STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

TEXAS GOVERNMENT

Spring 2024

2306.007

MWF 11:00-11:50

Professor Information
Professor: Mrs. Rebecca J. McElyea
Department of Government
Office: Liberal Arts North #112
Office Hours: W 1000-1200 F 1100-1400
Please feel free to email me @ the following address:
Email: Rebecca.McElyea@sfasu.edu
During the week, I will return emails within 24 hours and on the weekend expect a reply by/or on the following Monday. Weekends begin at 1700 Fridays and conclude at 0600 on Mondays.
SI Leader: Dacoda Burkholder
SI Meeting Times: 4-5PM Tu/Tr
SI Location: Landing Room H

Mrs. Rebecca Jackson McElyea

Stephen F. Austin State University
1936 North St. Vera Dugas Liberal Arts North #112
Nacogdoches, Texas 75926 United States
Notice on Emails to Your Instructor:
Please note the following as a very important step-by-step guide for students when:
You need help / have a general question(s).
Always follow the following when you are emailing me:

• **First**, you need to **check the syllabus** to find out if your question has already been answered. *Any emails sent with questions that have been answered in the syllabus will be responded with an attachment of the syllabus only.*

• **Second**, you MUST include your name and class for the course in which you are enrolled. As an example, “Sally Mae Jones 2306.006”.

**Please note:** By identifying yourself and the course correctly*as demonstrated above* you will get a response email from me FASTER. I will be able to ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CLASS YOU ARE ENROLLED IN.

I teach around 300 students Texas Government each semester. Each course—although titled in SFASU course catalogue as “Texas Government” are unique and differ. Therefore, I REQUIRE THIS INFORMATION TO GIVE YOU CORRECT ANSWERS IN RETURN.

Please do not write by using the following as examples:
“Hi, I am in Texas govt ponline”
“I am enrolled in Givernmetn.”
“I’m in ahistory class you teach.”
“I am enrolled in your Texas course on Tuesdays.”
Note, these examples do not help me to know what course YOU ATTEND in-class or online. *The above examples do not help me help you find information specific to you and the course section you are enrolled in!*

**So, please, if necessary, copy and paste the following:**

Hello,
My name is Sally Mae-Dow Jones. I am enrolled in GOVT 2306.001*insert the last three numbers of your course here*
I read through the syllabus, looked at the course calendar, and throughout D2L but …insert concern/comment/questions/introductions/ introductions explaining you are a member of an SFASU group or team which travels**dates included would be nice**ETC…. here.
Thank you for your time and assistance. I look forward to hearing from you and taking this course.
Sally Mae-Dow Jones
123456
smdjones@jacks.SFASUahoraUT_SYSTEMescuela.net 3
Copyright and/or Plagiarism note on the above example. You all have my permission to reproduce the above email example for other courses in which you need to email your instructor and are unsure how to begin, it is a sketch email you may be able to use for your boss, an on-campus organization/team leader, volunteer organization you want / work for, or whomever—even your roommates—and yes, they will be impressed. Please take note of the professionalism, tone, and syntax of the briefly written electronic message. You should tailor this example to your own personal needs. As a university student, I urge you to embrace every moment, example, group, book, and the time you spend physically or virtually on-campus or off-campus! SFASU allows you a myriad of potential new experiences, people, and information are provided to you. Take what professors, staff, teams, school spirit organizations groups/teams/mates provide to you in all forms throughout your career at SFASU. I challenge you to ignite every moment and experience gained while enrolled into an opportunity for improving yourself for the future professional you aspire to become through your education at SFASU.

Finally, I will only answer emails that originate from an official SFA email account. The university requires all communication between faculty members and students take place within university sponsored email servers. Other email domain addresses may not ever ‘land’ in my inbox. Even after, your google email makes it through not just once—but maybe even twice! I have had communication cut off from students using outside domain email addresses in the past. Please use your university @jacks email and we will all be happier for it.

Required Reading:
THERE IS NO TEXTBOOK! You will read in the course module on D2L each chapter worth of information. I am in favor of OER’s (open educational resource) texts especially for introductory courses like ours. OER’s reduce the overall cost of higher education.

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.

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.

Core Objective 1- Critical Thinking Skills – creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
Core Objective 2- Communication Skills – effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
Core Objective 3- Social Responsibility – intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities
Core Objective 4- 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
- Critically evaluate political science theories and approaches to institutional arrangements of Texas political system and to Texas public policy
- 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

**Purpose:**
This course is the first of two required political science courses designed to be an introduction to politics. The focus of this course is the inputs into the political process, and to some extent the political process itself. 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.

**Assessment:**
Grades for Texas Government 2306 will be based on the completion of the following assignments:

**Assessment Weighting Information**
The following are the weights given to your participation, exams, weekly assignments, and the date each assignment is due:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Grade Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas Legislature Assignments</td>
<td>Semester Long</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam One</td>
<td>Feb. 15-17</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Two (Midterm)</td>
<td>March 7-9</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Three</td>
<td>April 3-6</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Four (Final)</td>
<td>May 6-10</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz Grade</td>
<td>All quizzes due May 5</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final grades will be granted on the following scale:
A=100%-90%   B=89%-80%   C=79%-70%   D=69%-60%   F=59% and below

Exams
There will be **four exams** given during the semester. Tests will cover material from the online modules, in-class lectures, PowerPoints, and the assigned reading. Your exams may include True/False, short answers, short essays, essays, and multiple-choice questions. You will be given 75 minutes to complete your exams online.

All four exams comprise in total 70% of your overall course grade. Exams may consist of T/F, multiple choice, essay questions, fill in the blank, and/or short answer questions and are not limited to these formats alone. Tests will cover material from the lecture and the reading previously studied usually three or four modules worth of content. **Once material is tested, we will move forward learning new course materials in preparation for the next test.**

The exception to this rule is the final COMPREHENSIVE exam.

Exams will be open in D2L/Brightspace at 6:00AM/ 0600 on the dates listed above. Exams will be open for at minimum two days. Allowing the student to manage their time and responsibilities outside of class but while also getting the exam taken. The exam will be 75 minutes unless otherwise noted by other university offices or the student to the professor. Students are given a longer period to complete the final exam—the final exam will be held online in D2L Brightspace during the dates listed above. All exams close at 11:59PM/2359 on the dates listed above.

Quizzes
Another 10% of your grade will come from your quiz grade. The quizzes are designed to help test your basic understanding of the online 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. Quizzes are meant to test your general knowledge and understanding after reading. Please note it is advised you complete each quiz weekly alongside the assigned module readings. However, the quizzes are not due and do not close until May 5, 2024 at 11:59PM/2359.

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Texas Legislature Assignments
There are **three total** Texas Legislature Assignments: all assignments are due by 11:59PM in D2L Dropbox. All three assignments compose 35% of your overall course grade.

*Texas Legislature Assignments Two and Three are considered keystone events defined by policy as, "a special or unique assignment, test, project, experience, or other academic exercise identified by the Faculty member as critical for successful completion of standards of the class and unable to be missed.” *

1-Texas Legislature: Who Represents Me, (8%) due February 11, 2024
2-Texas Legislature: Letter to a Representative, (13.5%) due March 17, 2024*
3-Texas Legislature: Analyzing Your State Senate District, (13.5%) due April 14, 2024*
### Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Begins</td>
<td>January 18, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last day to apply for August Graduation 2024</td>
<td>March 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>March 9-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Holiday for faculty and students</td>
<td>March 28-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First day to apply for December 2024 Graduation</td>
<td>April 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exams</td>
<td>May 4-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Attendance Policy

I expect students to attend all scheduled classes unless otherwise noted by faculty. If you are a member of a campus organization or team, please inform me of dates you will be unable to attend class via email before the expected date(s) of absence. I keep exams open for two days minimum therefore if an official university sanctioned activity calls you away from campus you are still given ample time to take the exam. I will not facilitate re-opening exams or assignments due to absences. You are given all due dates and exam dates at the beginning of the semester. Therefore, the onus of all course activities and submission is left with the student.

### Student Syllabus Resources

The information on this page serves as an important part of your course syllabus. It includes details regarding attendance, grading criteria and other important policies and Students should review the following link for additional policies and information:

[https://www.sfasu.edu/student-syllabus-resources](https://www.sfasu.edu/student-syllabus-resources)

Information on the following is available at Student Syllabus Resources:

- Institution Absences (HOP 04-110)
- Academic Integrity (HOP 04-106)
- Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (HOP policy 02-206)
- Students with Disabilities and Disability Services
- Student Wellness and Well-Being
- Additional Campus Resources
- Crisis Resources
## Core Curriculum Objective Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>How the Core Objective Will be Addressed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Texas Legislature: Analyzing Your State Senate District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Texas Legislature: Letter to a Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td>Texas Legislature: Analyzing Your State Senate District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Texas Legislature: Letter to a Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Texas Legislature: Letter to a Representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Course Calendar

Dates may change at the discretion of the instructor. Should a date change be required, it will be announced in the course news or on the discussion board. All times listed are Central Standard Time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>MODULE</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week of Jan. 14th</td>
<td>Welcome Module 1: Introduction</td>
<td>• Read Get Started module content, notably syllabus and Course Calendar. (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete Module 1 (CO 4) content and assigned readings.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete Module 1 quiz in D2L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of Jan. 28th</td>
<td>Module 2: Texas Constitution</td>
<td>• Read Module 2 content and assigned readings. (CO 4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Submit Module 2 quiz (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of Feb. 5th</td>
<td>Module 3: Texas Legislature</td>
<td>• Read module 3 content and assigned readings. (CO 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texas Legislature Assignment</td>
<td>• Submit Module 3 quiz (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One Due Feb. 11 @ 2359</td>
<td>• Submit TX Legislature: Who Represents Me (CO 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 12th</td>
<td>Module 4: The Texas Governor</td>
<td>• Read module content and assigned readings. (CO 1 &amp; 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>• Submit Module 4 quiz (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ Complete Exam 1 (CO 4) by Feb. 7 @ 11:59PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of Feb. 18th</td>
<td>Module 5: The Texas Bureaucracy</td>
<td>• Read module content and assigned readings. (CO 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Submit Module 5 quiz (CO 4) 5 discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of Feb. 25th</td>
<td>Module 6: Campaigns &amp; Elections</td>
<td>• Read module content and assigned readings. (CO 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Submit Module 6 quiz (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of March 3rd</td>
<td>Module 7: Texas Judiciary</td>
<td>• Read module content and assigned readings (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>• Submit Module 7 quiz (CO 4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week of March 10th | **SPRING BREAK March 9-16th**  
Texas legislature Assignment Two  
Due March 17th by 2359 | • Complete Exam #2 (CO 4) by March 9  
• Submit TX Legislature: Writing a Letter to a Representative March 17th |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Week of March 17th | Module 8: Texas Sized Justice | • Read module content and assigned readings (CO 4)  
• Submit Module 8 quiz (CO 4) |
| Week of March 24th | Module 9: Organized Interests | • Read module content and assigned readings. (CO 3)  
• Submit Module 9 quiz (CO 4) |
| March 28-31 | Easter Holiday for students and faculty | • Read module content and assigned readings. (CO 4)  
• Submit Module 9 quiz |
| Week of March 31st | Catch up if needed or begin Module 10: Political Parties  
Exam #3 | • Read module 10 content and assigned readings. (CO 4)  
• Submit Module 10 quiz  
• Complete Exam 3 (CO 4) by 2359 April 6 |
| Week of April 7th | Module 10: Political Parties | • Read module 10 content (CO 3)  
• Submit Module 10 quiz (CO 4)  
• Texas Legislature: Analyzing Your State Senate District (CO 1 & 6) due April 14th by 2359 |
| Week of April 14th | Module 11: The Media | • Read module 11 content (CO 3&4)  
• Submit Module 11 quiz |
| Week of April 21st | Module 12: Public Policy | • Read module content and assigned readings.  
• Submit Module 12 quiz |
| Week of April 28th | Dead Week  
no new content introduced | Submit ALL WEEKLY QUIZZES BY MAY 5th @ 11:59PM |
| Week of May 1 | Final Exam May 6-10th | • Complete Final Exam by May 10th @ 2359 |

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