



Political Science 2306.03W Texas Government
Fall 2021 (83534)

Instructor: Rebecca Lynch
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Virtual Meetings/Office Hours via Zoom available by appt.
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Preferred Form of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: 24-48 Hours **excluding weekends**

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:

Lone Star Politics: Traditions and Transformations in Texas, 6th Edition By: Collier, Galatas, and Harrelson-Stephens.

Course Description: This course is a survey of the institutions and policies of the Texas governing bodies. You will learn about formal and informal institutions of the state government and how they play into the creation and implementation of public policy. Topics considered include the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, bureaucracies, public policies (formulation and implementation), global forces that continue to shape our understanding of the relationship between the people and government of Texas.

Please note that you will not be taught what to think about political issues in this course. Rather, you will be provided with the knowledge to determine how to think about political issues for yourself.

This course is meant to provide you with a working knowledge of how a government functions at the state level in the United States.

Because this is a web-based course, all students must meet the technology requirements listed below to successfully complete this course.

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. In written, oral, and/or visual communication, A&M Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to the audience and occasion, with an evident message and organization structure.

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.
5. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
6. Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
7. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
9. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
10. Analyze the state and local election process.
11. Identify rights and responsibilities of citizens.
12. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need to be familiar with the University learning management system (D2L/Brightspace), know how to use a personal computer, navigate the internet, and use basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint.

Instructional Methods

Each week will consist of and involve lectures and discussion over the assigned readings and any other supplemental readings the instructor wishes to add. You will regularly be asked to contribute your opinions and answer questions about the readings.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class and engage in class discussions

Complete all assignments

Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class

Be courteous to and respectful of your fellow students and instructors

University Pandemic Response

A&M-Commerce requires the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories. Exceptions may be made by faculty where warranted. Faculty have management over their classrooms. Students not using face-coverings can be required to leave class. Repetitive refusal to comply can be reported to the Office of Students' Rights and Responsibilities as a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale based on a 1000 total points.

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89.9%

C = 70%-79.9%

D = 60%-69.9%

F = 59.9% or Below

The following will be how grades are broken down for this class

Discussion Board Posts (13) = 260 points total

Quizzes (13) = 130 points total

Exams (3) = 300 points total

Final Exam (1) = 150 points total

Final Paper (1) = 160 points total

Assessments

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.

Participation: With this being an online course, you will need to login to D2L and access this course regularly throughout the week. There will be discussion board posts weekly and assignments throughout the semester that you will be required to complete on our online platform. Not logging in and keeping up with due dates and weekly readings and assignments will have a detrimental effect on your grade.

Exams: There will be three exams given during the semester in addition to a final exam to be administered during finals week. They comprise a significant portion of your grade, so it would be beneficial to be prepared for your exams. **Exams will open Monday at 8:00 am and close Friday of the same week at 11:59 pm.** Since there is a multi-day window for exams, makeup exams will not be given. If you have an athletic or academic reason as to why you are not able to take the exam during the window it is open, you must email me IMMEDIATELY so that other arrangements can be made. This means emailing me **BEFORE** the exam opens, not after the fact. There will be absolutely no exceptions to this policy.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given weekly and can be over the subject matter or **current topics/events**. Questions for the quizzes will come from the week's lectures, assigned readings and any breaking news (political, sports, or pop culture related). Quizzes will be given every week during the semester. Quizzes cannot be made up if they are missed. Quizzes will open on **Monday at 8:00 am and close Friday at 11:59 pm each week.**

Discussion Board Posts: Like with a face to face class where students would engage with one another, you will be expected to do so in this course as well. For weekly discussion posts students are expected to respond to the week's prompt with a MINIMUM of at least 350 words and you are also responsible for responding to at least TWO other classmates' responses with a minimum of at least 150 words per response. **Original discussion posts AND peer responses (2) are due FRIDAY of each week by 11:59 pm.** You should make three total posts each week. Discussion posts are worth 20 points each week with the original post being 10 points and the two responses being worth five points each. In your discussion posts please include a word count. (Points for this assignment along with all others will lose points for not following directions.)

Non-Participation: If you miss 4 discussion posts or quizzes during the semester, I as your instructor reserve the right to drop you from the class. The discussions and quizzes are open for five days and if you know that you will be missing a significant amount of course work, it falls on you to make arrangements for your grade(s).

Extra Credit: Extra credit will be given at the instructor's discretion. I will NOT create extra credit for any student at any time because they "need to get" a certain grade or because they have chosen not to do the original assignments assigned. I do not "give" grades rather you EARN your grade. I cannot stress this enough: keep up with your assignments and your grade in the gradebook throughout the whole semester and not just at the end.

Submitting Assignments & Late Assignments: Writing assignments without cover pages and/or no name will not be graded. I DO NOT accept late work. Each assignment is given with enough time to complete it. Assignments that have to be submitted to the dropbox are ALWAYS due at 11:00 pm the day they are due. **Assignments submitted online after 11:59 pm will not be opened or graded.** You are responsible for attaching the correct assignment to the correct folder in D2L Brightspace. Once you submit your assignment you should always click on the document to guarantee that it has been submitted correctly, or no document is counted as failure to complete the assignment on time. Poor internet connection, dead laptop batteries, etc. are not valid reasons for an assignment not being completed.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

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 helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:
<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Student emails will be responded to within 24 hours except for on weekends. Weekly assignments will regularly be graded and inputted into the grade book. Any student wishing to discuss a grade or assignment should email me or request to schedule a video conference and will receive a response within 24 hours.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx> Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

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.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M- Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of

handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center’s crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel.

Course Calendar
 Subject to Change

Date	Topic/Chapter Title	Assignments Due
Aug. 30th - Sept. 3rd	Introduction/Texas Political Culture Chapter 1	Discussion Board Post (DBP) 1 Quiz 1
Sept. 6th - 10th	Texas Constitution Chapter 2	DBP 2 Quiz 2
Sept. 13th - 17th	Texas Legislature Chapter 3	DBP 3 Quiz 3
Sept. 20th - 24th	Texas Governors Chapter 4	DBP 4 Quiz 4
Sept. 27th - Oct. 1st	Plural Executive and Bureaucracy in Texas Chapter 5	DBP 5 Quiz 5 Exam 1 (Ch.1-4)
Oct. 4th - 8th	Texas Judicial System Chapter 6	DBP 6 Quiz 6
Oct. 11th - 15th	Texas Sized Justice Chapter 7	DBP 7 Quiz 7
Oct. 18th - 22nd	Campaigns and Elections Texas Style Chapter 8	DBP 8 Quiz 8
Oct. 25th - 29th	Political Parties Chapter 9	DBP 9 Quiz 9 Exam 2 (Ch.5-8) Final Paper Assigned**

Nov. 1st - 5th	Organized Interests Chapter 10	DBP 10 Quiz 10
Nov. 8th - 12th	Local Government in Texas Chapter 11	DBP 11 Quiz 11
Nov. 15th - 19th	Fiscal Policy Chapter 12	DBP 12 Quiz 12
Nov. 22nd - 26th	TBD	Work on Final Paper
Nov. 29th - Dec. 3rd	Social Policy Chapter 14	DBP 13 Quiz 13
Dec. 6th -10th	Exam 3	Exam 3 (Ch.9-12 &14) Final Paper Due
Dec. 13th - 17th	Finals Week	Final Exam (Cumulative) Please note that the due date for the final will depend on when final grades are due for submission to allow time for me to double check grades and finish grading final papers etc.)

******Your professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any point during the semester and will inform students of alterations.******