INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Dr. Donald M. Gooch  
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Office: Vera Dugas Liberal Arts North #111  
Office Phone: 936-468-2098  
Office Hours: T&TH, 8:00am – 9:30am; W 11:00am – 1:00pm; By Appointment

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number: GOV 2306  
Sections: 014  
Prerequisites: N/A  
Semester Credit Hours: 3

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: T, TH 12:30pm- 1:45pm  
Room: Ferguson 371

REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MATERIALS


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>2024 Date Due</th>
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</table>
| Communication Skills | To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication. | 1) M1: Bumper Sticker  
2) M7: Interview Party Chair  
3) M9: Infograph  
4) M11: Meme | 1) Jan 28  
2) Mar 10  
3) Mar 31  
4) Apr 14 |
| Critical Thinking  | To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information | 1) Exam #1  
2) Exam #2  
3) Exam #3  
4) Exam #4 | 1) Feb 18  
2) Mar 10  
3) Apr 7  
4) May 10 |
| Social Responsibility | To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities | 1) M2: Amendment  
2) M4: Executive | 1) Feb 4  
2) Feb 18 |
CLASS POLICIES

• 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 policy 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 Policy: 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 materials” under SFA’s Academic Honesty 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.

EVALUATION

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 8 of them. The daily assignments are due at 11:00pm each Sunday. Once the dropbox closes, the assignment can no longer be submitted.

WEIGHTING SCALE

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and down</td>
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ACADEMIC HONESTY

The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2011), section on “Academic Integrity” (A-9). 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.

All cases of academic dishonesty will be handled according to University policies and procedures (A-9.1). 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 (2011) or the University’s General Bulletin, 2016 – 2017 section entitled “Academic Integrity” and other sources of University policy.

WITHHELD GRADES

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/.

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, policy D-34.1). 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.