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PSCI 2306 03E: Texas Government COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2021

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Chad M. King
Class Meeting Times: 12-12:50 MWF
Classroom: BA-244
Office Location: SS-162
Office Hours: M 9:50-11, 1-3; W 9:50-11, 1-2; F 9:50-11.
(Can meet virtually T/Th by request)
University Email Address: chad.king@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: E-mail
Communication Response Time: 24 hours (Up to 48 hours during weekends)

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required
Governing Texas (Fifth Edition)
Author: Champagne, Harpham, and Casellas
Published Date: 2021
ISBN: 978-0393539226
Publisher: Norton

Software Required: Word processing software such as MS-Word

Course Description

“This course is a survey of the principles and practice of the political system in Texas. In addition to examining the state constitution and the institutions that it empowers, a wider

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look is taken to consider local governments, the political system, and the actors in the political system.” (Quoted from the University Undergraduate Course Catalog)

Student Learning Outcomes (Should be measurable; observable; use action verbs)

1. Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art. Core Objective: Critical Thinking
2. In written, oral, and/or visual communication, A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure. Core Objective: Communication
3. Students will understand and practice academic honesty. Core Objective: Personal Responsibility
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or civic issues. Core Objective: Social Responsibility
5. Students will be able to:
 - Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
 - Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
 - Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
 - Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
 - Analyze the state and local election process.
 - Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens
 - 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, (myLeo Online), know how to use a personal computer, navigate the World Wide Web/Internet, and use basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word and Power Point.

Instructional Methods

The following methods of instruction will be utilized for this course.

- Assigned readings from the required textbook.
- Lectures and discussions during assigned meeting times.

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- Weekly course work on myLeo Online.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

All students are expected to comply with the following requirements.

- All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.
- Students are expected to regularly check the course site for announcements and updates.
- Students are expected to complete all course readings for each section of the course.
- Students are expected to review any supplementary materials that the instructor provides, such as web links, news stories, etc.
- Students are expected to attend class regularly.
- Students are expected to complete all assigned writing assignments, quizzes, class activities, and exams. All coursework will be submitted to the class page on MyLeo Online.
- Students are expected to exhibit respect toward their fellow classmates and the instructor. This includes treating everyone with courtesy and esteem in all correspondence for the course. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.
- Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate academic dishonesty. 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 or taking exams), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. For this course, academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic work. In particular, any student who passes passing off work as their own that was actually written by someone else, without proper citation or attribution, will be considered to have committed plagiarism. This holds true whether material comes from the textbook, another publication, an Internet source, or another student. Any act of academic dishonesty on an exam or quiz will result in a score of 0 for the exam or quiz. Any act of academic dishonesty on a writing assignment will result in a 0 for the entire semester's writing assignment grade. Instances of academic dishonesty may also be referred to the appropriate offices on campus and may result in significant administrative penalties.
- Students will comply with all myLeo Online/D2L technical requirements in terms of training, computer access, & Internet access.

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GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 89.5%-100%

B = 79.5%-89.4%

C = 69.5%-79.4%

D = 59.5%-69.4%

F = 59.4% or Below

Course grades are computed using the following weighted assignments.

Grade Breakdown	%
Weekly Quizzes	11%
Class Activities	10%
Exam One	22%
Exam Two	22%
Exam Three	22%
Writing assignment	13%
Final Grade	100%

Assessments

Quizzes

Students will take weekly quizzes over the assigned readings for the course. These quizzes will contain both multiple-choice and True/False questions. Students will have 10 minutes to complete each quiz. These quizzes cannot be made up, however, the instructor will automatically drop the lowest three quiz grades. The dates and times for these quizzes are listed at the end of the syllabus

Class activities

Each week, students will complete an activity/assignment over the assigned readings. These assignments will vary in terms of format, however, they could include: brief simulations, responding to prompts, or quizzes over provided videos/news stories. The

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amount of time per activity will vary depending on the type. The dates and times for these assignments at the end of the syllabus.

Writing Assignment

Students will complete a writing assignment during the term that will require them to both effectively communicate their ideas and opinions as well as critically evaluate information, evidence, and data. Specifically this assignment will have students select a specific topic with the broad domain of Texas public policy. The assignment description, along with expectations and the grading rubric is provided on the course page in myLeo Online. Students will submit a topic proposal early in the semester and a final paper later in the semester. The deadlines for the topic and final paper are listed at the end of the syllabus.

Exams

Students will take three exams. All exams will include material from the textbook and the scheduled dates for the exams are listed below. These exams will have 50 multiple-choice questions. Students have 50 minutes to complete each exam. The times and dates for the exams are listed at the end of the syllabus.

Extra Credit "Syllabus "Quiz"

Students can earn up to a three bonus points toward their final average by taking a syllabus quiz. This quiz is designed to ensure that students familiarize themselves with the requirements and expectations of the syllabus. The quiz will be available on D2L/myLeo online and it cannot be made up. The dates and times for this quiz is listed at the end of the syllabus.

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:

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<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.

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.

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

Students should rely upon e-mail, office hours, and course announcements as the primary means of communication with the instructor. I will use all of these to announce any changes to the course syllabus or other relevant information. Also, please note that the system will only send e-mail to your official University Email address, so you will need to check that account regularly. I will always try to e-mail you as soon as I can.

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From M-F you can expect a reply, at the latest, within 24 hours. On the weekends, I may take 48 hours to respond.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

- Make-up exams: If a student misses an exam, that student will receive a grade of 0 for the exam. Make-up exams will only be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Any request for a make-up exam must be made in writing and include documentation explaining why the absence was legitimate. Such a request must be received within 3 calendar days of the missed exam date, unless the student is physically unable to submit such a request. Legitimate reasons may include illness severe enough to require professional treatment, death of an immediate family member, participation in University activities, and legal obligations. Technical problems with accessing the course are not a valid excuse for missing an exam unless it can be shown that the problem is the fault of the myLeo Online platform. Students who miss any exam because they forgot about the exam dates/times will not receive a make-up exam. Please note, these reasons do not guarantee that a make-up exam will be given. Make-up exams will be exclusively essay format.
- Incompletes will be granted completely at the discretion of the instructor and only be granted in the case of serious medical illness or other serious, unavoidable circumstances and only if the student has completed at least 70% of the course work. Incompletes must be finished within two weeks of the end of the semester.
- Students must complete the "Personal Responsibility Statement" quiz available on the course site. Students who fail to do so by the time the first exam is graded will be administratively dropped from the course.

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).
<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

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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](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

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

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

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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.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

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

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Below are readings assignments and exam schedule. In addition to the readings from the textbook, students should also keep abreast of the news and current events.

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
Week starting 8/30	Texas Political Culture	1
Week starting 9/6	Texas Constitution	2
Week starting 9/13	Texas in the Federal System	3
Week starting 9/20	Political Parties	4
Week starting 9/27	Campaigns and Elections	5
Week starting 10/4	Interest Groups and Lobbying	6
Week starting 10/11	The Legislative Branch	7
Week starting 10/18	The Legislative Branch, The Executive Branch	7,8
Week starting 10/25	The Executive Branch	8
Week starting 11/1	The Texas Judiciary	9
Week starting 11/8	Local Government	10
Week starting 11/15	Public Finance	11
Week starting 11/22	Public Policy	12
Week starting 11/29	Crime, Corrections, Public Safety	13
Week starting 12/6	Future of Texas Public Policy	14
Week starting 12/13	Finals Week	

Exams will be available on the course page and are scheduled on the dates listed below. Each exam begins at 11:59 PM and closes 48 hours later.

Exam 1: Opens on 10/8/21 @ 11:59 AM and closes at 11:59 PM on 10/10/21. Covers Chapters 1-6.

Exam 2: Opens on 11/12/21 @ 11:59 AM and closes at 11:59 PM on 11/14/21. Covers Chapters 7-10.

Exam 3: Opens on 12/13/21 @ 9 AM and closes at 3:30 PM on 12/17/21. Covers Chapters 11-14.

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Quiz Schedule

With the exception of exam weeks, and Thanksgiving week, quizzes will be given every week. Quizzes will open on Fridays at 11:59 AM and close 60 hours later on Sundays at 11:59 PM.

Class Activity Schedule

With the exception of Thanksgiving week, class activities will be given every week. Class activities will open on Wednesdays at 11:59 AM and close on Sundays at 11:59 PM.

Extra Credit Syllabus Quiz Schedule

The quiz will open on 9/17/20 at 11:59 PM and close on 9/19/21 at 11:59 PM.

Writing Assignment Schedule

The assignment topic is due on 9/20/21 at 11:59 PM. The final assignment is due by 11:59 PM on 11/29/21. Students must upload their topics and final assignments to D2L. See the course page for an assignment description, grading rubric, and a listing of important dates, times, and important resources.

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