

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SAN ANTONIO
FALL 2024 TEXAS GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS - GOVT 2306-905 HYBRID
Monday, 26 August 2024 to Friday, 13 December 2024

Class meets: FACE TO FACE Tuesdays ONLY 5:30pm to 6:45pm

Location: Classroom Hall 201

CRN 11254

Instructor: Margaret Richardson, M. A., M. S.

Contact Email: mrichardson@tamusa.edu

Department Office: CAB-348

Department Phone: (210) 784-2231

Office Hours for students - by Zoom: Meeting ID: 916 2861 7669

- Mondays & Wednesdays – 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
- Tuesdays & Thursdays – 10am to 3pm
- Friday - 12pm to 3pm (*depending on professional development or duty hours*)

COURSE INFORMATION

*****GOVT 2306-905 meets on Tuesdays from 5:30pm to 6:45pm in Classroom Hall 201. This is a HYBRID, and we will meet FACE TO FACE every Tuesday. Class lectures, resources and assignments are online. Attendance to class every week is mandatory and will be taken.** This class is a Synchronous class, where students WILL meet the instructor during a scheduled class time. Students are responsible for routinely logging into BLACKBOARD to complete assignments by set deadlines as listed in the course syllabus. Communication between the student and instructor is in real time.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

In this class, we will work on the following themes of Texas Government: the origin and development of the Texas Constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. This course fulfills the Government/Political Science foundational component area of the core and addresses the following required objectives: Critical Thinking, Communication, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility.

**REQUIRED TEXT: The Texas Experience: Lone Star Politics, Policy, and Participation
1e Update, 2022 Midterm Elections Update**

Authors: Texas Tribune, Paul Benson, and Anthony Giardino

Publisher: Pearson

ISBN-13: 9780134891163



*****You must have a REVEL/Pearson account and purchase the textbook to access it for class. When you are ready to access the textbook dashboard, click on the following link: <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/dqlbtj>**

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REVEL Student Resources: <https://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/students/support/>

IF it asks for an access code, it is: GOVT 2306 905. Please type it in as it appears here...

We will utilize the following websites for class:

- Texas Legislature Online - <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>
- Texas Tribune - <http://www.texastribune.org/>
- Texas Legislative Budget Board - <https://www.lbb.state.tx.us/>
- Bexar County Elections Department - <https://www.bexar.org/1568/Elections-Department>
- Comal County Elections Department - <https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Elections.htm>
- Kerr County Elections Department - <https://www.co.kerr.tx.us/elections/>

EXPECTATION OF COURSE ACTIVITIES - Course Assessments based on a 700-Point Scale

Course Requirements	Points
Syllabus & Blackboard Scavenger Hunt Exercise	70
Semester Reflection Check-ins (for attendance: 6 at 15 points each)	90
Weekly Assignments (8 at 55 points each)	440
Final Exam	100
Total =	700

GRADE CUT OFFS FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE: 90% FOR AN "A," 80% "B," 70% "C," AND 60% "D."

- 700 - 630 points = A
- 629 - 560 points = B
- 559 - 490 points = C
- 489 - 420 points = D
- 419 and below = F

Grade cutoffs for all assignments are 90% for an "A," 80% "B," 70% "C," and 60% "D." Students can get their scores at any time during the semester on Blackboard. Any appeals concerning your course grade must be submitted in writing by email. Also, it is the student's responsibility to immediately notify the instructor of accommodations (usually sent to the instructor by email through the Dean of Students Office).

-- FALL 2024 SEMESTER: ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS --

1. Syllabus & Blackboard Scavenger Hunt Exercise

This assignment is an **attendance verification activity assigned to be done completed** by the Census date. The Syllabus & Blackboard Scavenger Hunt Exercise is done specifically to ensure that you are attending AND participating in this class. It counts as the first attendance check-in of the semester. The Census date is Wednesday, 11 September 2024. **It is to get you to read the syllabus and make sure that you are aware of what the expectations of this class are. The Syllabus & Blackboard Scavenger Hunt Exercise is the first assignment and will open at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024. It is worth seventy (70) points and will be due by 10pm on Monday, 9 September 2024. This assignment is unique in that there is no extension (no late work will be accepted). Not completing this important assignment will result in being dropped from this course. However, if you withdraw from class, it is YOUR responsibility to verify that it is completed.**

2. Semester Reflection Assignments

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There are six (6) semester reflections to be done (one reflection assignment done every other week). These assignments allow for the student to provide your feedback – questions, comments, concerns, and suggestions for what we will do in class. The reflection assignments automatically open at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024. But each reflection assignment **HAS ITS OWN HARD DEADLINE (STATED IN THE SYLLABUS SCHEDULE)**. Please be careful with these assignments as they are used solely for feedback about the content that we have done for the period that each reflection covers. Do not sleep on these assignments as they tend to be the easiest of the assignments on our schedule.

Doing each of these assignments is mandatory and on their own time schedule (they each have their own due dates within a limited amount of time as instructed on our syllabus). The check-ins are done every other week... **Each reflection assignment is worth fifteen (15) points for a total of 90 points. The reflection assignments will be worth 12.857% of your overall grade. An extension for all reflection assignments will be open until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024. However, this will come with a 3-point deduction off the top for late reflection assignment.** After the extension ends, no late reflection assignment will be accepted - no exceptions.

3. Chapter Assignments

There are eight (8) regular assignments, each that will focus on a respective chapter. There is a lecture and (in most cases a video) included for the support of the textbook chapter. The videos are a resource to help you – to demystify the more difficult themes in class as well as provide you with some amazing facts on the Texas Government – how and why we have the structure that we do. The videos will help make the topics easier to understand. But there are a couple of the videos that will be the primary focus of an assignment.

There are a few assignments that are attached to bigger videos. Each of these assignments are marked on the Syllabus and in Blackboard according to the order of chapters each week. To complete one of these assignments, you will have to watch a video and then complete questions that focus on the video in connection to the chapter featured for that week. Links to these larger videos will be included in their appropriate assignments for easier access. Please make sure to number your answers according to the questions they respond to. Following instructions will ensure that you receive full credit for the assignments prior to grading.

The chapter assignments automatically open at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024. But each chapter assignment **HAS ITS OWN HARD DEADLINE (STATED IN THE SYLLABUS SCHEDULE)**. While it is preferable for you to complete these assignments according to their respective deadlines, the due dates are different and are non-negotiable. So, it is to your benefit and your responsibility to get the assignments done by their respective due dates. **Each chapter assignment is worth fifty-five (55) points for a total of 440 points. The chapter assignments will be 62.857% of your overall grade. An extension for all chapter assignments will be open until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024. However, this will come with a 10-point deduction off the top for late chapter assignments. After the extension ends, no late chapter assignments will be accepted - no exceptions.**

4. Fall 2024 Semester Final Exam

There will only be one exam this semester – the Final Exam. It will be a cumulative exam that will cover several topics as discussed, this semester. The format of the Final Exam will be in multiple choice and true/false form and its instructions will be rolled out to you on Monday, 4 November 2024. It is my hope that it gives you time to plan accordingly to get everything prepared so that you do not have to rush through the last days of class without knowing what is going on.

The Final Exam will be open from 12am on Thursday, 5 December 2024 and will close at 10pm on Thursday, 12 December 2024. It will be worth 100 points. **The time will not be extended, so make sure that you are able to take the Final Exam.** As this is given at the very end of the semester, there is little room to schedule a make-up opportunity. If there is room for such

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an opportunity, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to schedule a make-up. Time will be of the essence so there can be no waiting around to figure it out. You will lose 20% of the points available for every day it takes you to get the Final Exam submitted after its original deadline. No late Final Exams will be **allowed after Friday, 13 December 2024 – no exceptions.**

Any requests for a make-up to the Final Exam must be accompanied by official documentation (doctor's note, work notice, jury summons, etc....) before any request is confirmed. If granted, the make-up will only be open for a limited time as specified above. To avoid this, the information for the Final Exam Essay is rolled out to students more than four weeks in advance to allow for explanation and discussion before students launch into the material. **The final exam is worth 14.285% of your overall grade.**

FYI: FOR YOUR INFORMATION - RESOURCES (LECTURES & VIDEOS)

The textbook publisher includes extra resources with the textbook and lectures. The extra resources may feature assignments or chapter quizzes designed to assist the student better understand a chapter. You are welcome to complete these extra assignments. But none of them will be graded or included in our grading this semester. **The only assignments you will be expected to complete for a grade are those listed in this syllabus and the Assignments page in Blackboard.**

Also, I have also included a resource page for you on Blackboard regarding videos to help you better understand the lectures and textbook. Every week, there is a chapter on which we will focus. Attached to each chapter is a lecture from the textbook. Even though the textbook has been updated with a new edition, the lectures are pretty good and easy to follow. There is also least one PBS Crash Course video that describes the information provided for in each chapter. Most of the videos are short (no more than 10-15 minutes in length each) and make it easier to understand the content covered by the chapter and lecture.

FYI: FOR YOUR INFORMATION - Weekly Assignment & Reflection Deadline Extension

An extension for all chapter & reflection assignments will be open until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024. However, this will come with a (ten) 10-point deduction off the top for late chapter assignments and a (three) 3-point deduction for late reflection assignments. Please adhere to the instructions listed in each assignment. Submit all assignments in a Word document ONLY – never in any other form UNLESS otherwise instructed. But no weekly or reflection assignment will be accepted after that deadline extension. Any missing weekly and reflection assignments will automatically be given a "0".

WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT DOES NOT ATTEND CLASS?

If you do not withdraw from the course but stop attending (or submit scheduled assignments), you will receive an "F" for the course. To receive a "W," you must withdraw from the course prior to the last withdrawal date published in the schedule. Failure to officially withdraw may result in a failing grade for the course. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from a class by speaking with their advisor or notifying the instructor that they wish to drop the class (within TAMUSA guidelines).

-- CLASS EXPECTATIONS FOR FALL 2024 SEMESTER --

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

We will have class each Tuesday face to face in Classroom Hall 201. Attendance will be taken. There may be an option for us to meet at this time by remote – depending on the situation. But all assignments are to be completed and submitted online. All lectures will be presented face to face, but are also available online for you. On top of attending class, I expect for you to check into our class Blackboard a minimum of three times a week, to ensure that you are able to complete the weekly readings/lectures and assignments (including exams) by the dates listed in our syllabus

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schedule. This will assist you in staying on top of class or an easier time in catching up if necessary. Instructions for the assignments are posted both in the syllabus and in each of the assignments respectively. The assignments for this class can be found on Blackboard under the assignment prompt on the main navigation list.

No student can pass the course without completing ALL assignments and exams. One's inability to plan for class does not constitute an emergency for me. Please let me know if there are any issues or obstacles that may hinder your participation in class. Waiting to contact me after there is an issue does not help you – instead, it takes away the necessary time for you to get the assistance that you need to complete the assignments. Please plan accordingly as there is at least one assignment PER week. Let me know if there are any issues so that we can see what adjustments can be done to help.

There will be a brief assignment extension period for all chapter and reflection assignments. This is to allow for you to get in late assignments if needed. However, turning in a late assignment comes with a penalty of an automatic deduction of points for the late submission. Although it is not the best circumstance, IT DOES allow for you to still turn in an assignment late and it be accepted and graded... After that extension period ends, late work will not be accepted – no exceptions.

I would like to help as much as I can. But communication must flow in both directions. Please email me so that I can provide help with your assignments or on other issues. Waiting until the last minute to submit your assignment or ask for help after a deadline takes away your ability to get help and adjust when if possible.

Finally, I will not tolerate frivolous requests for regrades (e.g., requests of the “I need a good grade to go [business/law/med] school!” or of the “I need a good grade because I’m on probation!” variety). Caring about your grade should be practiced all semester, not just at the end of the semester. I do not grade on a curve so the grade you receive will be for the work you have done.

RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER

As this is a Government class, I expect for class discussion to get spicy. Indeed, this is what makes government so interesting when we can engage in a political discourse (I see it like a soap opera, especially as we are on the countdown to an exciting election in November 2024). I just want to ensure that everyone uses respectful language with each other in class and in all correspondence with me; in any class discussion posts as well as assignments. There is **a zero-tolerance policy** in my class regarding racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, or any other highly offensive or violent rhetoric. As our class is about Texas government, I expect the conversation to be spicy... especially as there is another busy election season upon us. HOWEVER, everyone is expected to give respect for others as you request the same respect from others.

As your instructor, I will respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals; will promote a culture of respect for the TAMUSA community; respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others; reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind; practice personal and academic integrity and expect it of others; and promote the diversity of opinions, ideas, and backgrounds, which is the lifeblood of this university. I expect the same of each student in the class for themselves and your classmates.

No Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

GOVT 2306-905 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

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ACADEMICALLY DISHONESTY & MISCONDUCT

Academic dishonesty (or academic misconduct) refers to deceitful or misleading behavior in an academic setting. Academic dishonesty can occur intentionally or unintentionally and varies in severity. It can encompass paying for a pre-written essay or assignment; using an assignment from a previous class for this class; cheating on an exam; stealing someone else's work without proper credit (plagiarism); submitting a "clean essay" with no references used or cited (plagiarism); working with someone on an assignment that is supposed to be done individually and sharing answers (to where the answers are identical word for word); committing plagiarism; or signing in for someone else (that is absent in class).

Consequences of academic dishonesty depend on the severity of the offense; the instructor's syllabus policy and TAMUSA's institutional policy. Please be advised that possible consequences can range of receiving at least one of the following actions:

- receiving a warning
- receiving a zero on that assignment
- doing that assignment over (for a lower grade)
- failing the course
- being reported to your advisor and/or chair of the department
- being expelled from TAMUSA.

For students, academic dishonesty impacts your reputation and future college record, leading others to doubt your future work. If you are unsure about something, please come to the instructor so that the matter can be clarified. If at all possible, let us avoid the possible trouble that can be opened up with this misconduct and behavior.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe you have a disability that may require accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services for the coordination of services. DSS is located on the first floor of the Main Campus building (Room 127) and on the Brooks City-Base Campus in Room 149. The phone number for DSS is 210-784-1335.

COUNSELING RESOURCES

There may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you or someone you know is experiencing life stressors, emotional difficulties, or mental health concerns at TAMUSA, ***please contact the Student Counseling Center (SCC) located in Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance) or call 210- 784-1331 Monday through Friday between the hours of 8am and 5pm. All mental health services provided by the SCC are free, confidential (as the law allows), and are not part of a student's academic or university record.***

SCC provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling. ***In a crisis, please walk-in to the Student Counseling Center (SCC) any time between the hours of 8am and 5pm Monday – Friday, to be seen by a clinician. For after-hours support, call 210-784-1331. Contact UPD at 911 if harm to self or harm to others is imminent.***

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT POLICY AND EMAIL ETIQUETTE

I am available with office Hours that I have on Zoom. These hours are no mandatory, but for your benefit if you need to ask questions about an assignment or anything about class. This time is not recorded and whatever is said in our talk during office hours STAYS in our office hours chat.

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Office hours - By Zoom: Meeting ID: 916 2861 7669

- Mondays & Wednesdays – 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
- Tuesdays & Thursdays – 10am to 3pm
- Friday - 12pm to 3pm (*depending on professional development or duty hours*)

I am available by email until 8pm on weekdays (Monday through Friday). On the weekend, I will do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours of receiving an email. I expect that when you send me an email message that it comes with a proper greeting and closing and from your official Jaguar email address. Thus, to get a response, you should:

- 1) Send your email **ONLY** from your official recognized TAMUSA email. I will not respond to a personal email...
- 2) Have a clear explication of your question/issue/problem (This book had me ROTFL—is unclear)
- 3) Include a proper closing with your name (Thank you/Best/Something like this, John).

All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have a TAMUSA Jagwire email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at sahelp@tamusa.tamus.edu or at 210-784- 4357. If you do not hear back from the within 48 hours, contact them again. They have a lot of requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to check up on them.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION:

All written submissions should be submitted in a font (preferably 12-inch font) and page set-up with one-inch margins all around. Please post your answers in black, not in any other color... Also, it is recommended that students adhere to a consistent format as follows:

- All assignments (including exams) are to be submitted via Blackboard as instructed by each assignment. No assignment will ever be accepted by email.
- Typewritten in New Times New Roman or similar 12-point font. Page margins Top, Bottom, Left Side and Right Side = 1 inch, with reasonable accommodation being made for special situations and online submission variances.
- When responding to the assignments, please follow the instructions of the assignment. You do not have to color code your responses. Please number your responses according to the question it answers. If you are doing a chapter assignment with a series of questions, **DO NOT** place your answers to the assignment in one big paragraph for me to decipher which response answers goes to the right question. This is not an essay, unless an essay is described in the instructions of each assignment. If you submit an assignment in this way, you will lose 50% of the points eligible for that assignment...
- Submissions are to be made either by Word document. If you use PDF, **PLEASE** let me know **BEFORE** submitting your assignment so that I can ensure that I have received and can access your assignment to grade. **If there is an issue with the receipt of your submission, I will only ask you for an updated submission ONCE.** If it is not received by the due date, you will automatically receive a zero "0".
- **PLEASE BE ADVISED:** do not submit your assignments in any other form or there may an issue with my accessing your submission on my end. You will only receive one (1) attempt to submit your assignment. **Make sure to submit the correct response to each assignment.** Please make it count as you will receive a ZERO if you submit the assignment in the wrong form or I cannot access it. Following instructions is a part of a successful assignment submission.

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- Please let me know if you have any issues BEFORE a due date so that together, we can work through the issue. Your success in class is important to me, but it must also be important to you. Let's work together so that you can pass this course!

JAGUAR WRITING CENTER

The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing assistance to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Students can make individual or group appointments with a writing tutor. The Writing Center has two locations:

- ✓ Central Academic Building, Suite 208 and Brooks City-Base, Room 104. Both locations can be reached by email at tutoring@tamusa.edu or call (210) 784-1332. Appointments can also be made through JagWire using TutorTrac which is found under the services tab.

COURSE POLICIES: *Best practices on how to pass this course* –

1. **This is a HYBRID class, meaning that we will meet face-to-face class but we will have the assignments and resources available to you online. Attendance is mandatory and will be taken for each class.** Please make sure that this class is the class that you registered for.
2. **It is your responsibility to ensure that your Jaguar email and Blackboard are working** – not just to submit assignments but to also access the textbook and other material for this class.
3. **COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS: Use a desk or laptop computer to log into Blackboard to submit assignments (please review the assignment submission information above to comply with those instructions).** Blackboard works better on Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, or Safari browsers. If you use a smart phone, an I-pad, tablet, or application, but make sure to check with me *BEFORE THE DUE DATE* to ensure that your assignment has been submitted and received on my end. After the due date has passed, if an assignment is submitted that I do not receive or cannot open on my end, you may not be asked to re-submit it. You will instead receive a “zero” for the missing assignment.
4. **TAMUSA TECH SUPPORT:** In case you need assistance with Blackboard and/or Jaguar, here is the contact for you to contact Technical Support at TAMUSA: <https://www.tamusa.edu/information-technology-services/tech-support/itshelpdesk/index.html>. This link takes you directly to the Tech Support page. Here is the phone number and email address: (210) 784-4357 and helpdesk@tamusa.edu.
5. **TEXTBOOK SUPPORT:** Information for the textbook attached to your Blackboard through Jagwire. There should be information from the bookstore and/or textbook publisher prior to the start of this semester regarding accessing the textbook. **You must have a REVEL account to access the textbook. For more information,** please open the Textbook page (OPEN PEARSON _ TEXTBOOK ACCESS). This is listed at the bottom of the page: For Pearson tech support, you can access the following link: <https://support.pearson.com/getsupport/s/contactsupport>. Click on the link and then fill in the options for "College Student", and "Pearson eText" and the options to call or chat with tech support will be available...
6. **INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS: I will hold office hours on ZOOM this semester, beginning on Monday, 26 August 2024. The Meeting ID is 916 2861 7669.** Here is my office hours schedule:
 - Mondays & Wednesdays – 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
 - Tuesdays & Thursdays – 10am to 3pm
 - Friday - 12pm to 3pm (*depending on professional development or duty hours*)

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7. **CLASS COMMUNICATION:** You may be emailed throughout the week with information regarding class related topics like the assignments and announcements, as well as the Zoom information so that students can drop in to ask questions or discuss issues with the assignments. If you are not available, then I am also reachable by email and Blackboard messages/chat daily Monday through Friday. Please note however that any email sent to me after 8:00pm will not be answered until the next day after I have completed my classes scheduled. On the weekends, On the weekend, it may take up to 48 hours to respond after I have received your email.
8. **THE SYLLABUS:** Keep up with the syllabus and the dates of each assignment. Make a copy of it and keep it with you, place the dates of each assignment on your calendar. But please be advised: I will not answer emails regarding what a student may have missed if they were not able to participate in an assignment. Our syllabus and your Blackboard include a schedule with every assignment and instructions.
9. **Complete and submit all assignments in Blackboard on time as instructed.** Each chapter AND reflection assignment have its own individual deadline. ***An extension for all chapter & reflection assignments will be open until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024. However, this will come with a (ten) 10-point deduction off the top for late chapter assignments and (three) 3-point deduction for late reflection assignments.*** Please adhere to the instructions listed in each assignment. Submit all assignments in a Word document ONLY – never in any other form UNLESS otherwise instructed.
10. **You will only have one attempt to submit each assignment.** Be sure that you submit your responses to the correct assignment. There are no re-dos. Each assignment is clearly marked at the top of each of their instructions. So, there should not be anyone submitting the wrong information to an assignment. If so, you may be able to submit it to the comments section for that assignment. Do not email it to me as it may get lost in the endless emails that we each receive. Also, if for whatever reason you submit an assignment that I do not receive or cannot open on my end – I will not ask for you to re-submit the assignment. You will be given a “0”.
11. **Please follow the instructions and grading rubric that accompany each assignment.** Each assignment has instructions at the top or bottom of the page. Please adhere to its chosen format and instructions accordingly. For instance - if the assignment is a chapter assignment with chapter questions, then make sure that each response is numbered according to the assignment. DO NOT submit your answers to the short answer questions in one big paragraph/ or in essay form when the assignment does not call for it. This DOES NOT follow the instructions of the assignment. I will not dissect your submission to make sure that you answered each question. I will automatically deduct half of the points that assignment is worth OFF THE TOP (before it is graded for content). It is unfair to other students to allow a student's incorrect submission to receive full points while everyone else was able to follow the proper instructions.
12. **There may be extra credit offered during the semester but details of how it may be used will be determined at the instructor's sole discretion.** DO NOT depend on the offering of extra credit to help build your grade. Your adherence to our syllabus and assignment completion should be practiced throughout the semester.
13. **It is okay to advocate for yourself. I want to assist you as much as I can, but it only goes so far – students will have to meet me halfway. Do the work and do not hesitate to let me know when you need help.** It ties my hands if you wait too long to ask for help as a deadline passes (I know that we all procrastinate but doing so for each assignment may eat away time needed to get assistance on an assignment). Missing a deadline; submitting an incomplete/incorrectly done assignment or submitting an assignment in the wrong place are not emergencies for me.

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14. **Communication is key and must FLOW BOTH WAYS.** This is not for me to get up into your business... rather an opportunity for us to get ahead of a concern and allow me the chance to help you if I can. Let me know if something happens that may hinder your ability to participate for this class (assistance done on a case-by-case basis).
15. **Respect for each other is expected.** Inappropriate behavior and disrespect are not welcomed. It will result in an immediate end to the conversation and/or removal from class. I ask for all students to respect each other's opinions. It is okay if we disagree, but we can do so respectfully. If there is a point of disagreement, please refrain from mocking each other. Let me know so that I can address it. Please remember that as you wish for respect to make your comment you must also respect that right of others.
16. **Do not wait until the end of the semester to worry about your grade. Adherence to the syllabus for all assignments should be practiced during the entire semester. Every point counts!!** The grade you are given is the grade you will have earned by the work you have done throughout the semester. I do not grade by curves, and I will not add points that have not been earned to boost a grade. I will not haggle over grades or tolerate frivolous requests for re-grades (e.g., requests to boost the grade beyond the work you as the student has already submitted for a grade). It is up to you to maximize whatever assignment/extra credit opportunities you receive. **Keeping up with ALL assignments and caring about YOUR grade should be practiced throughout the semester. Care enough about your grade to put your best effort into EVERY ASSIGNMENT...**not just at the end of the semester.
17. **Follow instructions and ask for clarification BEFORE submitting an assignment.** Read the instructions for each assignment (and questions as well). Please make sure to number your answers according to the questions they respond to. Answer a question in its entirety. **This may sound silly but do not give a partial response to a question or half do an assignment and expect to receive full credit.** That is where I usually see students lose points – because they were speeding through the assignments and missed questions or did not follow the instructions to a question. Partial responses/work will result in partial credit.
18. **Have fun, enjoy the journey and let me know if you need assistance!**

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-- FALL 2024 SEMESTER IMPORTANT DATES --	
Monday, 26 August 2024	Fall 2024 Semester Classes officially begin
Monday, 2 September 2024	Labor Day Holiday (campus closed)
Wednesday, 11 September 2024	Census Date for 16-week classes
Monday – Friday, 7 Oct to 18 Oct 2024	Midterm grading period
Monday, 11 November 2024	Last day to withdraw from class
Wednesday, 27 November 2024	Study day (no classes - campus closed)
Thursday, 28 Nov 2024 to Saturday, 30 Nov 2024	Thanksgiving Holiday Break (no class - campus closed)
Monday, 2 December 2024 by 10pm	Assignment Extension for late assignment
Tuesday, 3 December 2024	Last day of scheduled classes for weekday classes
Wednesday, 4 Dec to Friday, 6 Dec 2024	Study days – NO CLASS
Saturday, 7 Dec 2024 to Friday, 13 Dec 2024	Week of Final Exams
**Tuesday, 10 December 2024 6pm to 8pm	Our class final exam (TAMUSA scheduled)
Friday, 13 December 2024	End of FALL 2024 Semester

-- FALL 2024 SEMESTER SYLLABUS SCHEDULE --

This schedule is subject to change at my discretion. Students will immediately be notified of any changes. Do not wait for class to begin the readings of the week... The assignment dates will not change.

Week 1: Monday, 26 August 2024 (Tuesday, 27 August 2024)

First week of class for students – working on Syllabus & Blackboard class materials...

Watch video: *History.com – Texas*: <https://www.history.com/embed/447763011894#>

- ✓ **Syllabus & Blackboard Scavenger Exercise** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Monday, 9 September 2024 (no extension).

Week 2: Tuesday, 3 September 2024

READ CHAPTER 1: TEXAS SOCIETY & POLITICAL CULTURE

Lecture: [Chapter 1 Lecture](#)

Watch video: *Texas Counties Deliver - How did we get to 254 counties?* <https://youtu.be/wLFWwnDYZgQ>

Watch video: *Corpus Christi Caller Times: How much do we know about the Texas Constitution?*: <https://uw-media.usatoday.com/embed/video/106830562?placement=snow-embed>

- ✓ **Semester Reflection #1 Assignment: Introduce Yourself & Class Introduction** - opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 7 September 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 3: Tuesday, 10 September 2024

*****CENSUS DATE: Wednesday, 11 September 2024**

READ CHAPTER 2: FEDERALISM & THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION

Lecture: [Chapter 2 Lecture](#)

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Watch video: PBS Crash Course – Federalism: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0gosGXSqsl>

Watch video: Texas Archives – A New Constitution for Texas (1974) https://texasarchive.org/2015_01034

- ✓ **Chapter 2 Assignment** - opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 14 September 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 4: Tuesday, 17 September 2024

READ CHAPTER 7 - THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

Lecture: Chapter 7 Lecture

Watch video: Schoolhouse Rock: I'm Just a Bill - <https://youtu.be/OgVKvqTlfto>

Watch video: Opening Day of the 87th Texas Legislature (House of Representatives) - https://tlchouse.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=47&clip_id=19106

- ✓ **Chapter 7 Assignment** - opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 21 September 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.
- ✓ **Semester Reflection #2 Assignment: The Legislature** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 21 September 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 5 – Tuesday, 24 September 2024

READ CHAPTER 8 – THE GOVERNOR IN TEXAS

Lecture: Chapter 8 Lecture

Watch video: Texas Governor Greg Abbott State of the State Address (Feb 2021) - <https://youtu.be/beDy0sGiq3w>

- ✓ **Chapter 8 Assignment** - opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 28 September 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 6 – Tuesday, 1 October 2024

READ CHAPTER 9 - PLURAL EXECUTIVE & BUREAUCRACY IN TEXAS

Watch video: Rhett Creative - What is the Executive Branch of Texas?: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=la_Q4V-gaMg

Lecture: Chapter 9 Lecture

Lecture: The Lieutenant Governor

- ✓ **Semester Reflection #3 Assignment: The Plural Executive** - opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 5 October 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 7 – Tuesday, 8 October 2024

READ CHAPTER 10 - THE TEXAS COURTS SYSTEM

Lecture: Chapter 10 Lecture

Watch video: Texas State Law Library -The Texas Court Structure: https://youtu.be/rCjJNKQe_Ac

Watch video: Texas Counties Deliver - Texas Judiciary - <https://youtu.be/5tOm94gSZmY>

- ✓ **Chapter 10 Assignment** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 12 October 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 8 – Tuesday, 15 October 2024

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READ CHAPTER 12 – CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY IN TEXAS

Lecture: [Chapter 12 Lecture](#)

Watch video: PBS Crash Course – What is justice?: <https://youtu.be/H0CTHVCKm90>

Watch video: The Long Road to Justice – The Tim Cole Story - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEnMN3EXYU>

- ✓ **Chapter 12 Assignment** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 19 October 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.
- ✓ **Semester Reflection #4 Assignment: The Courts** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 19 October 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 9 – Tuesday, 22 October 2024

READ CHAPTER 11 – LOCAL, COUNTY GOVERNMENTS & SPECIAL DISTRICTS IN TEXAS

Lecture: [Chapter 11 Lecture](#)

Watch video: Texas Counties Deliver - What is the difference between governments? - <https://youtu.be/K7us7syDw88>

Watch video: Texas Counties Deliver – Texas Counties Deliver Unique Solutions - <https://youtu.be/mXeSXCjcWoY>

- ✓ **Chapter 11 Assignment** – opens at 12 on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 26 October 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 10 – Tuesday, 29 October 2024

READ CHAPTER 3 – VOTING & ELECTIONS IN TEXAS

Lecture: [Chapter 3 Lecture](#)

Watch video: Texas Counties Deliver - Who is in charge of elections in Texas? -

<https://www.facebook.com/TexasCounties/videos/2200819386596294/>

Watch video: 2018 Governor Candidate Debate - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suNe435w2FY>

- ✓ **Chapter 3 Assignment** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 2 November 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.
- ✓ **Semester Reflection #5: Voting & Elections** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 2 November 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 11 – Tuesday, 5 November 2024

****Instructions for FINAL EXAM released on Monday, 4 November 2024**

READ CHAPTER 4 – POLITICAL PARTIES IN TEXAS

Lecture: [Chapter 4 Lecture](#)

Watch video: PBS Crash Course – Political Parties - <https://www.pbs.org/video/crash-course-government-and-politics-40/>

Watch video: John Seymour – Texas Political Parties - https://youtu.be/SG6x_oal06l?si=YC2Hmii5C0KbcJs7

- ✓ **Chapter 4 Assignment** – opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 9 November 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 12 – Tuesday, 12 November 2024

READ CHAPTER 5 – INTEREST GROUPS IN TEXAS POLITICS

Lecture: [Chapter 5 Lecture](#)

Watch video: PBS Crash Course - Interest Groups: <https://www.pbs.org/video/crash-course-government-and-politics-42/>

Watch video: Texas Tribune - Special Interest Ads: <https://youtu.be/W6BzRh535Cw>

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- ✓ **Semester Reflection #6: Influences on Texas Government** - opens at 12am on Monday, 26 August 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 16 November 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024.

Week 13 – Tuesday, 19 November 2024

READ CHAPTER 13 – PUBLIC POLICY, FINANCE & BUDGETING IN TEXAS

Lecture: Chapter 13 lecture

Watch video - *Texas Senate Committee on Finance Hearing* (from 1 February 2021):

https://tlc.senate.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=35&clip_id=15358 (fast forward to 2:07.00 and start from there to watch testimony from the Office of the Texas Attorney General).

Week 14 – Tuesday, 26 November 2024

*****Thanksgiving Holiday – no class, campus closed – No office hours after Wednesday, 27 November 2024 by 12pm**

Priority 1 - Catch up on missing/late assignments so that everything can be submitted by the extension deadline.

Priority 2 - Get ready for the final exam. The study guide is available to help you prepare.

- ✓ We will have class, going over the Final Exam Instructions and Study Guide information.

Week 15 – Tuesday, 3 December 2024

- ✓ *****ASSIGNMENT EXTENSION DUE by 10pm on Monday, 2 December 2024**

PRIORITY: All late or missing assignments have to be submitted by this date. No late or missing assignment will be accepted after this deadline. No exceptions.

AFTER THIS DEADLINE ENDS: The only thing we will have left in class is the Final Exam. By now, you should have access to the Study Guide to help prepare and use for the Final Exam.

If we meet for class, we will be going over the Final Exam instructions and study guide information. If not, I can open the Final Exam at the time listed below so that you can take it early without coming to class..

Week 16 – Tuesday, 10 December 2024

- ✓ *****FALL 2024 FINAL EXAM OPTIONS since the Final Exam is online...**

OPTION 1: Take it early – it will open at 12am on Tuesday, 3 December 2024 and will close by 8pm on Tuesday, 10 December 2024 (no extension)....

OPTION 2: Take it the day its originally scheduled: Tuesday, 10 December 2024 from 6pm to 8pm in class. Or, I can open it at 12am on Tuesday, 10 December and not close it at 8pm on the same day...

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-- FALL 2024 SEMESTER: IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES --

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210.

You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit tamusa.edu/studentcounseling.

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2').

Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including support for in the moment distress, an anonymous peer to peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/>. Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has

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not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on "Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center" to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a CARE referral (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities/file-a-report.html>) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots' Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

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Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

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3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.

4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.

2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.

3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.

4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.

5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct.

For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the Student Code of Conduct (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/documents/Student-Handbook-2022-23.pdf>) or visit the resources available in the OSRR website (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/academic-integrity.html>).