Professor: Dr. Julie Harrelson-Stephens  
Office: 135 Liberal Arts North, Department of Government  
Phone: 468-2380  
Email: *the best way to contact me is the email in Brightspace  
ZOOM Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 9:00-9:50; Tuesday 1:00-3:00, and Thursday 11:00-12:00, and by appointment (ZOOM LINK on BRIGHTSPACE)  
SI: Caitlyn Shrewsbury  
Monday Wednesday 5:00-6:00 in Lumberjack Landing Room H  

*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.)

**Purpose:** This course is one of two required political science courses. This course focuses on Texas government. The course covers the Texas constitution and the state’s institutions (the executive, legislative, and judicial branch). It also explores a few of the policy outputs produced by the political system. 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.

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the origin and development of the Texas constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and intergovernmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. *General Bulletin, 2021-2022*

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.

**Textbook:**  
You will be required to purchase the textbook *Lone Star Politics 7th* in Vantage, through Brightspace.

Course Requirements:

As you read through the chapters in Vantage, you will be assigned quick knowledge checks throughout the chapter, worth 10% of your total grade. These checks are relatively easy, but are designed to help you comprehend the material as you are reading. If you get one of the questions wrong, you can (and should) retake the check. You can take them as many times as you want before the due date and the highest score will be recorded. Once the due date closes, you can continue to take the checks for your own benefit, but the grade will be set and the gradebook will not change.

In addition, 30% of your grade will come from end of chapter tests, which cover basic vocabulary and concepts from the textbook. You may take each end of chapter tests as many times as you want to help study the material. These tests can help you check your knowledge; if you encounter a question you do not know the answer to, the test can also point you to information you need to study.

The remaining 60% of your grade will come from four exams given during the semester, consisting of multiple choice and short answer. Tests will cover material from the lecture and the reading. Exams will be taken in class, during the regularly scheduled time.

If you know you will miss an exam for any reason (including ANY university excused absences) you must make arrangements with me at least two days prior to the scheduled exam date to take the exam early. This means if you participate in any SFA extracurricular such as a sports team or academic competition team, you must arrange to take your exams before rather than after the exam date. Otherwise a zero will be recorded for your exam grade. If you miss an exam unexpectedly,
contact me immediately. You may be allowed to take an alternative exam with appropriate documentation, such as a doctor’s note.

**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.

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**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 review questions and basic quizzes. 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 me as early as possible. I will be happy to help you in any way possible. I may be able to help you study more effectively or recommend other assistance. Do not wait until the end of the semester to ask for help, when so much of your grade is already completed. Ask for help as soon as you know you need it. Remember, I want you to do well in this class!

**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 merely repeating questions from the review questions that I give you to fill out. I am happy to answer questions and
help you with material you are struggling with, but you should be sure you have been keeping up with the material and the modules.

**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/)

**Academic Integrity**
According to SFASU’s Policy Manual (2020), 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.

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 will result in a minimum penalty of a zero for the assignment and may result in an “F” for the course and reporting to the Dean of Students for further action.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy**

“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.”
Mental Health and Wellness

SFA 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:
SFA Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
Rusk Building, 3rd Floor
936.468.2401

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic
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

Class information and updates:
Class information, including changes of dates, review sheets, or other information will be posted on the class D2L site.
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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Schedule</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction; Political Culture</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 1;</td>
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<tr>
<td>II. The Texas Constitution</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 2</td>
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<td>III. The Texas Legislature</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 3</td>
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**Exam 1: Monday September 20th**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV. Texas Governor</th>
<th>LSP Chapter 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V. Plural Executive</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI. Texas Judiciary</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 6</td>
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</tbody>
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**Exam 2: Monday October 11th**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VII. Political Parties</th>
<th>LSP Chapter 9</th>
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<tr>
<td>VIII. Organized Interests</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>IX. Voting, Campaigns and Elections</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Exam 3: Monday November 1st**

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<tr>
<th>X. Texas Justice</th>
<th>LSP Chapter 7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XI. Civil Rights</td>
<td>LSP 2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>XII. Fiscal Policy</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIII. Energy and Environment</td>
<td>LSP Chapter 13</td>
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**Exam 4: Monday Dec 6th  10:30-12:30**
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
- Communicate your understanding and interpretation of institutional arrangements of the Texas political system, and well as key domestic and foreign policy issues
- Understand social responsibility by examining Texas government policy choices as they effect various regional, national, and global communities
- Understand, connect, and evaluate individual choices associated with Texas state public policy options and / or theories and approaches to institutional design of the Texas political system

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

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 GOVT 2306: Texas Government you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Core Curriculum / General Education Objectives of Communication Skills (Visual and Written), Critical Thinking, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. During the semester, you will receive assignments 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. If you have any questions, please see your Instructor or the Office of Student Learning and Institutional Assessment 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 associated with this course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Titles</th>
<th>2020 Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas</td>
<td>1) Bumper Sticker: Political</td>
<td>Sept 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation,</td>
<td>1) Exam #1</td>
<td>1) Sept 20</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and synthesis of information</td>
<td>2) Exam #2</td>
<td>2) Oct 11</td>
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<td>3) Exam #3</td>
<td>3) Nov 1</td>
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<td>4) Exam #4</td>
<td>4) Dec 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and</td>
<td>1) Exam #2</td>
<td>1) Oct 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global</td>
<td>2) Exam #4</td>
<td>2) Dec 6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to</td>
<td>1) Exam #1</td>
<td>1) Sept 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethical decision-making</td>
<td>2) Exam #3</td>
<td>2) Nov 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Exam #4</td>
<td>3) Dec 6</td>
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