



# TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SAN ANTONIO

## SPRING 2024 SEMESTER SYLLABUS SCHEDULE TEXAS GOVERNMENT GOVT 2306-600, CRN 23675 (Online- Asynchronous) Tuesday, 16 January 2024 to Tuesday, 7 May 2024

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

**Email:** [mrichardson@tamusa.edu](mailto:mrichardson@tamusa.edu)

**Department Office:** CAB-348

**Department Phone:** (210) 784-2231

**Office hours - By Zoom: Meeting ID:** 970 9179 1350

- Monday - 12pm to 1:30pm & 3pm to 5pm
- Tuesday - 12pm to 4pm
- Wednesday - 12pm to 1:30pm & 3pm to 5pm
- Thursday - 12pm to 4pm
- 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. Communication between the student and instructor is NOT in real time. The timeframe for an instructor’s 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.

By the end of the course, you will have a comprehensive understanding of the structure of our state government and will understand better how our state is supposed to work. **Please be advised that this is an ONLINE class, which means that all the instruction, activities, and assignments will occur online.**

PowerPoints and other supplemental materials are posted in BLACKBOARD under their corresponding week. We do not have scheduled meeting times. All assignments have their own individual due dates (including the **semester reflections, which serve as check-ins throughout the semester**). However, you can submit assignments earlier than their due date if you are able to move through the semester quicker than the class schedule.

### **REQUIRED TEXT: The Texas Experience: Lone Star Politics, Policy, and Participation**

By Texas Tribune, Paul Benson, and Anthony Giardino

Pearson

ISBN-13: 9780134891163

**\*\*\*You must have a REVEL or Pearson account and purchase the textbook to access it.**



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For more information, please contact the TAMUSA Bookstore by calling (210) 784-1070 or the bookstore website at the following link: <https://www.bkstr.com/texasamsanantonio/home>.

### 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	40
Semester Reflection Check-ins (for attendance: <b>6 at 20 points each</b> )	120
Weekly Assignments ( <b>8 at 55 points each</b> )	440
Final Exam	100
<b>Total =</b>	<b>700</b>

### 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 (within TAMUSA guidelines). It is up to YOU to stay informed and in communication with your instructor. You must keep up



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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](mailto:helpdesk@tamusa.edu)

## **SPRING 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. **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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024. It is worth forty (40) points and will be due by 10pm on Sunday, 28 January 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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 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 twenty (20) points for a total of 120 points. An extension for all reflection assignments will be open until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 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 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 Sunday, 28 April 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 2023 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 essay form and its instructions will be rolled out to you on Monday, 25 March 2024. This will allow you the time and space to prepare for the final exam.

***The final exam will open at 1am on Monday, 29 April 2024 and will stay open until 10pm on Monday, 6 May 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.



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### **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 last semester, the lectures are the same and 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 Sunday, 28 April 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”.

## **SPRING 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 2306-600 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

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](http://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 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](mailto: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. I

### My office hours - by Zoom: Meeting ID: 970 9179 1350

- Monday - 12pm to 1:30pm & 3pm to 5pm
- Tuesday - 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
- Wednesday - 12pm to 1:30pm & 3pm to 5pm
- Thursday - 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
- Friday - 12pm to 3pm (depending on professional development or duty hours)

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, via Blackboard, so I encourage you to log-in to that system **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.

### Assignment submission:



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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.
- 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->





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[support/itshelpdesk/index.html](https://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](mailto: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. Remember, **you must have a REVEL account to access this textbook**. For more information, please contact the Bookstore: (210) 784-1070 Follett Higher Education Group Texas A&M University-San Antonio Bookstore <https://www.bkstr.com/texasamsanantonio/home>. Here is the contact information for textbook - 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, 22 January 2024. The Meeting ID is 970 9179 1350. For the first days of class (class begins on Tuesday, 16 January 2023), I will only be available by email at [mrichardson@tamusa.edu](mailto:mrichardson@tamusa.edu). Please feel free to drop in and introduce yourself or receive assistance for an assignment. Here is my office hours schedule:
  - Monday - 12pm to 1:30pm & 3pm to 5pm
  - Tuesday - 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
  - Wednesday - 12pm to 1:30pm & 3pm to 5pm
  - Thursday - 9am to 10:30am & 12pm to 4pm
  - 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 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 has its own individual deadline. **An extension for all chapter & reflection assignments will be open until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 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.
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 be 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!

SPRING 2024 SEMESTER IMPORTANT DATES	
Tuesday, 16 January 2024	<b>Spring 2024 Semester Classes officially begin</b>
<b>Wednesday, 31 January 2024</b>	<b>Census Date for 16-week classes</b>
Monday, 26 February 2024 - Friday, 8 March 2024	Midterm grading period
Monday, 11 March 2024 - Sunday, 17 March 2024	Spring Break - campus closed
Friday, 29 March 2024	Study day – campus closed
<b>Friday, 13 April 2024</b>	<b>Last day to drop with a “W”</b>
Saturday, 20 April 2024	<b>Lady day to withdraw from the University</b>
<b>Sunday, 28 April 2023 by 10pm</b>	<b>Assignment Extension for late assignment</b>
<b>Monday, 29 April 2024</b>	<b>Last day of scheduled classes BEFORE Final Exams</b>



# TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SAN ANTONIO

Tuesday, 30 April 2024	Study day – NO CLASS
Wednesday, 1 May -Tuesday, 7 May 2024	Week of Final Exams
<b>Monday, 29 April 2024 - Monday, 6 May 2024</b>	<b>Our class final exam</b>
Tuesday, 7 May 2024	End of SPRING 2024 Semester

## SPRING 2024 SEMESTER SYLLABUS SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change at my discretion. Students will immediately be notified of any changes.

### Week 1: Tuesday, 16 January 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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Sunday, 28 January 2024 (no extension).

### Week 2: Monday, 22 January 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/wLFWwnDYZqQ>

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: Class Introduction** - opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 27 January 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 3: Monday, 29 January 2024

**\*\*\*CENSUS DATE: Wednesday, 31 January 2024**

READ CHAPTER 2: FEDERALISM & THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION

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](https://texasarchive.org/2015_01034)

- ✓ **Chapter 2 Assignment** - opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 3 February 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 4: Monday, 5 February 2024

READ CHAPTER 7 - THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

Lecture: Chapter 7 Lecture

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

Watch video: *Opening Day of the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature (House of Representatives)* - [https://tlchouse.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=47&clip\\_id=19106](https://tlchouse.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=47&clip_id=19106)

- ✓ **Chapter 7 Assignment** - opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 10 February 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.



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- ✓ **Semester Reflection #2 Assignment: The Legislature** – opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 10 February 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 5 – Monday, 12 February 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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 17 February 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 6 – Monday, 19 February 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](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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 24 February 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 7 – Monday, 26 February 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](https://youtu.be/rCjJNKQe_Ac)

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

- ✓ **Chapter 10 Assignment** – opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 2 March 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 8 – Monday, 4 March 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=rEnMN3EXYU>

- ✓ **Chapter 12 Assignment** – opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 9 March 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.
- ✓ **Semester Reflection #4 Assignment: The Courts** – opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 9 March 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

### Week 9 – Monday, 11 March 2024

SPRING BREAK!!! – campus is closed. Enjoy the break!!



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Week 10 – Monday, 18 March 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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 23 March 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

Week 11 – Monday, 25 March 2024

**\*\*Instructions & Study Guide for FINAL EXAM released on Monday, 25 March 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 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 30 March 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.
- ✓ **Semester Reflection #5: Voting & Elections** – opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 30 March 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

Week 12 – Monday, 1 April 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: *2021 Texas Republican Governor Primary Candidate Debate* - <https://youtu.be/EvdOidRRlhU>

- ✓ **Chapter 4 Assignment** – opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 6 April 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

Week 13 – Monday, 8 April 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>

- ✓ **Semester Reflection #6: Influences on Texas Government** - opens at 1am on Tuesday, 16 January 2024, and will close by 10pm on Saturday, 13 April 2024. Assignment extension until 10pm on Sunday, 28 April 2024.

Week 14 – Monday, 15 April 2024

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

Watch video: John Seymour, El Paso Community College – The Public Policy Process in Texas Government:

<https://youtu.be/PMXkp8p5dl8>

Lecture: Chapter 13 lecture



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### Week 15 – Monday, 22 April 2024

Watch video - Texas Senate Committee on Finance Hearing (1 Feb 2021)

- [https://tlc.senate.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=35&clip\\_id=15358](https://tlc.senate.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=35&clip_id=15358) (Links to an external site.) (fast forward the time to 2:07:00 and start from there to watch testimony from the Office of the Texas Attorney General).

### Week 16 – Monday, 29 April 2024

✓ \*\*Last day of class **BEFORE** our Final Exam - Monday, 29 April 2023

✓ \*\*Study Day **BEFORE** our Final Exam – Tuesday, 30 April 2023

**\*\*\*Final Exam (Final Exam Essay) due for OUR CLASS: opens at 1am on Monday, 29 April 2024 and will close by 10pm on Monday, 6 May 2024.**

## SEMESTER 2024 SEMESTER: IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

**Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADAAA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodation of their disability. If you have a diagnosed disability that may require accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu).

**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 is an appointment-based center where appointments are made through the Navigate platform. Students can access Navigate through Jagwire in the Student Services tab. The Center is active on campus outreaching to students to highlight services offered. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu) or calling (210)-784-1332. Appointments can also be made through JagWire under the services tab.

**Counseling Resources:** As a college student, 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 Texas A&M University – San Antonio, please contact the Student Counseling Center (SCC) located in Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance) or call 210-784-1331 between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM. 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, couples, and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling).

In a crisis, please walk-in to the Student Counseling Center (SCC) any time between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM to be seen by a licensed clinician. After hours, please contact UPD at 911 or text "HOME" to 741-741 24/7/365 to connect with a trained crisis counselor. The National Suicide Prevention hotline also offers a 24/7/365 hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

**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 and/or phone call with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit:



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<https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>. More information about Emergency Preparedness and the Emergency Response Guide can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/upd/index.html>.

**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 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.

**Jaguar Writing Center:** The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing support 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. The Writing Center is currently holding all appointments digitally. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in JagWire under the student services tab.

Students wanting to work in real time with a tutor can schedule an "Online Appointment." Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an "eTutoring" appointment. 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 [www.tamusa.edu/Writing-Center](http://www.tamusa.edu/Writing-Center). The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing [writingcenter@tamusa.edu](mailto:writingcenter@tamusa.edu).

**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 contact the Dean of Students ([DOS@tamusa.edu](mailto:DOS@tamusa.edu)) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

**Military Affairs:** Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots' Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at [military@tamusa.edu](mailto:military@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 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.



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**Statement of Harassment and Discrimination:** Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of 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, diversity, pluralism, 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, based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university. 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 has staff members trained to support survivors 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 university.

Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and other healthcare providers 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 or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331, Modular C.

**Students' Rights and Responsibilities:** The purpose of the following statement is to enumerate the essential provisions for the student freedom and responsibility to learn at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. All students are required to follow all policies and regulations as set forth by The Texas A&M University System. This includes the A&M-San Antonio Student Code of Conduct.

### **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 procedure 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, based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
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 the administration.





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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, University Catalog and students must comply with them and the laws of the land.
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 an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.
6. 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. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.