American and Texas Government: Theory and Politics
PSC 141-023 Stephan F. Austin University
Monday Nights: 6:45 pm to 9:15 pm
Ferguson Liberal Arts Room 372

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Brian Naples
Email: naplesbn@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: N/A

Semester: Fall, 2017
Department: Government
Phone: 903-693-2043 (PC)

NOTE: As an adjunct instructor at SFA, I do not have an office on campus. However, I am a full-time faculty member at Panola College in Carthage, Texas and can regularly be reached on my office phone there each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 1:30pm to 5pm. My Panola College number is listed above.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

TEXT AND MATERIALS


STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should be able

• To describe the basic themes and concepts related to the study of American and Texas political behavior
• To examine the relationship between political behavior and political institutions, especially the interdependence of behavior and institutions
• To think critically about American and Texas politics, especially the theoretical foundations of both systems
• To discuss the foundations of the US and Texas Constitutions
• To identify the key schools of thought regarding voting behavior and electoral processes
• To explain the roles and functions of political parties, interest groups, and media in a
democratic political system
• To understand citizenship in the American political system more completely

CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

During this course, students learning will be assessed according to the following Core
Curriculum Objectives for political science:

1. Critical Thinking Skills – creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis,
evaluation, and synthesis of information
2. Communication Skills – effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas
through written, oral, and visual communication
3. Social Responsibility – intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and
the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities
4. Personal Responsibility – the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to
ethical decision-making

CLASS GRADE

The grades in this course will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (75%)</td>
<td>(A) = 90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments (25%)</td>
<td>(B) = 80-89</td>
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<td>Attendance</td>
<td>(C) = 70-79</td>
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<td>(D) = 60-69</td>
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<td>(F) = Below 60</td>
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EXAM GRADE

Exams will account for 75% of the class grade. The exam material will not be cumulative but
students should expect the material on one exam to relate to the material of another exam. Each
exam will cover assigned material, primarily out of the textbook. All exams must be taken in class
or at an approved testing center on days assigned by the instructor. Each student is responsible
for completing the exams in accord with class policy. Make-up exams will only be given in accord
with the make-up policy.

ASSIGNMENTS GRADE

Students will receive an assignment grade for this class. This grade will account for 25% of the
overall class grade. This grade will consist of assignments, and discussions posted on Canvas or
given in the classroom. The assignment grade is counted as a percentage of the total points earned
out of the total points possible. For example, if all the assignment point values add up to a total of
400 points and a student earns 300 of those points, the student's assignment grade will be 75%.
Specific directions, policies, and grading instructions may be found in each assignment.
FACE-TO-FACE CLASS ATTENDANCE

Each student's attendance will be monitored during this course. Students who fail to attend 80% of the classes will receive a failing grade for the class. Every absence will be marked in the attendance record regardless of the reason for the absence* with the exception of religious holidays or legally binding obligations (jury duty, military leave, etc). The assumption is that if a student is unable to attend 80% of the classes, they have simply missed too much class time to have “mastered” the course material. Students with a long standing medical issue, military leave, or jury duty and students with a medical emergency are eligible for an incomplete grade.

*NOTE: Sporting events, medical emergencies, family deaths, incarceration, a lack of child care, short-term illnesses, work conflicts, vacations, or any other unlisted reason will be marked a class absence.

A student is marked "present" for each class they attend on time. Late arrivals to a class will be marked as “tardy.” Tardy marks will only be given to students who are no more than 10 minutes late. Every 2 tardy marks count's as one class absence. If a student is tardy, they are responsible for informing the instructor at the end of class that they were late (otherwise they will be counted absent).

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Students should arrive on time and remain in class until the full class period has expired. Appropriate dress attire should be worn (i.e. no pajamas or overly revealing attire), headwear should be removed, and students should be respectful (in language and behavior) toward one another and the instructor. Students are highly encouraged to engage the class by participating in class discussions and asking appropriate questions. The standards of student conduct must be maintained with the instructor outside of class and in all electronic communication with the instructor or other students.

Disruptive class behavior will result in dismissal from the classroom and an absent mark on the attendance record. Disruptive class behavior is defined as any behavior (whether verbal or physical) which disrupts the educational environment, debases the instructor or fellow students, or impedes anyone's ability to freely and without stigma participate in and/or complete the course.

Persistent, disruptive behavior may ultimately result in dismissal from the course, a failing grade, and further disciplinary actions in accordance with college policy.

Bottled water will be permitted in the classroom, but any other liquids and all food are expressly prohibited during class. Cell phones, computers, and all other electronic devices must be turned off before the beginning of class. Students shall be allowed to record lectures but their recording device must be placed at the front of the class on or near the instructor's podium. Recording a lecture does not excuse a student from attending class.

At all times, students are expected to uphold the standards of student conduct as defined in the Student Handbook. A failure to comply with these conditions will result in removal from the classroom and an absent mark on the attendance record.
INTERNET ATTENDANCE POLICY

An attendance record will be kept for students who take this course over the internet. Attendance will consist of a student's ability to complete the regularly scheduled assignments. Students will receive a “present” mark for each assignment completed by the due date. Students who complete an assignment late will receive a tardy mark on their attendance grade. Every two tardy marks will count as one class absence. Students who fail to turn an assignment in receive an absent mark on their attendance. A student will receive a failing grade for the course if they do not complete at least 80% of the assigned material. Make-up assignments will only be given in accord with the class make-up policy.

The instructor reserves the right to alter a student’s attendance grade (for better or worse) based on their ability to uphold the internet etiquette policies. Inappropriate online behavior during an assignment will result in a failed assignment grade and an absent attendance mark for the assignment (i.e. “dismissal from a classroom”). Persistent inappropriate behavior may result in dismissal from the course, a failing grade, and further disciplinary actions in accordance with college policy.

Students are responsible for attending meetings or proctored exams as required by the instructor and the college. All scheduled meetings/exams shall be announced one week(s) in advance. Students are responsible for arriving in a timely fashion and adhering to the class policies set by the instructor along with the rules of the facility in which the meeting takes place. This course shall further adhere to the class policies specifically defined in the Student Handbook.

INTERNET ETIQUETTE

All online users should take great care in their internet behavior. Students are expected to remain respectful in all electronic communication as any publicly or privately shared media will be viewed by others. This communication includes all written material, submitted assignments, pictures, audio recordings, and video recordings. The instructor reserves the right to censor inappropriate or obscene material in a public forum which is hosted or regulated by Panola College. Obscene material consists of any material (written, visual, or auditory) lacking academic value, containing libelous or slanderous information, or is repugnant to common standards of good taste and etiquette. Students who violate proper internet etiquette in an assignment shall fail the assignment on the first offense and shall fail the class upon the second offense.

No student shall post material concerning a fellow classmate in any online forum (whether hosted by the college or another party) which so debases the classmate as to impede their ability to freely and without stigma participate in and/or complete the course.

No student shall copy, alter or share files of course material submitted by another student. All of the standards of the academic honesty policy shall apply to all online course material.

The instructor and the college do not assume responsibility for the disbursement of any grade information a student freely gives of himself in private correspondence or in a public forum.
Students shall be held accountable for posting libelous or obscene material debasing to the instructor, the course, or the college on any electronic forum hosted or expressly regulated by the college. The instructor and the college reserve the right to remove said material and hold disciplinary actions in accord with college policy. At all times, students are expected to uphold the standards of student conduct as defined in the Student Handbook.

The instructor and the college shall have the right to remove a student from the course (resulting in a failing grade) and take appropriate disciplinary actions (as defined by the student handbook) for violating any of the aforementioned policies.

MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up work will only be given for exams in the case of a serious conflict. A serious conflict consists of a medical emergency, family death, or previously scheduled school related event. Incarceration, lack of child care, work conflicts, and vacations do not constitute a serious conflict. All make-up exams must be taken within one week of the original due date providing the student’s inability to complete the exam as originally scheduled falls within the criteria of a serious conflict. The instructor reserves the right to change the exam format for make-up exams to protect the integrity of the exam. A student is only permitted one make-up exam during the course. No make-up work will be given for weekly assignments since they are all open for a minimum of one week prior to their due date.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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 to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; 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 your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, 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

Note: The resubmission of previously submitted work is prohibited, even if the work was originally written by the submitting student. This rule is in place to support the spirit of persistent, academic growth.

WITHHELD GRADES SEMESTER GRADES POLICY
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/).

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

The schedule for this course schedule will be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNED MATERIAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>US Political Culture</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>US Constitution</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>US Constitution/Federalism</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 2 &amp; 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 3</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Federal Elections</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 12</td>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Political Parties and Interest Groups</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Public Opinion and the Media</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Civil Liberties/Civil Rights</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Keeping the Republic Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Textbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Texas Political Culture</td>
<td>Lone Star Politics</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The Texas Constitution</td>
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<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Lone Star Politics</td>
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<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td>Public Opinion</td>
<td>Lone Star Politics</td>
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<td>Chapter 2</td>
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**Final Exam**