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, 2020-2021.

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.

Class Meeting Days & Times: MW 1:00pm – 2:15pm
Room: Ferguson 372


The Course

"Wherever the real power in a Government lies, there is the danger of oppression. In our Governments, the real power lies in the majority of the Community, and the invasion of private rights is chiefly to be apprehended, not from the acts of Government contrary to the sense of its constituents, but from acts in which the Government is the mere instrument of the major number of the constituents."

- James Madison, Letters and Other Writings of James Madison Volume 3

"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

Ronald Reagan, 40th President of the United States

Course Objectives

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 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

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>2023 Date Due</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>1) M1: Bumper Sticker</td>
<td>1) Jan 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) M7: Interview Party Chair</td>
<td>2) Mar 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) M9: Infograph</td>
<td>3) Mar 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4) M11: Meme</td>
<td>4) Apr 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information</td>
<td>1) Exam #1</td>
<td>1) Feb 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) Exam #2</td>
<td>2) Mar 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Exam #3</td>
<td>3) Apr 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4) Exam #4</td>
<td>4) May 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities</td>
<td>1) M2: Amendment</td>
<td>1) Jan 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) M4: Executive</td>
<td>2) Feb 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLASS PROCEDURES

- This is a LIVE course, so you will be required to attend the class sessions in order to do well in this course. This means being in class, at your seat, ready to participate in class, BEFORE the time the course is scheduled to begin. It means REMAINING in class for the entire period, unless you have previously arranged with me to leave class early. It means doing ALL of the assigned reading BEFORE the class so you can actively and fully participate in the class discussion and activities. It means having your phone silenced and put away. Ten percent of your grade is assigned to attendance AND participation – meaning you must participate in class, not merely show up.

- I have a 48-hour response procedure for student contacts. This means that, barring extraordinary circumstances, I endeavor to respond to any student contact within 48 hours of receiving it. Most such contacts are via email. I STRONGLY encourage you to email me directly at goochdm@sfasu.edu and NOT through D2L (unless it is about a specific grade). Keep in mind, emails sometimes do not reach their intended destination. **If you have not heard from me within 48 hours of having sent an email to me – send another email and/or attempt another contact.** If you have a specific question about your grade, it must be through D2L or discussed in office hours. Responses through D2L take longer, but still follow the 48-hour policy. Phone calls to the office are **not** recommended.

- Late assignments are not accepted. Make-up assignments will only be allowed under exceptional circumstances. Having another exam or paper due that day is not an exceptional circumstance. Grades are non-negotiable. All assignments are posted to the calendar in the intro module, are scheduled on and are posted to the D2L calendar.

- 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 permitted under any circumstances.

- **Social Media Procedure:** In addition to our Brightspace course shell, we will have an official class GroupMe for questions, comments, and interactions among the students and instructor for this class. As such, non-official class groups, on any social media platform (Facebook, GroupMe, etc.), are strictly forbidden as “unauthorized collusion” under SFA’s Academic Integrity Policy. Such non-official groups present a threat to the academic integrity of the course. Posting about class interactions or class participants on social media is strongly discouraged, both for your sake and the sake of the class. Social media is not a good forum for discussing the class or issues in the class. Our discussions and debates should remain within the confines of the class. Any issues with the class you have over the course of the semester should be addressed directly with the instructor.
There will be **four exams** given during the semester, which comprise 60% of your course grade. The regular exams will consist of multiple choice, fill in the break, and short answer. Tests will cover material from the lecture and the reading. The exam time limits will be stated on each exam and strictly enforced. Another 15% of your grade will come from your **quiz grade**. The quizzes are designed to help test your basic understanding of the module’s content. As such, you may take each quiz as many times as you want to help study the material. The highest grade will be recorded. Be sure to complete the reading and relevant materials prior to taking the quiz for each module. The final 15% of your course grade will come from the **weekly assignments**. Whereas the quizzes are designed to test basic knowledge, the assignments are geared towards integrating the material in the lecture. There are 13 total daily assignments and you must complete 7 of them. The daily assignments are due at 11:00pm each Sunday. Once the drop box closes, the assignment can no longer be submitted.

### WEIGHTING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LESSON ASSIGNMENTS</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESSON QUIZZES</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMS</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90% and up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80% - 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70% - 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60% - 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NOTE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The use of artificial intelligence, large learning models, or other similar instruments to generate text or responses to prompts is strictly prohibited in this class. This includes, but is not limited to, ChatGPT, Google Bard, YouChat, Perplexity, OpenAI GPT, and Quora.
The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Withheld Grades

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 coursework 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 to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

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 promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Student Wellness and Well-Being

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These
may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, 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:**

**The Dean of Students Office** (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
[www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](http://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

**SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic** Human Services, Room 202
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
936.468.1041

**The Health and Wellness Hub** “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education
[www.sfasu.edu/thehub](http://www.sfasu.edu/thehub)
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**Crisis Resources:**

- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

**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 Code Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, Article V.c.i.). 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 Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.