

# COURSE SYLLABUS United States and Texas Government: Institutions and Policies PSCI 2302.01W US/TX GOV; INSTS & POLS WEB BASED CLASS SUMMER I 2016 June 6 through July 7, 2016

Instructor: Dr. Robert G. Rodríguez, Assistant Professor, Political Science

**Office Location: Ferguson Social Science Building 149** NOT APPLICABLE DURING SUMMER SESSION

Office Hours: NOT APPLICABLE DURING SUMMER SESSION The ONLY way to contact me is via email

Office Phone: (903) 468-3094 NOT APPLICABLE DURING SUMMER SESSION

**University Email Address: robert.rodriguez@tamuc.edu** *Check the Syllabus to see if your question is answered FIRST.* 

Preferred Form of Communication: The ONLY way to contact me is via email.

**Communication Response Time:** *I will usually respond to emails within 24 hours (48 hours maximum).* 

## **\*\*CHECK** ANNOUNCEMENTS SECTION IN COURSE DAILY\*\*

This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the professor's discretion.

# **COURSE INFORMATION**

## **Textbooks Required**

There are **TWO required texts** for this course. *MAKE SURE TO PURCHASE THE* **CORRECT EDITIONS**:

- We the People: An Introduction to American Politics <u>TENTH</u> ESSENTIALS Edition, 2015, W.W. Norton and Co. *by Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert, Spitzer* ISBN: 978-0-393-93705-3
- Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas <u>FOURTH</u> Edition 2016, CQ Press by Ken Collier, Steven Galatas, Julie Harrelson-Stephens ISBN: 978-1-4833-5277-0

# **Course Description**

Welcome to United States and Texas Government! The purpose of this course is to study the *political systems* in the United States and Texas. This course will introduce you to the formal and informal institutions of national and state governments and the roles they play in the creation and implementation of public policy. Please note you *will not* be taught *what* to think about political issues in this course. Rather, you will be provided with the knowledge base to determine *how* to think about political issues for *yourself*.

First, we will examine the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the United States and Texas State Governments, in addition to federal and state bureaucracies. Then, we will analyze the formulation and implementation of public policies at the national and state levels.

## Format:

This is a FULLY ONLINE course that is ONLY accessible by logging in through your **MyLEO** account. The course is instructor-led, with a schedule that is organized into four learning modules (Units). Learning activities for each unit include an **online discussion** and an **online exam**.

The course materials are divided into FOUR units:

Unit 1: The Legislative Branch (June 6-14)

- Unit 2: The Executive Branch and Bureaucracy (June 13-21)
- Unit 3: The Judicial Branch (June 20-June 28)
- Unit 4: Public Policy (June 27- July 7)

Each unit contains chapter PowerPoint slides, links to chapter outlines and summaries, a discussion and an examination.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. **Critical Thinking**: Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion.

2. **Communication**: Student communication will be clear, purposeful, and make appropriate use of evidence, data and technology as applicable.

3. **Personal Responsibility**: Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.

4. **Social Responsibility**: Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues.

# **COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS**

**Examinations:** In this course, **all students are required to take** <u>FOUR</u> **exams**, each of which will consist of <u>50 questions in a multiple choice format</u>. Exams are "open book," HOWEVER, you MUST NOT RECEIVE ASSISTANCE IN ANY WAY FROM ANYONE WHILE COMPLETING THE EXAM. You will have <u>50 minutes</u> to complete each exam online. Together, these exams will comprise **92%** of your grade (each exam is worth 23%). The exams are NOT comprehensive. There is <u>NOT</u> a final exam in this course.

You will have a 48 hour period to complete each exam. **If you do not complete an exam during the designated 48 hour period, you will receive 0% for that exam.** 

If you have a **legitimate reason** for not completing an exam during the designated period (e.g. severe illness or injury *requiring professional medical care*, emergencies in your *immediate* family, participation in *official* university activities, legal *obligations*) **AND** you have **supporting documentation** for your inability to take the exam, then you may **request** an extension of the period to take the exam.

Requests for taking the make-up exam must be **submitted in writing VIA EMAIL and include SCANNED documentation** explaining and substantiating why your inability to take the exam during the designated period was legitimate. An approval to extend the period for you to complete the exam **will be based solely upon the professor's evaluation of your request and any supporting documentation**.

IF YOU RECEIVE ASSISTANCE ON THE EXAM FROM ANYONE IN ANY WAY, THIS CONSTITUTES ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND YOU WILL RECEIVE AN AUTOMATIC "F" IN THIS COURSE AND POTENTIALLY FACE FURTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION. (SEE "POLICIES" SECTION IN THIS SYLLABUS)

#### **EXAM DATES & TIMES:**

**UNIT 1, EXAM 1:** Monday, June 13, 12:00 a.m.-Tuesday, June 14, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 2, EXAM 2:** Monday, June 20, 12:00 a.m.-Tuesday, June 21, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 3, EXAM 3:** Monday, June 27, 12:00 a.m.-Tuesday, June 28, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 4, EXAM 4:** Monday, July 4, 12:00 a.m.-Tuesday, July 5, 11:59 p.m.

**Participation in ONLINE DISCUSSIONS:** A topic of discussion will be assigned to the class for each UNIT. Students must make one **(1) LONG POST** (two-three paragraphs or 8-12 sentences) AND AT LEAST one **(1) SHORT RESPONSE** (one-paragraph or 4-6 sentences) to another student's post, for each UNIT (each week). Your POSTS and RESPONSES MUST BE MEANINGFUL. In other words, it is not sufficient to simply state you agree or disagree. You must explain why in 4 sentences. You are ONLY required to respond to ONE long post each week. However, you may respond to up to THREE long posts, if you wish. (Note: You will NOT receive extra points for responding to more than one long post.)

# YOUR POSTS AND RESPONSES ARE NOT GROUP PROJECTS, AND THEY MUST NOT BE PLAGIARIZED.

IF YOU CUT AND PASTE OR PARAPHRASE SOMEONE ELSE'S WRITING IN YOUR POSTS OR RESPONSES, THIS CONSTITUTES ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND YOU WILL RECEIVE AN AUTOMATIC "F" IN THIS COURSE AND POTENTIALLY FACE FURTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION. (SEE "POLICIES" SECTION IN THIS SYLLABUS)

#### You must post your LONG POST by <u>WEDNESDAY</u> OF EACH WEEK

UNIT 1, LONG POST 1: Monday, June 6, 12:00 a.m.-Wednesday, June 8, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 2, LONG POST 2:** Monday, June 13, 12:00 a.m.-Wednesday, June 15, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 3, LONG POST 3:** Monday, June 20, 12:00 a.m.-Wednesday, June 22, 11:59 p.m.

UNIT 4, LONG POST 4: Monday, June 27, 12:00 a.m.-Wednesday, June 29,11:59 p.m.

## You must post your SHORT RESPONSE by <u>SUNDAY</u> OF EACH WEEK

**UNIT 1, RESPONSE 1:** Thursday, June 9, 12:00 a.m.-Sunday, June 12, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 2, RESPONSE 2:** Thursday, June 16, 12:00 a.m.-Sunday, June 19, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 3, RESPONSE 3:** Thursday, June 23, 12:00 a.m.-Sunday, June 26, 11:59 p.m.

**UNIT 4, RESPONSE 4:** Thursday, June 30, 12:00 a.m.-Sunday, July 3, 11:59 p.m.

## **ONLINE DISCUSSION RUBRIC:**

Each LONG POST is worth up to 1% of your grade, while each RESPONSE is worth up to .5% of your grade, for a total of **6%** of your grade. In order to receive FULL CREDIT for your LONG POSTS and SHORT RESPONSES, they must:

- A. Fulfill the length requirements LONG POST (two-three paragraphs or 8-12 sentences); SHORT RESPONSE (one-paragraph or 4-6 sentences)
- B. Use correct spelling and grammar. (Do not write like you are texting on your phone.)
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of the readings and topic. (Show you have completed the assigned readings.)
- D. Be respectful of others points of view and use appropriate language (NO RUDE OR DISRESPECTFUL COMMENTS ARE ALLOWED. You are free to disagree or agree with anyone, but your writing MUST demonstrate respect and civility at ALL times.)
- E. Use references and support. (Without DATA, all you have is an opinion.)

**Writing Assignment:** You will have **ONE** required writing assignment worth a total of **2%** of your grade. You will be provided the guidelines and topics for your writing assignment on **Monday, July 4**. The assignment will require you to write about issues addressing **critical thinking, communication** and **social responsibility** learned in this course.

IF YOU CUT AND PASTE OR PARAPHRASE SOMEONE ELSE'S WRITING IN YOUR POSTS OR RESPONSES, THIS CONSTITUTES ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND YOU WILL RECEIVE AN AUTOMATIC "F" IN THIS COURSE AND POTENTIALLY FACE FURTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION. (SEE "POLICIES" SECTION IN THIS SYLLABUS)

Your writing assignment is SUBMITTED THROUGH THE DROPBOX on the last day of the course (Thursday, July 7). \*\*PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL YOUR WRITING ASSIGNMENT\*\*

WRITING ASSIGNMENT: Monday, July 4, 12:00 a.m.-Thursday, July 7, 11:59 p.m.

# **Policies:**

**Academic Dishonesty of ANY kind:** Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an "F" in this course and be reported to the University administration. "Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material" (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12).

# If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

**Email: Before you ask me a question in an email, check to see if the <u>syllabus</u> <b>answers your question FIRST.** I generally reply to emails within 24 hours, Monday-Thursday. Emails sent to me over weekends will be replied to on Mondays. I do not reply to emails that ask questions about items covered in the syllabus, such as what chapters are covered on an exam or what the assigned readings are for a given class session.

**Code of Student Conduct:** Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

**SINCE THIS IS AN ONLINE COURSE, THIS CODE MOST SPECIFICALLY APPLIES TO YOUR WRITING IN THE ONLINE DISCUSSIONS.** Consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

**Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination 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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library, Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 Rebecca.tuerk@tamuc.edu http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServi ces/

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

# GRADING

Your grade in this course will be determined by the following scale and criteria:

Exams:92%Discussions:6%Writing Assignment:2%TOTAL:100%

# A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%

Detailed Grade Criteria and DUE DATES:

- Exam #1 (June 13-14): 23%
- Exam #2 (June 20-21): 23%
- Exam #3 (June 27-28): 23%
- Exam #4 (July 4-5): 23%
- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #1) June 6-8: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #2) June 13-15: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #3) June 20-22: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #4) June 27-29: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #1) June 9-12: .5%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #2) June 16-19: .5%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #3) June 23-26: .5%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #4) June 30- July 3: .5%
- Writing Assignment (July 4-7): 2%

<u>STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</u>: I have read the syllabus in its entirety, and understand the guidelines and agree to the policies detailed therein as a condition of being enrolled in this course. I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this course, and that failure to do so may result in serious consequences, including (but not limited to) being dropped from the course, and/or receiving a grade of "F" in the course.

#### YOU MUST SEND ME AN EMAIL ACKNOWLEDGING YOU HAVE READ AND AGREE TO STUDENT STATEMENT OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY BY THURSDAY JUNE 9, 2016 at 11:59 p.m., OR YOU WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE COURSE.

# **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

## Unit 1: The Legislative Branch (June 6-14)

Required Reading:

We The People Chapter 9 CONGRESS Lone Star Politics Chapter 3 TEXAS LEGISLATURE Lone Star Politics Chapter 4 LEGISLATIVE ORGANIZATION AND PROCESS

**Required Activities:** 

- Purchase your books
- Send me an email acknowledging that you have read and agree to the Student Statement of Personal Responsibility (**June 6-9**)
- Introduce yourself in the Online Discussion section (STUDENT LOUNGE) (June 6-8)
- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #1) **June 6-8**: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #1) June 9-12: .5%
- Exam #1 (June 13-14): 23%

## Unit 2: The Executive Branch and Bureaucracy (June 13-21)

Required Reading:

We The People Chapter 10 THE PRESIDENCY We The People Chapter 11 BUREAUCRACY Lone Star Politics Chapter 5 TEXAS GOVERNORS Lone Star Politics Chapter 6 THE PLURAL EXECUTIVE AND BUREAUCRACY IN TEXAS

Required Activities:

- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #2) June 13-15: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #2) June 16-19: .5%
- Exam #2 (June 20-21): 23%

# Unit 3: The Judicial Branch (June 20-28)

Required Reading:

We The People Chapter 12 THE FEDERAL COURTS Lone Star Politics Chapter 7 TEXAS JUDICIAL SYSTEM Lone Star Politics Chapter 8 TEXAS-SIZED JUSTICE

Required Activities:

- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #3) June 20-22: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #3) June 23-26: .5%
- Exam #3 (June 27-28): 23%

# Unit 4: Public Policy (June 27-July7)

Required Readings:

We The People Chapter 13 DOMESTIC POLICY Lone Star Politics Chapter 13 FISCAL POLICY Lone Star Politics Chapter 14 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY

**Required Activities:** 

- Participation in Online Discussions (LONG POST #4) June 27-29: 1%
- Participation in Online Discussions (RESPONSE #4) June 30-July 3: .5%
- Exam #4 (July 4-5): 23%
- Writing Assignment (July 4-7): 2%

# **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

- To fully participate in online courses you will need to use a current Flash enabled internet browser. For PC and Mac users the suggested browser is Mozilla Firefox.
- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - $\circ~$  Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
  - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
  - Speakers or headphones.
  - \*For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.
- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: <u>JAVA web site</u> http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.
- Run a browser check through the Pearson LearningStudio Technical Requirements website. <u>Browser Check</u> <u>http://help.ecollege.com/LS Tech Req WebHelp/en-</u> us/#LS Technical Requirements.htm#Browset

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported. Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled. Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  - <u>Adobe Reader</u> <u>https://get.adobe.com/reader/</u>

- <u>Adobe Flash Player</u> (version 17 or later) <u>https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/</u>
- Adobe Shockwave Player <a href="https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/">https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/</a>
- <u>Apple Quick Time</u> <u>http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/</u>
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.
- For additional information about system requirements, please see: <u>System Requirements for LearningStudio</u> <u>https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical</u>

# ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

### Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege) Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to <u>myLeo</u> and from the top menu ribbon select eCollege. Then on the upper left side of the screen click on the My Courses tab. <u>http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx</u>

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or <u>helpdesk@tamuc.edu</u>.

**Note**: It is strongly recommended you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the My Courses tab, and then select the Browser Test link under Support Services.

#### Pearson LearningStudio Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support for the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24/7 (24 hours, 7 days a week).

If you experience LearningStudio (eCollege) technical problems, contact the LearningStudio helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511 (toll free) or visit <u>Pearson 24/7</u> <u>Customer Support Site http://247support.custhelp.com/</u>

The student help desk may be reached in the following ways:

- **Chat Support:** Click on *'Live Support'* on the tool bar within your course to chat with a Pearson LearningStudio Representative.
- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

**Accessing Help from within Your Course**: Click on the '*Tech Support*' icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. Then you will be able to get assistance via online chat or by phone.

**Note**: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

# Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure must be followed:

- 1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at 1-866-656-5511.
- 2. Students must file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
- 3. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
- 4. I will email the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

**PLEASE NOTE:** Your personal computer and internet access problems are not legitimate excuses for filing a ticket with the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk. Only Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate reasons to contact the Help Desk.

You strongly are encouraged to check for your internet browser compatibility **BEFORE** the course begins and take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform.

#### myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email <u>helpdesk@tamuc.edu</u> or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at <u>myLeo</u>. <u>https://leo.tamuc.edu</u>

#### Learner Support

The <u>One Stop Shop</u> was created to serve you by providing as many resources as possible in one location. http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/

The <u>Academic Success Center</u> provides academic resources to help you achieve academic success.

http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter

# FREE MOBILE APPS

The Courses apps for phones have been adapted to support the tasks students can easily complete on a smaller device. Due to the smaller screen size course content is not presented.

The Courses app is free of charge. The mobile Courses Apps are designed and adapted for different devices.

	App Title:	iPhone – Pearson LearningStudio Courses for iPhone Android – LearningStudio Courses - Phone
COURSES	Operatin	iPhone - OS 6 and above
	g	Android – Jelly Bean, Kitkat, and Lollipop OS
	System:	
	iPhone	https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/pearson-learningstudio-
	App URL:	<u>courses/id977280011?mt=8</u>
	Android App URL:	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.pearson.ls phone_

Once downloaded, search for Texas A&M University-Commerce, and it should appear on the list. Then you will need to sign into the myLeo Mobile portal.

The Courses App for Android and iPhone contain the following feature set:

- View titles/code/Instructor of all Courses enrolled in online
- View and respond to all discussions in individual Courses
- View Instructor Announcements in individual Courses
- View Graded items, Grades and comments in individual Courses
- Grade to Date
- View Events (assignments) and Calendar in individual Courses
- View Activity Feed for all courses
- View course filters on activities
- View link to Privacy Policy
- Ability to Sign out
- Send Feedback

# LEARNINGSTUDIO NOTIFICATIONS

Students can be alerted to course activities via text on their mobile phones or up to two email addresses.

Based on their preferences, students can automatically receive a push notification with every new: course announcement, threaded discussion post, grade, and/or assignment without having to login to the course. Enrolled students will automatically receive email notifications for announcements and can <u>opt out</u> of this feature. To receive text notifications, students must opt in.

To begin setting up notifications, go into your course in LearningStudio and click on the bell-shaped Notifications icon on the main menu ribbon.

By default the student's university email address will appear. This cannot be changed in LearningStudio. Additional email addresses may be added by clicking the Add button. After all of the other selections are completed be sure to click the Save and Finish button.