

Political Science 2306: Texas Government

Fall 2018

M/W/F: 9:00am – 9:50am

Dan Rather 00320

(CHSS 495 after first session)

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Office Hours: M/W 2:00pm-4:00pm

Course Description

This course provides a survey of the institutional and behavioral foundations of Texas government and its role in the US federal system. We will cover the ideational foundations and political culture of Texas, both at its founding and now. Later, we will cover political behavior of various groups in Texas, from political parties to lobbyists. Finally, we will cover the institutional structure of Texas's government branches and how all these factors affect the policy outputs of the Texas government.

Course Textbook

There is one assigned textbook for the course. To keep costs down, only the ebook version is required. If students prefer to use a paper textbook, they are welcome to purchase one instead. There is also a paper copy available in my office that students can view during office hours or by appointment.

Anthony Champagne, Edward J. Harpham, and Jason P. Casellas. (2017). *Governing Texas*, Third Edition. W. W. Norton and Company.

Blackboard

All communication for the course will take place on the class Blackboard page or university email. Any changes to the course schedule or other announcements will be posted there. Each student should ensure that they have access to these materials and are able to receive emails through their student account. Please note that I cannot accept or respond to student emails that come from a non-university address.

Grading

Three Discussion Papers: 50 points each.

Exam 1: 100 points

Exam 2: 100 points

To prepare for each exam, I will make a review sheet available alongside my lecture slides. This material does not mean that class attendance is not important. Slides will only outline important points for the lecture, and are provided so that you can focus on taking notes from lecture rather than copying slides.

A handout with more information on the discussion papers will be made available later in the semester.

Grading Scale

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: 59 or lower

Information and University Policies

Academic Dishonesty:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

http://www.shsu.edu/~slo_www/

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/861001.pdf>

Students with Disabilities Policy:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/7ff819c3-39f3-491d-b688-db5a330ced92.pdf>

Visitors in the Classroom:

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

Copyright on Lecture and Course Materials

Copyright 2018 (Christopher Patane) as to this syllabus and all lectures. During this course, students are prohibited from selling notes or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the instructor teaching this course.

Mental Health

Sometimes the study of Political Science involves dealing with difficult material. In some cases these may reflect or reference your own personal, family, or group experiences. Other times, life events may interfere with your ability to succeed in class. We do not want neglect our own health or well-being. If you need support, the Counseling Center can be reached at 936-294-1720. The [website](#) also contains self-help resources, and those services available in the Huntsville community.

As with all other parts of the course, students are welcome and encouraged to come talk to me to voice their concerns, seek support, or discuss accommodation for coursework after a crisis.

Class Outline

Week 1, August 22 & 24: The Political Culture, People, and Economy of Texas

Textbook: Chapter 1.

Week 2, August 27, 29, & 31: Texas Constitution

Textbook: Chapter 2

Week 3, September 5 & 7: Texas in the Federal System

Monday, September 3, No class, Labor Day

Textbook: Chapter 3

Week 4, September 10, 12, & 14: Political Parties

Textbook: Chapter 4

Week 5, September 17, 19, & 21: Campaigns and Elections

Textbook: Chapter 5

Discussion Paper 1 Due: Friday, September 21

Week 6, September 24, 26, 28: Interest Groups and Lobbying

Textbook: Chapter 6

Week 7, October 1, 3, & 5: The Legislature

Textbook: Chapter 7

Exam 1: Friday, October 5

Week 8, October 8, 10, & 12: The Executive Branch

Textbook: Chapter 8

Week 9, October 15, 17, 19: The Judiciary

Textbook: Chapter 9

Week 10, October 22, 24, 26: Local Government

Textbook: Chapter 10

Discussion Paper 2 Due: Friday, October 26

Week 11, October 29, 31, & November 2: Public Finance

Textbook: Chapter 11

Week 12, November 5, 7, & 9: Public Policy

Textbook: Chapter 12

Week 13, November 12, 14, & 16: Crime and Corrections

Textbook: Chapter 13

Week 14, November 19, 21, & 23: Current Policy Debates
No Class November 21 & 23, Thanksgiving Break

Week 15, November 26, 28, & 30: Discussion and Review
Exam 2: Friday, Nov 30
Discussion Paper 3 Due: Friday Nov 30

Week 16, December 3 & 5: Finals Week
No Class