



PSCI 2306.01W 83542  
Texas Government  
Spring 2023  
August 28th - December 15th

**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](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel).**

Instructor: Rebecca Lynch

Office Location: Ferguson SS 135

Office Hours: TBA Virtual Office Hours Only

Virtual Meetings via Zoom available by appt.

University Email Address: [Rebecca.lynch@tamuc.edu](mailto:Rebecca.lynch@tamuc.edu)

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24 Hours **excluding weekends**

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

Required Textbook: Governing Texas 5th Edition (physical or ebook is acceptable and you will NOT need the access codes)

ISBN: 978-0-393-53922-6

**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.

### **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 Power Point.

### **Instructional Methods**

Each week will consist of and involve recorded lectures or videos and topic papers 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/writing assignments.

Complete all assignments

Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class

Be courteous to and respectful of your fellow students and instructors

**GRADING: A = 90%-100% B = 80%-89% C = 70%-79% D = 60%-69% F = 59% or Below**

**This following is the breakdown for grades and points in class based on a 1000 point scale:**

**Discussion Boards: 200 Points Total (8 @ 25 points each) 2 per module\***

**Quizzes: 150 Points Total (15 @ 10 points each)**

**Exams: 400 Points Total (4 @ 100 points each)**

**Final Paper: 100 Points Total**

**Final Exam: 150 Points Total**

Course Calendar

\*\*\*Subject to Change\*\*\*

For the assigned readings please follow along according to the chapter titles. My copy of the book is slightly different from the essentials edition and the ebook and physical copies sometimes differ as well. Please email me if you have questions. This semester we will be using a four week module schedule (with the exception of the last module). Assignments will open every four weeks and be due at the end of that four weeks. This will allow you to work at your own pace within that time frame. **Each module will open on Mondays at 8:00am and close on Sundays at 11:59pm.**

<b>Module 1: August 28th (assignments open 8:00am) - September 24th (assignments close 11:59pm) 4 Quizzes 2 Discussion Boards 1 Exam</b>		
Week 1: August 28th - September 3rd	Chapter 1 - The Political Culture, People and Economy of Texas	Chapter 1 Quiz Discussion Board 1
Week 2: September 4th - 10th	Chapter 2 - The Texas Constitution	Chapter 2 Quiz
Week 3: September 11th - 17th	Chapter 3 - Texas in the Federal System	Chapter 3 Quiz Discussion Board 2
Week 4: September 18th - 24th	Chapter 13 - Crime, Corrections, and Public Safety	Chapter 13 Quiz Exam 1

<b>Module 2: September 25th (assignments open 8:00am) - October 22nd (assignments close 11:59pm) 4 Quizzes 2 Discussion Boards 1 Exam Topic/Research Paper Opens</b>		
Week 5: September 25th - October 1st	Chapter 9 - The Judiciary	Chapter 9 Quiz Discussion Board 3 Topic/Research Paper Opens
Week 6: October 2nd - 8th	Chapter 8 - The Executive	Chapter 8 Quiz
Week 7: October 9th - 15th	Chapter 7 - The Legislature	Chapter 7 Quiz Discussion Board 4
Week 8: October 16th - 22nd	Chapter 10 - Local Government	Chapter 10 Quiz Exam 2

**Module 3: October 23rd (assignments open 8:00am) - (assignments close 11:59pm)  
4 Quizzes 2 Discussion Boards 1 Exam - Be working on your final paper**

Week 9: October 23rd - 29th	Chapter 4 - Political Parties	Chapter 4 Quiz Discussion Board 5
Week 10: October 30th - November 5th	Chapter 5 - Campaigns and Elections	Chapter 5 Quiz
Week 11: November 6th - 12th	Chapter 6 - Interest Groups and Lobbying	Chapter 6 Quiz Discussion Board 6
Week 12: November 13th - 19th	Chapter 11 - Public Finance	Chapter 11 Quiz Exam 3

**Module 4: November 20th (assignments open 8:00am) - December 8th\*\*\* (assignments close 11:59pm)  
3 Quizzes 1 Exam**

Week 13: November 20th - 26th	Chapter 12 - Public Policy	Chapter 12 Quiz Discussion Board 7
Week 14: November 27th - December 3rd	Chapter 14 - Building the Future: Public Policies for a Changing Texas Pt. 1	Chapter 14 Pt. 1 Quiz Discussion Board 8
Week 15: December 4th - 8th***	Chapter 14 - Building the Future: Public Policies for a Changing Texas Pt. 2	Chapter 14 Pt. 2 Quiz Exam 4 Final Paper Due

Week 16: December 11th-15th	Finals Week	Final Exam
-----------------------------	-------------	------------

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

**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/each module. Not logging in and keeping up with due dates and weekly readings and assignments will have a detrimental effect on your grade.

**Discussion Boards:** For each module there will be two discussion boards that you will be responsible for answering. You will also be responsible for responding to at least one other classmate. Discussion boards should answer all parts of the prompt and have some substance. This goes for the peer response as well. Your original post will worth 15 points and your peer response will be worth 10 points for a total of 25 points. Your original post needs to be at least 300 words (do not use filler words to get make the count, I am still grading for substance) and your peer response needs to be at least 150 word count.

**Exams:** There will be four 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. **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/DURING** the exam window, not after the window has closed..

**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.**

**Final Paper:** A final paper will be assigned/open during Module 2 and be due by December 8th. This a hard deadline with no wiggle room due to the academic calendar set by the university. You will have nearly the whole semester to complete this paper. The final paper should be 4-6 pages double spaced in Times New Roman with 12 pt.font (not including the cover page or reference page(s)). APSA formatting will be used unless otherwise discussed with me. Your paper will need to have a minimum of five academic or scholarly cited sources. If you are unsure what an academic source is, please ask. Points will be deducted for not using appropriate sources. Formatting will be a part of the grade so please make sure you are adhering to them so you do not lose points. **The final paper is due December 8th by 11:59 pm.**

**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:*** Late work will not be accepted. Each assignment is given with enough time to complete it. 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. If some reason you are having difficulty uploading your assignment please email me a PDF version before the deadline and explain the situation, but please only use this as a last option.

## **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](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](mailto: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 36 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 24-36 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](mailto: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.

## **Withdrawals**

**Dropping the Class:** If you need to adjust your schedule by dropping this course, please contact your Academic Coach. Please be aware that dropping your course may impact your financial aid, veterans and military benefits, three-peat, 45-hour, and 30-hour rules. It is the student's responsibility to drop the course. If you fail to officially drop the class, a failing grade shall be assigned.

**Student Withdrawal:** A student wishing to withdraw from all courses before the end of a term for which he/she is registered must clear his or her record by filing an application for voluntary withdrawal. Please contact your Academic Coach. This action must be taken by the date stated in the Academic Calendar as the last day to drop a class or withdraw. Any student who withdraws from the university is subject to the conditions outlined in the section regarding Scholastic Probation or Suspension in the university catalog. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from classes if he or she does not plan to attend during the semester in which he/she has enrolled. A student has one year from the first day of a semester to appeal a withdrawal refund. Courses withdrawn are counted as attempted hours and count towards the three-peat, 45-hour and 30-hour rules and financial aid and veterans and military benefits.

**Instructor Withdrawal:** Your instructor of record reserves the right to withdraw a student from his or her course based on inadequate performance and progress in the course materials, and/or behavior.



**All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.**