Stephen F. Austin State University

Spring 2016

Political Science 142.012

M/W/F 1:00 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.

Ferguson Liberal Arts, Room 371

Professor: David English

Office: Ferguson Liberal Arts, Rm 478

Phone: 468-1494

Email: englishdw@sfasu.edu

Office Hours: M/W/F 9:50 a.m.-10:50 a.m.

M/W 1:50 p.m.-2:20 p.m.

Other times by appointment

SI: Maddie Key

T/Th 5:00 p.m.

Lumberjack Landing 139-C

Course Description:

“Legislative, executive, and judicial functions in American and Texas governments: public policy areas such as finance, social services, and foreign policy; Texas local and county governments. Meets the state requirement for Texas Government.” General Bulletin, 2015-2016.
General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes:

In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the political science / government Foundation Component Area may be assessed.

- Critical Thinking Skills – creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
- Communication Skills – effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- Social Responsibility – intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities
- Personal Responsibility – the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

Program Learning Outcomes:

This course is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for a political science major are addressed in this course.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, you should be able

- To describe the basic themes and concepts related to the study of American and Texas political behavior
- To examine the relationship between political behavior and political institutions, especially the interdependence of behavior and institutions
- To think critically about American and Texas politics, especially the theoretical foundations of both systems
- To discuss the foundations of the US and Texas Constitutions
- To identify the key schools of thought regarding voting behavior and electoral processes
- To explain the roles and functions of political parties, interest groups, and media in a democratic political system
- To understand citizenship in the American political system more completely

Texts:

*Keeping the Republic (Brief 6th Edition), Christine Barbour and Gerald C. Wright*

*Lone Star Politics (Fourth Edition), Ken Collier, Steven Galatas, Julie Harrelson-Stevens*
**Course Requirements:**

There will be **four exams** given during the semester: three regular exams, plus a final exam. Tests will cover material from the lecture, textbooks, and any supplemental reading material assigned during the course. I will drop the lowest of the four exam grades and average the top three. If you miss an exam, that exam will be the grade dropped. For this reason, there will be no make-up exams. If you miss two exams, you will get a grade of zero on the second exam. However, if you know you are going to miss an exam due to an excused absence (e.g., an athletic trip or illness with documentation), you may take the exam early if you give me at least two days prior notice. If you took the first three exams and have an A average, you may skip the final exam; except for the day of the final exam, you still must attend classes or be counted absent (see “Attendance”).

**There will be no extra credit assignments.** I expect you to spend your time studying for the four major exams; these determine your final semester grade.

**Grading Policy:**

A = 90-100  
B = 80-89  
C = 70-79  
D = 60-69  
F = below 60

If you think there was an error in calculating your grade, please let me known ASAP.

**Attendance:**

After four unexcused absence, I will start deducting points from your next exam grade. If you are late, I may count you as tardy or absent, depending on how late you are; two tardies will count as one absence. In addition, if you leave early, I will count you as absent. If you have documented extenuating circumstances, please let me know, ahead of time if possible. I understand that there may be a valid reason for your absence or tardiness; I only ask that you be honest with me, and I will be fair with you.

**Other Policies:**

Please turn off your cell phones and other electronic devices that may make a noise. **Do not text, talk, or disrupt the class. Do not wear ear phones or ear buds.** If you do, I may not make a big deal out of it; I will just quietly deduct points from your next exam grade. If you continue, more drastic action may be taken. I also reserve the right to reduce your next exam grade by five points for any disruptive behavior.

I will never belittle a student. I want my classes to be based on mutual respect, and encourage you to inform me of any problem you may have involving my class.
Contacting Me:

Please feel free to meet with me during office hours if you are having any problems with the course. If you have a problem seeing me due to your academic or work schedule, I will make every effort to make an appointment at another time. It would be best to contact me by email.

Academic Integrity (A-9.1):

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Students with Disabilities

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.
In accordance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, I will not be able to give out grades over the phone or email. I can discuss your grades with you in person during office hours or by appointment.

Course Schedule (tentative):

Introduction

Public Policy

*Keeping the Republic, Chapter 14, pgs 457-464*

United States Congress

*Keeping the Republic, Chapter 6*

Texas Legislature

*Lone Star Politics, Chapters 3 and 4*

*Exam 1: Wednesday, February 10*

United States Presidency

*Keeping the Republic. Chapter 7*

Texas Governors

*Lone Star Politics, Chapter 5*

Texas Plural Executive and Texas Bureaucracy

*Lone Star Politics, Chapter 6*

*Exam 2: Wednesday, March 9*
United States Bureaucracy

Keeping the Republic, Chapter 8

United States Courts and Judiciary

Keeping the Republic, Chapter 9

Federalist Paper No. 78

Texas Courts and Judiciary

Lone Star Politics, Chapters 7 and 8

*Exam 3: Monday, April 4*

Texas Local Government

Lone Star Politics, Chapter 12

United States Fiscal Policy

Keeping the Republic, Chapter 14, pgs 476-489

United States Foreign Policy

Keeping the Republic, Chapter 14, pgs 489-496

Texas Fiscal Policy

Lone Star Politics, Chapter 13

*SFA Final Exam Schedule*

*Final (Exam 4): Wednesday, May 11, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.*