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. 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.

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.


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

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.
Grading: Course grades of 90 – 100 will be scored an A; 80-89 is a B; 70-79 is a C; 60-69 is a D; below 60 is 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 32%. 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. The final 4% of your course grade will come from a paper on constitutional principles.

There are No Make-up exams allowed. In the event that you get sick, or oversleep, or find yourself the victim of zombies, 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 for any reason you may make arrangements with me at least two days prior to the scheduled exam date to take the exam early. There are no make-up exams.

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 repeating questions from the review sheet that I give you to fill out. Please use the email listed on this syllabus. I will be happy to discuss your grades with you in person, during office hours or by appointment.
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.

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**.

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!**

Class information, including changes of dates, review sheets, or other information will be posted on the class **D2L** site.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Schedule</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction; Political Culture</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 1; LSP Chapter 1; The Declaration of Independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. The U.S. Constitution</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 2; The U.S. Constitution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exam 1: Thursday February 13th**

| III. The Texas Constitution                         | LSP Chapter 2                                                            |
| IV. Federalism                                      | KTR Chapter 3                                                            |
| V. Public Opinion                                   | KTR Chapter 10                                                           |

**Exam 2: Thursday March 5th**

| VI. Political Parties and Interest Groups           | KTR Chapter 11                                                           |
| VII. Parties and Interest Groups in Texas           | LSP Chapter 10 & Chapter 11                                               |
| VIII. Voting, Campaigns and Elections               | KTR Chapter 12; LSP Chapter 9                                             |

**Exam 3: Tuesday April 7th**

Easter Break Thursday April 9th

| 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                                       |

**Cumulative Final Exam: Thursday May 7th 8:00 - 10:30, in the regular classroom.**

This syllabus should be seen as a rough guide for the coming semester. I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus throughout the semester.
University Policies:

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/.

Academic Integrity (4.1)
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 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

Course Hours:
This three-credit hour face-to-face course requires approximate 150 minutes of classroom time/direct instruction as well as at least six hours of out-of-class reading and studying each week in preparation for exams and completion of writing assignments.
General Education / Core Curriculum Education Objectives:

In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the political science / government Foundational Component Area assigned to Political Science 141 may be assessed.

- 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

Note that the General Education / Core Curriculum Educational Objectives of Critical Thinking and Communication Skills (Written and Visual) in the Foundational Component Area of political science / government are assigned to PSC 142 and are therefore not assessed in PSC 141.

General Education Core Curriculum Assessment

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives listed at the front of this syllabus. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives. PSC 141: American Government: Theory and Politics is a general education core curriculum course and fulfills the Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility general education core curriculum requirements.

During the semester, you will receive an assignment associated with general education core curriculum assessment. When you complete the assignment you will upload the assignment to the “Core Curriculum – Social Responsibility Skills” dropbox that you will find on your account in Brightspace by D2L. This dropbox is for core curriculum assessment only. Your course instructor may provide another set of instructions for submitting this assignment for your course grade.

If you have any questions, please see your instructor or contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at (936) 468-1038 or assessment@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 the Social Responsibility dropbox this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in D2L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Not Assessed in Spring 2020</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social 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>Constitutional Principles</td>
<td>April 14th by 5:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>