Introduction to Course

Syllabus: PSC 142.502

Introduction to American Government: Structures & Functions

Fall 2018 Online Course

Department: Government
Instructor: Dr. Cindy Davis
Office: Liberal Arts North 132
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Office Number: 936-468-2424
Office Hours:
In office: Wed. 1pm-3:30pm
Virtual: Mon. 6am-7am and Noon-2pm; Tues. Noon-2pm I can be contacted by email, instant messaging through the D2L system, and by cell phone (call or text) during office hours. If you text be sure to include your name. I will try to be available by Skype during my office hours as well.

Office hours can be made by appointment if you cannot make the listed hours. Please contact me by email if you would like to set up a virtual or face to face meeting.

Catalog Description: Legislative, executive, and judicial functions in American and Texas governments; public policy areas such as finance, social services, and foreign policy; Texas local and county governments. Meets the state requirement for Texas Government.

Grading Scale: A (1000 points-900 points); B (899 points -800 points); C (799 points - 700 points); D (699 points -600 points); F (599 points and below)

Required Materials: [2 Required Books; you are responsible for acquiring the books for this course]

- Title: American Government
- Authors: Krutz and Waskiewicz
- ISBN: 978-1-938168-17-8

This is an open source (free) textbook. The pdf is available in the Course Documents section so you can view it there however it is a very large document since it is a textbook so I do not suggest trying to print the entire document. You can also view it online or download it as a pdf from the following website: https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government
Course Requirements:

- **11 Lessons; 440 Points (each lesson is worth 40 points):** Each lesson contains a set of readings, one discussion question that you will respond to and will then reply to a fellow student’s response, and one quiz (5 multiple choice questions; 3 true/false questions). The lessons will be available beginning on Monday at 8am and will close on Sunday at 11pm unless otherwise noted in the course calendar.

- **Three Exams; 300 Points: (each exam is worth 100 points):** Each exam contains 35 multiple choice questions, 10 true/false questions and 2 short answer questions. Each exam is based on the set of material covered during that portion of the semester (so not comprehensive). Exams are available beginning on Monday of the exam week and must be taken by Sunday of the exam week by 11pm (other than exam three which must be completed by Thursday of finals week). Exams are timed (60 minutes) and once you log on you must take the exam. You will only have one opportunity to take the exam. You cannot log on, view the exam and then take the exam at a later time. Exams can only be taken once.

- **Three Writing Assignments; 255 Points (85 points each):** 2-3 written pages (double spaced, 3 required academic references). I will provide you with the topic for each of the writing assignments. I highly suggest that you do not attempt to submit all writing assignments at the beginning of the semester as each assignment correlates with subject matter in the course that you should examine prior to completing the assignment. Additional information on the format for the writing assignments is provided, along with the topics, in the Introduction to Course materials.

- **Introduction to Course Quiz: 5 points**

**Course Schedule** *(Subject to change; Chapters should be read to prepare for the lesson for that week. There may be additional readings found within the lesson. Some assignments for the week will connect to the readings so be sure to get the books and complete the readings):*

- **Week 1 (Mon. Aug. 27 - Sun. Sept. 2):** Introduction to Course
- **Week 2 (Mon. Sept. 3 - Sun. Sept. 9):** Lesson One: US Legislature
  - **Reading:** American Government Chapter 11
- **Week 3 (Mon. Sept. 10 - Sun. Sept. 16):** Lesson Two: US Presidency & Bureaucracy
  - **Reading:** American Government Chapters 12 & 15
  o Reading: American Government Chapter 13
  o Reading: American Government Chapter 16
  o Reading: Readings found within lesson
  o Reading: Provided within lesson
  o Reading: American Government Chapter 17
• Week 10 (Mon. Oct. 29 - Sun. Nov. 4): Exam Two; Writing Assignment Two: Public Policy Due Sun. Nov. 4 by 11pm
• Week 11 (Mon. Nov. 5 - Sun. Nov. 11): Lesson Eight: Texas Legislature
  o Reading: Texas Government Chapter 1
• Week 12 (Mon. Nov. 12 - Sun. Nov. 18): Lesson Nine: Texas Governor & Texas Bureaucracy
  o Reading: Texas Government Chapters 2 & 3
  o Reading: Texas Government Chapters 4 & 5
  o Reading: Texas Government Chapters 6 & 7
  o Writing Assignment Three: Texas Government/Policy Due Sun. Dec. 9 by 11pm

Class Policies:

• This is an online course, so you will be required to engage in self-study and self-reminders as to when assignments are due and what is required of you. We will maintain regular contact throughout the semester through D2L email. A due date timeline is posted in the course documents section of the course, and I will post announcements on the News tab when necessary.

• Late assignments are not accepted. Make-up exams will only be allowed under exceptional circumstances. Having another exam or paper due that day is not an exceptional circumstance. **Grades are non-negotiable.**
• The open exchange of ideas will be respected by all students. Respectful discussion is required. While you are allowed to express your opinions during the discussions remember that other students may have different opinions and have the right to have and express those opinions. Personal attacks are not allowed as they do not promote civilized debate (one of the main purposes of the required discussions).

**Academic Integrity:** An individual’s integrity is a reflection not only on themselves, but on the reputation of their profession as well. The standards you hold in your academic career will weigh heavily on those you retain throughout life. Your professional reputation is of the utmost importance in maintaining a positive career path. Thus, your academic integrity will be held to the highest possible standard while in this classroom. Zero tolerance will be given for academic irregularities. If I catch you violating this policy, you will be reported. If another student accuses you and there is no other evidence, you will be required to resubmit a new assignment or take a new exam. If you choose not to, you will be reported. According to the university: “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](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**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/). If modifications or accommodations are needed due to disability, please make an appointment with me as early as possible so arrangements can be made.

**Technical Support:**
• For D2L technical support, contact student support in the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) at d2l@sfasu.edu or 936-468-1919. If you call after regular business hours or on a weekend, please leave a voicemail.

• For general computer support (not related to D2L), contact the Technical Support Center (TSC) at 936-468-HELP (4357) or at helpdesk@sfasu.edu.

• To learn more about using D2L, visit SFA ONLINE at http://sfaonline.sfasu.edu, where you’ll find written instructions and video tutorials.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:

In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the political science / government Foundational Component Area may be assessed.

• Critical Thinking Skills – creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information

• Communication Skills – effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication

• Social Responsibility – intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities

• Personal Responsibility – the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

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 Objectives:

• To examine the major structural and functional concepts underlying American and Texas government.

• To be able to identify and discuss important trends in American and Texas public policies.

• To gain the ability to critically analyze issues facing American and Texas government.

“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.”
Excused Absences: In order to have your absences excused, you must provide either notification from your coach/faculty club advisor or have a notice sent from the judicial office. Absence Notifications: “Students missing classes for legitimate reasons other than University-sponsored trips may contact the Judicial Office and request an absence notification be sent to their instructors. These notifications are not excuses. They are provided as a courtesy to the student and the student's instructor(s) and are not an evaluation of the information received by this office. Students requesting an absence notification should be prepared to give the Judicial Office their name, ID number, date(s) of the absence, reason for the absence, and a contact phone number. Students should also be prepared to offer documentation of the absence to their instructors. As per University policy Class Attendance and Excused Absence A-10, an instructor may determine the nature of satisfactory documentation.” Contact information for the judicial office is: 315 Rusk Building, 936-468-2703

Course Syllabus Appendix

The following information is required by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost for inclusion in the syllabus for this course:

General Education Core Curriculum

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: 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.

By enrolling in PSC 142: American Government – Structure and Function you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Communication Skills – Written and Visual requirement. You will see this course on your Brightspace by D2L list.

At one point during the semester, you will receive an assignment that fulfills both the requirements of this course and the needs of Stephen F. Austin State University's Core Curriculum Assessment Plan with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. When you complete this one assignment, you need to upload the assignment to both your standard course dropdown determined by your Instructor and the “Core Curriculum” dropdown. The Core Curriculum dropdown will be identified by the Objective for which work is being collected. (Examples: Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Social Responsibility Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Personal Responsibility, Communication Skills-Written, Communication Skills-Written and Visual, and Communication Skills-Oral and Visual.) Please note that this only applies to the approved assignment. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations. If you have any questions, please see your Instructor or the Office of Student Learning and Institutional Assessment.
When you complete the assignment mentioned above, you will upload the assignment to both the PSC 142 dropbox and the core objective dropbox.

Please note that this only applies to the specific assignment listed in the matrix below. All other assignments should be submitted according to regular class operations.

If you have any questions, please see your instructor or contact the Institutional Effectiveness Office at (936) 468-1130.

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 the Brightspace by D2L Communication Skills – Written and Visual dropbox this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to the D2L Communication Skills – Written and Visual dropbox. Not every assignment will be submitted for core assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in the Brightspace by D2L Communication Skills – Written and Visual dropbox.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in Brightspace by D2L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Writing Assignment #2</td>
<td>Nov. 4th 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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