**Stephan F. Austin State University**  
**American Government 141.012**  
**F371 Fall 2017 MWF 10:00 – 10:50**

Professor: Dr. Julie Harrelson-Stephens  
Office: 135 Liberal Arts North, Department of Government  
Phone: 468-2380  
Email: harrelsoj@sfasu.edu  
Office Hours: Monday 8:00 – 9:00; Tuesday 1:00 – 2:00, Wednesday 8:00-9:00, Thursday 9:00 – 11:00, and by appointment

SI leader: Rachel Clink  
Meets every M/W in Lumberjack Landing 139B from 4:00 –5:00.

*Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you.* -Pericles (430 B.C.)

**Course Description:** Origins and development of American and Texas government systems; federalism; civil liberties and civil rights; interest groups, political parties and elections. This course meets the legislative requirements for a course on the Constitutions of the United States and Texas.

**Purpose:** This course is the first of two required political science courses designed to be an introduction to American Politics. The focus of this first course is the inputs into the political process, and to some extent the political process itself. Although many of you are not majoring in political science, all of you will be affected by the political process. Hopefully by the end of this course you will not only be more informed about the political process, but also more interested and involved in it.


Collier, Ken, Steven Galatas and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. 201. Lone Star Politics (LSP) 5th edition.

**Grading:**  
Course grades of 90 – 100 will be scored an A; 80-89 a B; 70-79 a C; 60-69 a D; below 60 an F.

If you think that an error has been made in calculating your grade, it is *your responsibility* to provide me with all of your work. To that end, it would be prudent to save anything that is handed back to you until you get your final grade report.

**Course Requirements:**  
There will be three exams given during the semester as well as a **cumulative final.** You must complete three exams, each worth 33.333%. If you complete all four exams I will drop the lowest grade. Tests will cover material from the lecture and the reading. In addition, supplemental reading material may be periodically assigned during the semester.

There are **No Make-up exams.** In the event that you get sick or oversleep and miss an exam, I drop one test grade. If you miss two exams, you get a ZERO on the second test. If you know you will miss an exam due to an excused absence (i.e. athletic trip, medical issue with documentation) you must make arrangements with me at least two days prior to the scheduled exam date to take the exam **early.**
Attendance:
It has been my experience that poor attendance will result in a poor grade in the class. Thus, you are strongly encouraged to attend regularly. Please be on time to class and plan to stay, as entering a class late or leaving early is always disruptive and will result in you being counted absent.

Participation:
Participation in class discussions is strongly encouraged. As students, you will get the most out of this class if you engage in the discussions. I ask that you respect the diverse backgrounds and views of your fellow students, and employ common courtesies during class.

Other policies:
In addition, any cell phones, beepers or other electronic devices that ring/beep/click/ect. or any talking or behaviour that disrupts other students or your instructor will result in a five point grade reduction on your next exam.

The Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 restricts release of certain student information, such as grades. In accordance with the law, I will not be able to give grades out over the phone or e-mail. Please – DO NOT ASK. I will be happy to discuss your grades with you in person, during office hours or by appointment.

Class information, including changes of dates, review sheets, or other information will be posted on the class D2L site.

If you have a question please send me an email and I will be happy to help. Email inquiries should employ professional language including a subject line that indicates the nature of the email, your full name, which course and section you are enrolled in, and appropriate salutations. I will not respond to emails that are answered in the syllabus or requesting extra credit or any other adjustment in your grade. I will also not respond to emails asking questions from the review sheet that I give you to fill out. Please use only the email on this syllabus.
Success in this course:
Study skills are developed with practice. It is unlikely that you can merely read an assigned chapter and fully absorb all the concepts contained in that chapter in one sitting. Rather, it is often the case that to truly understand new material, you have to **read it more than once**, spend time contemplating the material, and even discussing it with your peers or in the SI group. Success is significantly more likely if you **keep up with the course requirements throughout the semester**, rather than cramming the requirements in a day or two before the exam. To increase the likelihood that you succeed, I have provided lecture outlines and review sheets so that you can begin reading and studying immediately. The course also has an SI session twice a week where concepts and themes from the class are covered.

Anyone having problems in this course is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor as early as possible. I will be happy to meet you and help you in any way possible. I may be able to help you study more effectively or recommend other assistance. Remember, **I want you to do well in this class!**

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1)**
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or
exam; (2) falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment, and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one's own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: (1) submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp. All cases of academic dishonesty will be handled according to University policies and procedures in the SFASU Policy Manual and other sources of policy. The consequences for academic dishonesty may range from a score of zero (0) on the assignment to an “F” for the course.

General Education Core Curriculum
This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be submitted to LiveText every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall semester</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall semester</td>
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</tbody>
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Program Learning Outcomes:
This course is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for a political science major are addressed in this course.

Student Learning Outcomes:
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Examine the relationship between political culture and policy
- Describe the basic features of the U.S. and the Texas constitutions
- Understand the inputs into the political process (participation, parties, interest groups) and how these inputs theoretically and practically effect the political system
- Understand the concept and importance of federalism for the American political system

Course Schedule

Readings
I. Introduction; Political Culture  
   KTR Chapter 1; LSP Chapter 1; The Declaration of Independence.

II. The U.S. Constitution  
    KTR Chapter 2; The U.S. Constitution.

Exam 1: Friday September 29th

III. The Texas Constitution  
    LSP Chapter 2

IV. Federalism  
    KTR Chapter 3

V. Public Opinion  
    KTR Chapter 10

Exam 2: Friday October 20th

VI. Voting, Campaigns and Elections  
    KTR Chapter 12; LSP Chapter 9

VII. Political Parties and Interest Groups  
     KTR Chapter 11

VIII. Parties and Interest Groups in Texas  
    LSP Chapter 10 & Chapter 11

Exam 3: Wednesday November 15th

Progress Reports November 17th
Thanksgiving Holiday: 11/20-11/26

IX. Civil Rights  
    KTR Chapter 5, the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th Amendments

X. Civil Liberties  
    KTR Chapter 4, the Bill of Rights

Wednesday December 13th, 10:30-12:30: Cumulative Final Exam in the regular classroom.