

American & Texas Government

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Term: Spring 2013
Class time: TR 2:00-3:20pm
Classroom: Reed 319
Course Number: POSC 10133-055
Class Number: 30005

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the institutions, processes, and influences of American and Texas government and politics. It is roughly broken into two sections. The first five weeks of the course will focus on political elites, discussing the history and theories of American democracy, as well as American and Texas political institutions (Congress, Executive, Judiciary, and Bureaucracy). In the second half of the course, we will shift gears and focus on mass political behavior.

Course Requirements:

1. *Do the reading:* You must read the assigned reading for every class period. Develop good study habits by taking notes as you read each chapter. This will maximize comprehension of the material. All supplemental readings can be found on LearningStudio and are annotated with LS on the syllabus. The *Keeping the Republic* text is abbreviated with KTR and *Lone Star Politics* with LSP.
2. *Take quizzes on the reading:* After you've completed reading the chapter(s) for the week, you should login to LearningStudio and take the quiz on that week's readings. The quizzes contain 10 multiple choice questions and are worth 10 points each. **Quizzes for weekly modules are available only during the week that module is assigned. Quizzes are available starting at 7am Sunday and become unavailable at 10pm Saturday.** For example, you must take the first week's quiz on the Constitution and Federalism anytime between Sunday, January 20 at 7am and Saturday, January 25 at 10pm. After that time, the quiz will be unavailable and you will receive a 0. Also, the quizzes are timed, and you have only 30 minutes to complete them. After 30 minutes from the time you start, the quiz will no longer be available to you. That means you should read the book carefully before taking the quiz as you will not have much time to "hunt" for the answer in the book while taking the quiz. The weekly quizzes are worth 20% of your grade.
3. *Class Participation:* I will take attendance at every class. *It's not enough to show up; you must be an engaged listener and participant.* No Facebook, texting, emailing, messaging, movie-watching, etc., during class is allowed. Five points will be subtracted from your participation grade for every absence and/or poor classroom etiquette. If you have a legitimate excuse for your absence (e.g., sickness, death, etc.), please let me know. Participation is worth 15% of your grade.

4. *Take exams:* There will be two midterm exams and a final exam. All exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay.

Midterms: The two midterms will contain 20 multiple choice questions, 10/12 short answer, and 1/2 essay questions. Half of the multiple choice questions will be from the quizzes, and the other half will be new. The first midterm will be Tuesday, February 19 and will cover material from January 17 to February 14. The second midterm will be Tuesday, March 26 and will cover material from February 21 to March 31. Each midterm is worth 15% of your grade (for a combined 30%).

Final: The final exam will be a modified comprehensive exam. It will contain 40 multiple choice questions, 10/12 short answer, and 1/2 essays. Only the multiple choice section will be comprehensive, and those questions from the first 12 weeks of the semester will come from the weekly quizzes. The short answer and essay will cover material from March 28 to April 25. The final exam will take place Tuesday, May 7 from 3pm-5:30pm. The final is worth 20% of your grade.

5. *Letter to Representative.* You must write a letter to one of your representatives. It can be addressed to your U.S. senator or congressman, or your state senator or congressman. There is a sample letter uploaded to LearningStudio for your reference. The letter is worth 15% of your grade. As you think about what to write, consider these two methods:
- Decide on the person first, then look into the key committees s/he is on and/or the key issues or pieces of legislation on which that individual is working.
 - Decide on the issue first, then determine if it's an issue on which the state or federal government legislates. Based on that, determine the key committee in the U.S. Congress or the TX Legislature that deals with this issue, and write the letter to the chair of that committee.

Grading:

Quizzes:	20%	Weekly, by 10pm Saturday of every week
Midterm #1:	15%	Tuesday, February 19
Midterm #2:	15%	Tuesday, March 26
Final:	20%	Tuesday, May 7, 3-5:30pm
Letter to Rep:	15%	Due Friday, April 19 by 11:59pm via LS Dropbox
Participation:	15%	Attendance & Contribution

Grading Scale:

A = 93-100	C+ = 77-79
A- = 90-92	C = 73-76
B+ = 87-89	C- = 70-72
B = 83-86	D+ = 67-69
B- = 80-82	D = 60-66
	F = < 60

Course Textbooks:

Barbour, Christine and Gerald C. Wright. Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics, 4th Brief Edition. Washington DC: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-60871-274-8

Collier, Ken, Steven Galatas, and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas, 2nd Edition. Washington DC: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-60426-638-2

Academic Misconduct:

**Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) –Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog (Student Policies>Academic Conduct Policy Details; http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current_year/undergraduate/). Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself.
- Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another’s work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one’s own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another’s work without giving credit therefore. *(If you are using Turnitin www.turnitin.com place information about your course id and password or LearningStudio dropbox reporting. If you only want to use Turnitin as a spot check please indicate in your syllabus that you may use Turnitin for plagiarism detection.)*
- Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

Disability:

Student Disabilities: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 11. Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations, and accommodations are not retroactive. Therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-7486. *Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.* Guidelines for documentation may be found at <http://www.acs.tcu.edu/DISABILITY.HTM>.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: U.S. Constitution

Tues., January 15: Introduction

Thurs., January 17:

KTR: Chapter 2, "The Politics of the American Founding"

KTR: Appendix 3, U.S. Constitution (pp. 521-530 to Amendment X)

Week 2: Federalism

Tues., January 22:

KTR: Chapter 3, "Federalism"

Thur., January 24:

KTR: Appendix 4, Federalist #10

LS: Brutus #6

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm Saturday, January 26

Week 3: Texas History & Constitution

Tues., January 29:

LSP: Chapter 1, "Introduction"

Thurs., January 31:

LSP: Chapter 2, "Texas Constitution"

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, February 2

Week 4: U.S. Congress

Tues., February 5:

KTR: Chapter 6, "Congress"

Thurs., February 7:

KTR: Chapter 6, "Congress"

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, February 9

Week 5: Texas Legislature

Tues., February 12:
LSP: Chapter 3, "Texas Legislature"

Thurs., February 14:
LSP: Chapter 3, "Texas Legislature"

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, February 16

Week 6: U.S. President

Tues., February 19: MIDTERM #1

Thurs., February 21:
KTR: Chapter 7, "The Presidency"

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, February 23

Week 7: Texas Governor

Tues., February 26:
LSP: Chapter 4, "Governors & Bureaucracy in Texas," Pp. 101-119.

Thurs., February 28:
LS: Draper, Robert. 2009. "It's Just a Texas-Governor Thing." *New York Times Magazine*, December 6.

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, March 2

Week 8: U.S. Bureaucracy

Tues., March 5:
KTR: Chapter 8, "The Bureaucracy"

Thurs., March 7:
KTR: Chapter 8, "The Bureaucracy"

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, March 9

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

Week 10: Texas Bureaucracy

Tues., March 19:

LSP: Chapter 4, "Governors and Bureaucracy in Texas," pp. 120-129.

Thurs., March 21:

Guest Speaker: Stephen Palmer, Director of Office of E-Health Coordination,
Texas Health and Human Services Commission

LS: Texas Health Information Technology Advisory Committee. 2006.
*Executive Summary: Roadmap for the Mobilization of Electronic
Healthcare Information in Texas.* September 29.

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, March 23

Week 11: U.S. Judiciary

Tues., March 26:

MIDTERM #2

Thurs., March 28:

KTR: Chapter 9, "The American Legal System and the Courts"

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, March 30

Week 12: Texas Judiciary

Tues., April 2:

LSP: Chapter 5, "Texas Judicial System."

Thurs., April 4:

LSP: Chapter 5, "Texas Judicial System."

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, April 6

Week 13: Voting, Campaigns, and Elections Nationally

Tues., April 9:

KTR: Chapter 12, "Voting, Campaigns, and Elections" pp. 397-409

Thurs., April 11:

KTR: Chapter 12, "Voting, Campaigns, and Elections" pp. 409-427

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, April 13

Week 14: Elections in Texas

Tues., April 16:

LSP: Chapter 7, "Elections: Texas Style"

Thurs., April 18:

Documentary Screening: *Hacking Democracy* (2006)

LETTER TO REPRESENTATIVE DUE FRIDAY, APRIL 19 @ 11:59PM VIA DROPBOX

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, April 20

Week 15: Parties & Interest Groups

Tues., April 23:

KTR: Chapter 11, "Parties & Interest Groups," pp. 357-375.

LSP: Chapter 8, "Parties and Organized Interests," 227-244.

Thurs., April 25:

KTR: Chapter 11, "Parties & Interest Groups," pp. 375-395.

LSP: Chapter 8, "Parties and Organized Interests," pp. 245-257.

Quiz: Must take quiz by 10pm on Saturday, April 27

Week 16: Review

Tues., April 29: Review for exam

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 7, 3:00-5:30pm