



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SAN ANTONIO

FALL 2024 SEMESTER SYLLABUS & SCHEDULE TEXAS GOVERNMENT GOVT 2306-607, CRN 10070 (Online – Asynchronous) Monday, 26 August 2024 to Friday, 13 December 2024

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

Email: mrichardson@tamusa.edu

Department Office: CAB-348

Department Phone: (210) 784-2231

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*)

*****THIS COURSE IS “Asynchronous,” – meaning that that this is a fully online class.** In Asynchronous classes, students WILL NOT meet the instructor during a scheduled class time. The communication with the instructor is managed via instructor and student email. Students are responsible for routinely logging into BLACKBOARD to complete assignments by deadlines set by the instructor listed in the course syllabus. **All instruction, activities, and assignments will take place ONLINE.** Communication between the student and instructor is NOT in real time. The timeframe for my response will be outlined in this course syllabus. Please make sure that this is the class that you registered for.

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.

TEXTBOOK: 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 or Pearson account and purchase the textbook to access it. When you are ready to access the textbook dashboard, click on the following link: <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/ec3eda>**



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If you need help, check out these Revel student resources: <https://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/students/support/>

If it asks for an access code, it is: GOVT 2306 607. 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/>
- Wilson County Elections Department - <https://www.wilsoncountytexas.gov/page/wilson.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

Students can get their grades at any time during the semester on Blackboard (visible in our Blackboard class information – listed as “MY GRADES”). This link can be found on the navigation list in Blackboard for our class. Assignments will be graded no more than 4 days after the expiration of their original deadlines. Each assignment will have this information listed in its instructions (AND listed in this syllabus and on its schedule).

Students can get their scores at any time during the semester on Blackboard. Any appeals concerning your course grade must be submitted by your official Jagwire email. Also, it is the student’s responsibility to immediately notify the instructor of additional accommodations (officially sent to the instructor by email through the Dean of Students Office).

What happens if a student does not attend class?

If you do withdraw from the course, you can receive a “W”. But you must withdraw from the course prior to the last withdrawal date published in the schedule (included in this syllabus schedule). YOU must submit a withdrawal request in ACES via the “student course withdrawal” link. Contact your advisor, or the Admissions and Records office if guidance is needed.

If you do not withdraw from the course but stop attending (or miss more than four scheduled assignments to be submitted in a row), you can be dropped from this course. If you stay in class but do not submit more than a few assignments, you will receive an “F” for the course. 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



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(within TAMUSA guidelines). It is up to YOU to stay informed and in communication with your instructor. You must keep up with every assignment for this class. If there is an issue that may be an obstacle to your participation in class, then please let me know so that I can assist you.

Disability Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to immediately notify the Disability Support Services office for any official accommodation needed for the student. The sooner the request by the student is done, the sooner a letter of accommodation will be sent by DSS to the instructor for the class. The letter will describe what the accommodation is, and how to make it accessible as soon as possible. But any official documentation must be sent from DSS so that the instructor is informed. Once received by the instructor, the accommodation will be discussed with the student to ensure that we both understand what they are and how to implement them in class.

DSS can be reached at the following contact information:

Central Academic Building, room 210

(210) 784-1335

Fax: (210) 784-1340

Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm; After hours by appointment only

Accessibility Issues

For best results to access our class information ON BLACKBOARD, use the one of the following browsers – Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge or Safari (if you have a MAC). You can access Blackboard through your smartphone, tablet, or pad. All assignments will be submitted on Blackboard (never by email). It is advised to use a laptop or desktop computer to log into Jagwire and then Blackboard instead of using the Blackboard app. The app may be problematic and could result in an assignment submission not being received. If this happens, you will not receive another opportunity to submit your assignment.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you always have access to Jagwire and Blackboard. Make sure that you have a backup (a plan B just in case you lose access, or your computer fails – perhaps use the campus computer lab or personal device). This may not mean much now, but it may later. If you have any issues with accessing 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

-- 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) and by not completing this important assignment, it could 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

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 assignments on our schedule.

Doing each of these assignments are 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. 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 assignment 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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 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. An extension for all chapter assignments will be open until 10pm on Friday, 2 December 2024. However, this will come with a 10-point deduction off the top for late chapter assignments.** After the assignment 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. It is worth 100 points. The format of the Final Exam will be in multiple choice and true/false format. ***The instructions for the final exam will be rolled out to the class on Monday, 4 November 2024.*** This will allow you the time and space to prepare for the final exam.

The final exam will open at 12am on Monday, 2 December 2024 and will stay open until 5pm on Tuesday, 10 December 2024. It will not be timed, so this should allow students to take the final exam without rushing through it. The time will not be extended, so make sure that you are able to take the Final Exam. There will not be an opportunity to make up the final exam if you miss it. If you miss the final exam, you will be given a zero.



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, we will focus on a new chapter. Attached to each chapter is a lecture from the original version of the textbook. Even though the textbook was updated, the lectures are the same and are easy to follow. There is also at least an introductory video that describes the information provided 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”.

-- FALL 2024 SEMESTER: CLASS EXPECTATIONS --

General Expectations

You are expected to check into our class Blackboard site a minimum of three times a week, to complete the weekly readings/lectures and their assignments (including the final exam) by the dates listed in our schedule in the syllabus. 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 manage their time or adequately plan for class does not constitute an emergency for me. Do not wait to let me know if there is an issue that can hinder your participation in our class. Waiting to contact me after there is an issue does not help you – instead, it takes away 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 week. Let me know if there are any issues so that we can see what adjustments can be done to help.

There will be an assignment extension period to still submit late assignments. This is to allow you to get in late assignments if needed. However, turning in a late assignment comes with a penalty of an automatic deduction of 10 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 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

Please use respectful language 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 want 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 2306-607 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.

Academic 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 an assignment done with AI; 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 possible, let us avoid the possible trouble that can be caused by this misconduct and behavior.

Students with disabilities



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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 reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe you have a disability that may require class accommodation, 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 & 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.

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, 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 officially 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 them 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 a Word document in Blackboard, not in any other format (and never by email). Please post your answers in black, not in any other color (do not color code your responses). Also, it is recommended that students adhere to a consistent format as follows:

- All assignments (including exams) are to be submitted in Blackboard as instructed by each assignment.



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- 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. For example – if you are doing a chapter assignment with a series of questions, DO NOT place your answers to the assignment in bullet points or one big paragraph/essay 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 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”.
- 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.
- Please let me know if you have any issues BEFORE an assignment’s 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!

Course Policies: *Best practices on how to pass this course* –

1. This is an ONLINE course. All instructions, readings and assignments will be administered online. We will not meet face to face. Please make sure that this 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 iPad, tablet, or application, 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:** There is information for the textbook attached to your Blackboard through Jagwire. There should be information from the textbook publisher prior to the start of this semester regarding accessing the textbook.



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Remember, **you must have a REVEL account to access this textbook**. For more information, please open on the Textbook page (OPEN PEARSON _ TEXTBOOK ACCESS). 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 2026. The Meeting ID is 916 2861 7669.** Please feel free to drop in and introduce yourself or receive assistance for an assignment. 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*)
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. I am also reachable by email and Blackboard messages/chat daily Monday through Friday. 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 as our syllabus and your Blackboard have our schedule with every assignment and instructions. Always keep a copy of the syllabus with you. It contains everything you will need to complete the assignments for this semester. Also, I will distribute course materials, including announcements and updates on Blackboard, so I encourage you to log-in **at least three times a week to stay updated on our class**. I will not answer questions about what we went over in class on the days you missed.
9. **Complete and submit all assignments in Blackboard on time as instructed.** Each chapter AND reflection assignment has 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. **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.
11. **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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12. **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).
13. **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.
14. **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.
15. **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.
16. Enjoy the journey that we will take this semester! Let me know how I can help!



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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
Thursday, 5 December 2024	Last day of scheduled classes for weekday classes
Friday, 6 December 2024	Study day – NO CLASS
Saturday, 7 Dec 2024 to Friday, 13 Dec 2024	Week of Final Exams
Opens at 12am on Monday, 2 Dec 2024, and closes at 5pm on Tuesday, 10 Dec 2024	Our class final exam
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.

Week 1: Monday, 26 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: Monday, 2 September 2024

*****LABOR DAY: Monday, 2 September 2024 – no class, campus closed...**

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: Monday, 9 September 2024

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

READ CHAPTER 2: FEDERALISM & THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION



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Lecture: Chapter 2 Lecture

Watch video: PBS Crash Course – Federalism: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0qosGXSqsl>

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: Monday, 16 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 – Monday, 23 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/beDy0sGjq3w>

- ✓ **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 – Monday, 30 September 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 – Monday, 7 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.



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Week 8 – Monday, 14 October 2024

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=rlEnMN3EXYU>

- ✓ **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 – Monday, 21 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 – Monday, 28 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 – Monday, 4 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 – Monday, 11 November 2024

*****Monday, 11 Nov: LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASS (just an FYI if needed)...**



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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>

- ✓ **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 – Monday, 18 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://tlcsenate.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 – Monday, 25 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.

Week 15 – Monday, 2 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.

Week 16 – Monday, 9 December 2024

- ✓ *****FALL 2024 FINAL EXAM due for OUR CLASS: opens at 12am on Monday, 2 December 2024 and will close by 5pm on Tuesday, 10 December 2024 (no extension)....**



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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>).