

Texas Government
Fall 2026
Section: 2306, (001, 002, 005)
Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Instructor Information

Name: Paul Cooper J.D., M.A.

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Office Hours: Fridays, 12 pm - 5 pm via online either on Zoom, Teams etc.

Class Meeting Times

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Classrooms: Frank L. Madla 210, 254

Course Description

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.

- Course Learning Objective 1: Students will analyze the origins of the U.S. Constitution and understand how foundational principles such as separation of powers, checks and balances, and sovereignty shape our federal government.
- Course Learning Objective 2: Students will be able to describe the organization, roles, and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and evaluate how these institutions interact within each other.
- Course Learning Objective 3: Students will comprehend how individuals and groups engage with politics through voting, political parties, interest groups, and civic action.
- Course Learning Objective 4: Student will gain a deeper understanding of their civic rights and duties within our society, and the importance of participation in the political process such as voting.

Students are expected to regularly check Blackboard for your daily assignments. All reading assignments, class lectures and extra supplemental information presented in class is game for your quizzes and exams. It is to your benefit to regularly show up to class, participate.

Pop Quizzes will be random and in writing. They will be a mixture of multiple choice and written.

Every exam will be reviewed in the prior class, so you know what to expect. There will be no surprises, and I don't play games with your exams to try to trick you. You will be expected to use logic and critical thinking skills at the university level to complete any assignments, pop quizzes and exams.

Grading Policy

This class will use the standard TAMU-SA grading scheme, summarized in the table below:

Grade	From	To
A	100%	90%
B	<90%	80%
C	<80%	70%
D	<70%	60%
F	<60%	0%

You will earn points throughout the semester. The more points you earn, the higher your grade. I will regularly inform you of where you stand so there are no surprises. I want all of you to do well in this course.

If any student is under threat of failing or falling under a C, I will inform you in advance so we can work together to earn a better grade.

Your grade is factored from the following:

- Attendance
- Pop Quizzes
- Participation in class discussion
- Exams

Textbook:

Governing Texas

Champagne, Harpham, Casellas, Hayes Clark

7th Edition

Student Expectations

Students are expected to assist in maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior is prohibited to ensure everyone has an opportunity to gain from the time spent in class. Should a disruptive incident occur, in-class or online, the faculty member may remove the student or ask the student to leave the classroom.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is required for the course. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings, arrive on time and actively participate in class activities and discussions. Students are also responsible for keeping up with all course materials, assignments, announcements, and deadlines throughout the semester.

If you are absent, you are responsible for reviewing the material covered in class, obtaining notes from a classmate, and completing any assigned readings or assignments.

Late Assignments

The instructor does not allow late work or submissions unless given prior authorization.

If you miss an exam, or an assignment, you will not be able to take them and will be given a grade of zero. Make-up exams and late assignments will only be permitted with a valid, documented excuse.

If you know in advance that you cannot make an exam, and have a valid excuse, please let me know so we can work to give you a make-up exam.

Assignments

Technology Issues Students are responsible for ensuring that assignments are successfully submitted by the designated deadline. If you encounter a tech issue when submitting an assignment, please notify the instructor, along with a screenshot of the error or issue you are experiencing.

Tech issues can include internet connectivity problems, computer malfunctions, system timeout, or course website (Canvas) errors.

Use of AI

Students will not be allowed to use AI to write assignments. Students are required to submit their own original work on assignments. Anyone caught using AI (20% or more) for their assignments will be given a grade of (0).

This course assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually. 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 AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

Important Policies and Resources

University Email Policy

All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at helpdesk@tamusa.edu or at 210-784-HELP (4357). If you don't hear back within 48 hours, contact them again. They have many requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to follow up with them.

Disability Services

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, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit

disability.services@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

All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. 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. Online tutoring is also available for after hours and weekend assistance.

Mental Health 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, visit our website, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

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. Crisis support is available 24/7/365 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 or through the TELUS student support App.

The TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to include 24/7/365 support for in the moment distress, crisis support, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.

Emergency PreparednessJagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification system. 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. Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900