GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description
This course and Government 2301 comprise an introduction to the study of politics and government in the United States and Texas. This course examines the evolution and current state of political behavior. Topics include an examination of political culture, public opinion, the media, political participation, voting, campaigns, elections, political parties, and groups.

TIP: Understanding the class format and learning opportunities is essential for your success in the course. Read and rely on this syllabus throughout the term—it provides detailed information followed by the professor and students.

Course Format
This is a web course; there are no face-to-face meetings. Through Blackboard, students post topic responses and take examinations.

Required Textbook

Student Learning Outcomes
- Analyze the tools of analysis, measurement, and research used in developing the scientific study of politics.
- Analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.
- Analyze the forms, functions, and types of public discourse, political activity and participation, and political information.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES & MEANS OF ASSESSMENT

Learning Opportunities at a Glance

Grading Scale
Unit Responses 100 Points
Exam 1 100 Points
Exam 2 100 Points
Exam 3 100 Points

Total: 400 Points

Curves
Grades are curved upwards if no one in the class earns 100%. This is for the unit response total and each exam. Additionally, if no one earns all available points at the end of the term, then there is an overall course curve. Your professor will email the class about any curve. Often, someone earns 100% and there is no curve.

Unit Responses (10 at 10 Points Each) 100 Points
• Post a 1–3 paragraph response to each unit question.
• Your grade for this portion of the course will be based on your 10 highest-graded unit responses that you have made on time during the term. Grades for your responses will appear under “My Grades” by the end of the term.
• You may work at your own pace, posting a response to an available question before the exam is due that covers the corresponding unit. New unit questions will open after each exam.
• Your response for each question is due before the related exam ends at 5:00PM, according to the Course Schedule.
• Missed, attached, emailed, or incorrectly posted responses are not eligible for points.

One purpose of posting your unit responses is to provide everyone in the class a chance to read and reflect upon your thoughts on the course material. You may respond to other students’ postings, and even post follow-up comments to your own posting, but only your initial response to the unit question is graded.

• Grading Criteria:
  1. Your responses need to be informed. Answer unit questions with course content. Convey comprehension and analysis of information from the textbook and other class material. Use logical reasoning. Avoid asserting opinions that are not supported by course material.
  2. Your responses need to be well-written. Use correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, capitalization, and punctuation. Present new information from the course material; avoid writing responses that are similar to another student’s posting. Use your own words; do not plagiarize. Clearly and correctly cite the source of any borrowed information. See the University’s “Academic Integrity” statement below.
  3. Your responses need to be professional. Avoid personal attacks, offensive remarks, stereotypes, grandstanding, ideological or partisan rhetoric, and hateful or prejudicial statements. See “Course Ethics” below.

TIP: Complete your learning opportunities as early as possible to avoid missing deadlines. This course uses the University’s clock, which may differ from your clock.

Exams (3 at 100 Points Each) 300 Points
• There are four timed exams for the course that you will take on Blackboard. Your three highest-scoring exams will count toward your course grade.
Each exam has 50 multiple-choice and true-or-false questions on the material and is worth 100 points.

Each exam is available for four days before it is due, as per the “Availability Dates” on the Course Schedule. You may take an exam anytime during its availability period.

Each exam is due before 5:00PM at the end of its availability time.

Each exam covers material from specific units as noted on the Course Schedule.

You will need to thoroughly and effectively study the course material, such as slide presentations and textbook readings to do well on the exams.

For information about missed exams and computer, connection, power, or user problems, see “Missed Learning Opportunities, Enrollments, & Incompletes” below.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

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<th>Topics &amp; Due Dates</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>7/8–7/10 2 Days</td>
<td>Course Orientation</td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Due by 5:00PM 7/10 for Welcome: Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/8–7/15 7 Days</td>
<td>Unit 1 Introduction &amp; American Political Culture</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
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<td>Unit 2 Political Culture, People, &amp; Economy of Texas</td>
<td>Ch. 19</td>
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<td>Unit 3 Public Opinion</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/11–7/15 4 Days</td>
<td>Due by 5:00PM 7/15 for Units 1–3: Responses Exam 1</td>
<td>Ch. 1, 19, 6</td>
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<td>7/15–7/22 7 Days</td>
<td>Unit 4 The Media</td>
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<td>Unit 5 Political Participation &amp; Voting</td>
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<td>7/22–7/29 7 Days</td>
<td>Unit 6 Political Parties</td>
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<td>Unit 7 Parties &amp; Elections in Texas</td>
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<td>Unit 8 Campaigns &amp; Elections</td>
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<td>7/25–7/29 4 Days</td>
<td>Due by 5:00PM 7/29 for Units 6–8: Responses Exam 3</td>
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<td>7/29–8/6 8 Days</td>
<td>Unit 9 Groups &amp; Interests</td>
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<td>Unit 10 Interest Groups, Lobbying, &amp; Lobbyists in Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/2–8/6 4 Days</td>
<td>Due by 5:00PM 8/6 for Units 9–10: Responses Exam 4</td>
<td>Ch. 11, 22</td>
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### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Course Ethics**
- Be courteous and respectful to students, faculty, and staff. This etiquette is especially important in web courses since we cannot hear the tone of voice or see the facial
expression of another person. Do not make personal attacks, offensive remarks, or emotional appeals. Keep in mind that you are a known individual in a learning environment, not an anonymous person on some blog.

- Back up your comments with substance related to the course material. Do not use the course as a platform for grandstanding, engaging in ideological or partisan rhetoric, or conveying hateful or prejudicial statements.
- Do not plagiarize (see “Academic Integrity” below). You can avoid presenting the words and ideas of others as your own by properly citing borrowed material, namely by using quotation marks and citing the source (author, work, page number).

Suggestions for Studying Course Units
The Course Schedule is organized on a unit-by-unit basis with “units” covering different topics and chapters. Each unit of study has required readings from the textbook, as identified on the Course Schedule. Within each unit folder on the home page, you will find PowerPoint slide shows. These slideshows are equivalent to classroom lectures and emphasize valuable information. The book also provides valuable information, as well as detailed content. For each unit, you may find it useful to follow these steps:

1. Actively read and review the assigned readings and online slide shows.
2. Reflect on the following questions throughout the term:
   - How is the topic analyzed, measured, or researched?
   - How does the topic analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems?
   - How does the topic analyze the forms, functions, and types of public discourse, political activity and participation, and political information?
3. Draft, proof, save, and then post your response to each unit question as early as possible, according to early deadlines that you have set for yourself, well before the due dates listed on the course schedule.

Missed Learning Opportunities, Enrollments, & Incompletes
- A missed, late, or incorrectly submitted learning opportunity is not eligible for credit.
- There is no early availability, due-date extension, or substitute, makeup, or extra-credit work for any learning opportunity.
- Making up a missed, late, or incorrectly submitted learning opportunity for credit requires a compelling, debilitating, and unavoidable conflict, legal documentation, and notification of the professor before the respective due date of the missed coursework. The conflict must occur during the entire availability time of the missed learning opportunity.
- Computer, internet connection, power, or user problems do not excuse a missed, late, or incorrectly submitted learning opportunity, including low-scored, unanswered, or unsaved exam questions or exams.
- In the rare event that a late or missed learning opportunity is accepted, it is not worth more than 80% of the original available points.
- This course follows A&M-Texarkana’s policies regarding enrollments and incompletes.

University-Required Syllabus Statements
Disability Accommodations: Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of ‘F’ in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the university catalog.

A&M-Texarkana Email Address: Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

Drop Policy: To drop this course after the census date (see semester calendar), a student must complete the Drop/Withdrawal Request Form, located on the University website (http://www.tamut.edu/Student-Support/Registrar/Dropping.html) or obtained in the Registrar’s Office. The student must submit the signed and completed form to the instructor of each course indicated on the form to be dropped for his/her signature. The signature is not an “approval” to drop, but rather confirmation that the student has discussed the drop/withdrawal with the faculty member. The form must be submitted to the Registrar’s office for processing in person, email Registrar@tamut.edu, mail (7101 University Ave., Texarkana, TX 75503) or fax (903-223-3140). Drop/withdraw forms missing any of the required information will not be accepted by the Registrar’s Office for processing. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the form is completed properly before submission. If a student stops participating in class (attending and submitting assignments) but does not complete and submit the drop/withdrawal form, a final grade based on work completed as outlined in the syllabus will be assigned.

Student Technical Assistance: Solutions to common problems and FAQ’s for your web-enhanced and online courses are found at this link: http://www.tamut.edu/Administration/Information%20Technology/Blackboard.html If you cannot find your resolution there, you can send in a support request detailing your specific problem here: http://www.tamut.edu/techde/support.htm Blackboard Helpdesk contacts: Office hours are: Monday - Friday, 8:00a to 5:00p Julia Allen (main contact) 903-223-3154 julia.allen@tamut.edu Nikki Thomson (alternate) 903-223-3083 nikki.thomson@tamut.edu Jayson Ferguson (alternate) 903-223-3105 jayson.ferguson@tamut.edu

Technical Requirements: Minimum Windows PC Requirements: • Pentium IV 1.5GHz+ (preferred: Core Duo) • 1 GB RAM minimum (preferred: 2 GB) • 128MB Video Card
minimum - Sound Card is required for some courses • 56K modem minimum (Cable or DSL required for some courses) • Windows 2000, XP, Vista or 7 • Web browser (Internet Explorer 7.0+; Firefox 3.0+) • Microsoft Word, minimum Office 97 Some courses will need plug-ins such as Flash player 10+, QuickTime player 7.0+, Adobe Reader 9.0+, Java Runtime Environment (Java 1.6.0_15), Windows Media Player 10+, RealPlayer, and Macromedia/Adobe Shockwave. Some online courses may also require a CD ROM (8x minimum, higher recommended) Blackboard has certified the following browsers for computers running Windows Operating Systems: • Internet Explorer 8 or 9 (IE is not supported on Windows XP) • Mozilla Firefox 3.6+ • Google Chrome Minimum Apple Macintosh Requirements: • Intel Core 2.0GHz+ • 1 GB RAM (preferred: 2 GB) • 128MB Video Card minimum - Sound Card is required for some courses • 56K modem minimum (Cable or DSL required for some courses) • Web browser (Firefox 3.0+ ; Safari 3.0+) • Microsoft Word, minimum Office 97 Some courses will need plug-ins such as Flash player 10+, QuickTime player 7.0+, Adobe Reader 9.0+, Java Runtime Environment, RealPlayer, and Macromedia/Adobe Shockwave. Some online courses may also require a CD ROM (8x minimum, higher recommended) Blackboard has certified the following browsers for computers running Macintosh Operating Systems: • Mac OS 10.2 (Jaguar): (Safari 1 is compatible) • Mac OS 10.3 (Panther): Safari 1.2 (Firefox 1.5 is compatible) • Mac OS 10.4 (Tiger): Safari 2 and Firefox 1.5 • Mac OS 10.5 (Leopard): (Firefox 2.0 is compatible) I-OS and Android Devices: These devices are currently supported using the Blackboard Mobile App, available for free from your App Store or scan the code below: To access Texas A&M University - Texarkana, there is an individual license fee of $1.99 per year or $5.99 lifetime. This fee gives you access to the university from all your (same platform) devices; it is not necessary to pay the fee for each device you own.