POLITICAL SCIENCE 141.501: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT – THEORY
Summer II Semester 2020
Instructor: Dr. Steven E. Galatas
Course Meeting Time: Online
Course Location: Online
Office Location: Dugas LAN 134
Office Hours: MTR 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. in ZOOM; and by appointment
Office Phone: 468-2003
E-mail: galatasse@sfasu.edu

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.”

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 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 Outcomes:
By the end of the course, you should be able to
- To describe the basic 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, especially the theoretical foundations of both the U.S. and Texas 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 and interest groups in a democratic political system
- To understand citizenship in the American political system more completely
Textbooks:
Two textbooks are required for this class:

Additional readings from *The Federalist Papers* are listed on the Course Outline below. These readings are available online. The professor reserves the right to add other readings at any time during the semester.

Grades:
Grades for the course will be drawn from the following sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignment</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Point values will be converted to letter grades using a standard 90% -- 80% -- 70% scale:

- **A:** 450 – 500 points (90% and above)
- **B:** 400 – 449 points (80% and above)
- **C:** 350 – 399 points (70% and above)
- **D:** 300 – 349 points (60% and above)
- **F:** 0 – 299 points (below 60%)

Course grades for the entire class are not curved or adjusted at the end of the semester. Extra credit work number of points for that grade.

Introductory Activity:
After watching the introductory video about your professor, you will introduce yourself to me and to the rest of the class through a post to a discussion board in Brightspace by D2L. In this post, you should address the following questions.

- What is your major? Why did you choose that major?
- What is your classification? (First year, sophomore, junior, or senior)
- What is your home town? Where else have you lived?
- Where did you go to high school?
- What are some interesting things about yourself like hobbies, activities, and other things you like to do when you are not studying?

This activity will help me and your co-learners in the class get to know you a bit better. Your discussion post is due in the appropriate location in Brightspace by D2L by 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8. Please note that your grade will be based upon the completeness of your answer as well as grammar and punctuation. Your answer should be about a good paragraph in length. The introductory activity is worth twenty (20) points.
Exams:

You will take four (4) exams during the Summer II.

- All exams consists of fifty (50) multiple-choice questions worth two (2) points each. Thus, each of the exams is worth a total of 100 points.
  - Material for the exams comes from classroom discussions and the assigned readings from your textbooks and outside sources.
  - Class sessions do not cover all material from the assigned readings, but all assigned readings, regardless of whether the material is discussed in class, are incorporated into the exams.
- All exams will be taken online in Brightspace by D2L. Each exam will open at 8:00 a.m. on the exam day and will close at 8:00 p.m. You will have seventy-five (75) minute to take the exam. You will take the exam only once, and once you submit an answer to a question, you will not be allowed to go back and change your answer. These procedures are in place to prevent any academic dishonesty.
- Make-up exams are given only under the most extreme circumstances (e.g., a serious illness or a death in the family).
  - You must notify your instructor ahead of time if you are going to miss an exam.
  - You provide written documentation to substantiate your absence.
  - Failure to inform your instructor of an absence prior to the exam or failure to provide adequate documentation will result in a score of zero points (0) on the exam.
  - Your professor determines what constitutes adequate documentation to qualify for a make-up exam.

Writing Assignments:

For this assignment, you will examine the current status of voting rights in the United States. Your paper will address debates over the last decade about the need for voter identification laws and their relationship to broader debates over access to the ballot box on election day.

Your paper will be graded based upon the logical flow of your argument and your ability to connect that argument with the position that you take either in favor or against voter identification laws. Moreover, you will be graded based upon your grammar, spelling, and other key elements of good writing. Here are a few of Dr. Galatas’ pet peeves when writing. Please avoid these common mistakes in academic writing.

- Confusing “feel” when you mean “think” or “believe”
- Splitting infinitives: to think clearly, not to clearly think
- Avoiding contractions: you have, not you’ve
- Writing in the first person, I or we

In addition, any sources of material that you consult other than your textbooks and course information presented in Brightspace by D2L must be properly cited in the paper and a bibliography must be provided. If you fail to provide adequate citations and bibliographic information, you have committed academic dishonesty. Your paper will receive a score of “0,” and your academic dishonesty will be reported to the university.

More details of the assignment will be provided on-line through the course’s Brightspace by Desire2Learn (D2L) website. The assignment is due by 8:00 p.m. on July 27, 2020. This assignment is worth eighty (80) points.

Participation:

You are expected to review online course information, including modules and their contents in a timely manner. In addition, you should review assigned readings from the textbooks according to the schedule provided. To aid you, I have created a course calendar in Brightspace by D2L that breaks the course material into daily readings and online modules for you to read and review. The dates are given to help you pace through the course. For online videos and Power Points, you should take notes just as you would in an in-person course. The same holds for course material in Brightspace by D2L that provides information. While I have attempted to harmonize a sizable amount of the textbook material with the online material, I have added some information throughout the
course that goes beyond the textbooks, especially, *Keeping the Republic* by Barbour and Wright. Although participation does not make up a portion of the final grade for the course, participation may prove to be a significant factor in determining borderline grades. For example, participation may be used as a criterion for a student whose final grade in the class is a 89.6% (B). A student who participated often in class discussions may receive an A as the final course grade. Participation will be determined based upon analytical data in Brightspace by D2L associated with your review of each module and its contents.

**Attendance:**
Because this course is delivered in an online format, attendance will not be taken. Attendance does not count toward your course grade.

**Student Academic Dishonesty:**
The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2019), section on “Student Academic Dishonesty.”

“Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism, as well as the appeal process.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty:
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam; falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; helping or attempting to help other student(s) 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: submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty:
Penalties may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, resubmission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf. 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. For details, students should refer to the SFA Policy Manual (2019) or the University’s General Bulletin, 2019 – 2020 section entitled “Academic Integrity” and other sources of University policy.

**Withheld Grades:**
The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2019), “Course Grades Policy.” (Policy 5.5)

“At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, 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. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.
Acceptable Student Behavior:
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

SFA Policy 5.4
In compliance with SFA Policy 5.4, you are expected to spend 150 minutes each week attending class. In addition, you should spend 300 minutes each week in preparation for class. This time included reading and reviewing material from your assigned readings, as well as reviewing notes from class, working on class assignments, and engaging in research related to your research project. During weeks in which you will meet one-on-one with your professor, you are expected to spend more time engaged in research and writing on your major research project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>D2L Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07/07</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Getting Started Module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/08</td>
<td>Basic Concepts and Definitions</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 1</td>
<td>Background and Basic Concepts Module</td>
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<td>07/09</td>
<td>U.S. Constitution</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 2</td>
<td>U.S. Constitution Module</td>
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<td>07/10</td>
<td>Texas Constitution</td>
<td>Collier, et. al., Chs. 1-2</td>
<td>Texas Constitution Module</td>
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<td>07/13</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/14</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 3</td>
<td>Federalism Module</td>
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<td>07/15</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 4</td>
<td>Civil Liberties Module sections on Introduction, Religion and Public Life, Establishment of Religion, Free Exercise of Religion</td>
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<td>07/16</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Civil Liberties Module sections on Free Speech, Freedom of Press</td>
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<td>07/17</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Civil Liberties Module sections on Rights of the Accused, Self-Incrimination Protections, Cruel and Unusual Punishment, Right to Bear Arms</td>
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<td>07/20</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/21</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 5</td>
<td>Civil Rights Module sections on Foundations, Social Equality, Political Equality</td>
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<td>07/22</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Civil Rights Module section on Women’s Equality</td>
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<td>07/23</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Civil Rights Module section on Privacy and LGBT Rights</td>
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<td>07/24</td>
<td>Public Opinion</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Writing Assignment on Voting Rights Due</td>
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<td>07/27</td>
<td>Public Opinion</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 10</td>
<td>Public Opinion Module section on Why Public Opinion Matters</td>
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<td>07/28</td>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>07/29</td>
<td>Interest Groups</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 11</td>
<td>Interest Group: Introduction Module</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(pp. 376-394)</td>
<td>Interest Group: Function and Regulation Module</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Collier et al, Ch. 9</td>
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<td>07/30</td>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 11</td>
<td>Political Parties: Definition and Function Module</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(pp. 355-375)</td>
<td>Political Parties: Why Two Parties Module</td>
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<td>07/31</td>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Political Parties: U.S. Party System Cycle and Texas Party System Module</td>
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<td>08/03</td>
<td>Elections and Voting Behavior</td>
<td>Barbour and Wright, Ch. 12</td>
<td>Elections: Introduction Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/04</td>
<td>Elections and Voting Behavior</td>
<td>Collier et. al, Ch. 8</td>
<td>Elections: Primaries Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/05</td>
<td>Elections and Voting Behavior</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Elections: Voting Theories and Voter Turnout Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/06</td>
<td>Elections and Voting Behavior</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Elections: Voter Turnout and Structural Arguments Module, Voter Turnout and Contextual Arguments Module, The Progressive Reforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/07</td>
<td>Exam #4</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Exam #4</td>
</tr>
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