watch videos and turn in assignments.
Late work and Make-up Exams

The course is asynchronous, therefore you are able to log in and complete course learning anytime that is convenient to you. There are requirements, however, for completion of unit work and exams. If the student is late in meeting these dates, the work will not be accepted, nor will exams allowed to be made up.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit offered in this course.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

Definition: In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is a violation academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:

- Using the work of another as your own,
- Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- Using resource materials without correct documentation,
- Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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. Drop Date for this semester is July 29th.

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**
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 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.

**Incompletes:**
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.

**Disabilities Accommodations**
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.

**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.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, 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.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

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.
Schedule

Week 1: Introduction, Culture, People, History, The Texas Constitution, American Federalism
   Exam #1 completed by 11:59 pm on July 19th

Week 2: Elections in Texas, Parties, Factions, Campaigns
   Exam #2 completed by 11:59 pm on July 26th

Week 3: The Texas Legislature, The Governor
   Exam #3 completed by 11:59 pm on August 2nd

Week 4: The Texas Court System, Local Government
   Exam #4 due by 11:59 pm on August 9th