Syllabus
GOVT 2302.502
Fall 2021

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Office: Liberal Arts North 106
Phone: (936) 468-2176

Office Hours:

Text Books (both are required)


Course 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.” General Bulletin.

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.

Grades

Grades for this course will be based on lessons, discussions, and a final exam.

• 10 Lessons (each lesson is worth 10 points). Each lesson contains a set of readings and a quiz. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions, and each question will be worth one point. Quizzes must be completed before they close. If a quiz is not completed before it closes, you will earn a zero for that quiz. The schedule for when quizzes will be open is below.
  o Quiz 1: Congress. Opens: August 23 at 12am. Closes: September 1 at 11:30pm.
  o Quiz 2: Texas Legislature. Opens: August 23 at 12am. Closes: September 1 at 11:30pm.
Quiz 3: President. Opens: September 2 at 12am. Closes: September 11 at 11:30pm.

Quiz 4: TX Governor. Opens: September 2 at 12am. Closes: September 11 at 11:30pm.


Quiz 6: TX Judiciary. Opens: September 12 at 12am. Closes: September 20 at 11:30pm.


Quiz 8: TX Plural Executive. Opens: September 21 at 12am. Closes: September 29 at 11:30pm.

Quiz 9: US Domestic and Foreign Policy. Opens: September 30 at 12am. Closes: October 7 at 11:30pm.

Quiz 10: TX Local Government Opens: September 30 at 12am. Closes: October 7 at 11:30pm.

5 Discussion Questions (each discussion question is worth 10 points). Discussion questions will be posted on D2L. You are required to respond to the question posted on the discussion board and to respond to at least one of your classmate’s responses. The initial response will be worth 8 points, and the response to a classmate will be worth 2 points. You must answer all parts of the discussion question and you must post a separate reply to a classmate in order to earn full credit for the discussion response. Your initial response must be thorough and complete. This means you should expect to write 2-3 well-developed paragraphs that cover the following:

- **Identify what they say.** Because writing is a response to a person or group, you must clearly state your own ideas as a response to others. This means you must clearly and concisely summarize the views you are responding to, and why you are responding (e.g., are they wrong?, do they overlook an important facet pertaining to the problem?, etc.).

- **Respond to what they say by offering your own argument.** There are three primary ways to respond to others’ ideas: agree, disagree, or agree/disagree simultaneously. If you agree, it is important that you go beyond regurgitating the views you agree with. That is, you need to add something new to the conversation. If you disagree, you must offer a persuasive
explanation for why you disagree. If you agree/disagree simultaneously, you must clearly identify what you agree with and what you disagree with. Moreover, your post must provide evidence supporting your position.

- Your response to your classmates may be shorter (2 or 3 sentences should suffice). When responding to classmates, be sure to respond to the concepts and ideas that your classmate has proposed, not to their writing style or just saying that you agree/disagree with them. If you agree/disagree, you may say so, but you must explain why. Moreover, you must use appropriate language. The discussion board may cover sensitive topics so be respectful to your fellow student’s opinions. A disrespectful response will lead to a zero for the discussion board assignment. Thus, I encourage you to think about your response and try to formulate an answer in the most objective way possible.

- If you do not complete a discussion post before the discussion question closes, you will receive a zero for that discussion. The schedule for when discussions will be open is below:
  - Discussion 1. Opens: August 23 at 12am. Closes: August 31 at 11:30pm.
  - Discussion 2. Opens: September 1 at 12am. Closes: September 9 at 11:30pm.
  - Discussion 3. Opens: September 10 at 12am. Closes: September 18 at 11:30pm.
  - Discussion 4. Opens: September 19 at 12am. Closes: September 26 at 11:30pm.
  - Discussion 5. Opens: September 27 at 12am. Closes: October 5 at 11:30pm.

- **Final Exam (exam is worth 100 points).** The final exam contains 50 multiple choice questions that cover all material addressed during the semester. Moreover, the final exam is timed (75 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. Exam will be available at 12am on October 5, 2021 and must be taken by 11:30pm on October 8, 2021.

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Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to change. More importantly, 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.

- **The Legislature: August 23 -- September 1**
  - Keeping the Republic ch. 6
  - Lone Star Politics ch. 3
  - Lesson One - U.S. Congress
  - Lesson Two - Texas Congress
- **The Executive: September 2 -- September 11**
  - Keeping the Republic ch. 7
  - Lone Star Politics ch. 4
  - Lesson Three - The Presidency
  - Lesson Four - Texas Governor
- **The Judiciary: September 12 -- September 20**
  - Keeping the Republic ch. 9
  - Lone Star Politics ch. 6 (Texas Judicial System)
  - Lesson Five - U.S. Judiciary
  - Lesson Six - Texas Judiciary
- **The Bureaucracy: September 21 -- September 29**
  - Keeping the Republic ch. 8
  - Lone Star Politics ch. 5
  - Lesson Seven - U.S. Bureaucracy
  - Lesson Eight - Texas Plural Executive & Bureaucracy
- **Policy and Local Government: September 30 -- October 7**
  - Keeping the Republic ch. 14
  - Lone Star Politics ch. 11
  - Lesson Nine - U.S. Domestic and Foreign Policy
  - Lesson Ten - Texas Local Government
- **Final Exam:**
The Final Exam will be available from October 5, 2021 at 12am to October 8, 2021 at 11:30pm

Academic Integrity

The following is taken from SFA’s Policy Manual and can be found in section 4.1 – 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.

All cases of academic dishonesty, both cheating and plagiarism, will be handled according to University policies and procedures (A-4.1 & A-6.3). 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. While these are not exhaustive lists, students who are curious should peruse SFA’s Policy Manual.2 Specifically, you should focus on section 4.1 – Student Academic Dishonesty.3

To be clear, I do not take academic dishonesty lightly, and the consequences for academic dishonesty will be an “F” for the course. No exceptions.

Withheld Grades
The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2014), “Semester Grades Policy” (A-54): 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 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. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Mental Health**

SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:

SFASU Counseling Services [www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices) 3rd Floor Rusk Building 936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic

[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp) Human Services Room 202 936-468-1041

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741