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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60</td>
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</table>
**Evaluation:** There will be 4 exams will consist of multiple choice questions. There is a short written assignment in this class. **LATE PAPERS WILL BE PENALIZED 10 POINTS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</table>

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:**

You can buy the textbook or the ebook from the bookstore. You can also buy the ebook from the Cengage. More instructions are posted in Blackboard.

**Mindtap will be available for study resources. Instructions on how to access Mindtap are also posted in Blackboard.**

**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.

Please use the email listed above if you need to contact me. I will get back to you during usual working hours, M-F, 8 am – 5 pm.
Class Attendance
All students are expected to attend EVERY class. The major valid excuses for missing a class are illness and death. **Documentation for excused absences must be submitted upon your return to class.** 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absences</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 2</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 4</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 6</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 8</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
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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.
- You will be offered the opportunity to take a comprehensive replacement exam to replace your lowest grade.

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.

**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. November 8, 2019 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**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](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](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).
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.

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 Etiquette
There are certain rules that apply to my classes. It is difficult to learn in an environment that is not conducive to leaning. 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 silence your cell phones during my class.

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.

PROVISIONAL COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Syllabus presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 1 | HISTORICAL TEXAS  
• Historical Texas: politics and government  
• Political adjustments | Jones et al., Prologue |
| --- | --- |
| Week 2 | CULTURE, PEOPLE  
• Texans and Texas pride  
• Population of Texas  
• Past and future growth trends  
• Demographic characteristics  
• Impact on government programs (Murdock Report)  
• Concept of political culture  
• America’s political culture  
• Texas' political culture | Chapter 1 |
| Week 3 | AMERICAN FEDERALISM  
• Defining and interpreting  
• Constitutional structure  
• Division of powers  
• Limits on states | Chapter 2 and notes |
| Week 3, 4 | TEXAS CONSTITUTION  
• Functions of State Constitutions  
• History of Texas Constitutions  
• Revising the Constitution  
• Constitution today  
• Articles of Texas Constitution | Chapter 3 |
| Week 4 | Test 1 | 9/19/19 |
| Week 5 | Video: Hacking Democracy | Discussion |
| Week 6 | POLITICAL PARTIES, FACTIONS  
• Development of Texas party system  
• Functions and characteristics of political parties  
• Party machinery  
• Political ideologies  
• Party factions | Chapter 5 |
| Week 7-7 | Reaction paper | 10/10/19 |
| Week 7 | ELECTIONS IN TEXAS  
• Political participation  
• Types of elections  
• Campaigning in Texas | Chapter 4 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>TEST 2</th>
<th>10/17/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Video: <em>Last Man Standing</em></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 10 | **THE LEGISLATURE**  
- Image of Texas legislature  
- Functions of legislature  
- Legislative process  
- Legislative district lines  
- Policy making | Chapters 7 |
| Week 11 | **THE GOVERNOR, PLURAL EXECUTIVE AND POLICY MAKING**  
- Image and functions of governor  
- Governor’s staff  
- Governor’s powers  
- Plural Executive  
- Executive Branch  
- Bureaucracy and public policy | Chapter 8 |
| Week 12 | TEST 3 | 11/12/19 |
| Week 13 | Video | Discussion |
| Weeks 13 - 14 | **LAW AND THE COURTS**  
- Function of state courts  
- Role of courts in policy making  
- Texas courts  
- Criminal law  
- Civil law | Chapter 9 |
| 11/28/19 | **THANKSGIVING BREAK** | NO CLASS |
| Weeks 14 - 15 | **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**  
- Comparison of state and city governments  
- Forms of city government  
- Participation in city politics  
- County governments  
- County responsibilities  
- Constitutional provisions  
- Policy making  
- State and local taxes  
- Sources of revenue  
- Texas tax system  
- State and local spending | Chapters 11, 12 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 15</th>
<th>Last Day of Class</th>
<th>12/3/19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Post test – online</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Replacement Exam – online</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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