Political Science 142.006
Introduction to American Government: Structure and Functions

Spring 2016
Department of Government
Course Meeting Times: Tuesdays & Thursday 11:00 to 12:15
Course Location: E. L. Miller Science 233
Instructor: Dr. Richard J. Herzog
Quote: I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts.
– Will Rogers
Office Location: Vera Dugas LAN 139
Office Hours: MW 12:00-1:30, TR 9:10-10:40, and by appointment
Phone: 468-2446
E-mail: Desire2Learn only
SI Leader: Ms. Kimberly Dean
SI Meeting: MW 6:00 LL 139C

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.

Required Textbooks

Introduction to American Government Structure and Functions PSC 142 Richard Herzog, Stephen F. Austin State University, Department of Government, McGraw-Hill Create 2011 (American—Blue Cover)


Additional Required Readings

Sources for contemporary political news (e.g., newspapers, magazines, news pages on the Internet, television programs, and radio broadcasts)

Program Learning Outcomes

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

General Education Core Curriculum

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal
Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Public Policy Paper</td>
<td>April 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Public Policy Paper</td>
<td>April 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Public Policy Paper</td>
<td>April 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Public Policy Paper</td>
<td>April 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will:
1. better understand how governments affect their lives
2. have learned about American, Texas, and local political systems
3. understand the structure and functions of the five branches of national and state governments: executive, legislative, judicial, the bureaucracy, and the media
4. have used research skills to gather governmental information
5. gain greater interest in contemporary political issues
6. become knowledgeable about public policies
7. develop the ability to critically analyze information
8. have intellectually discussed and presented contemporary political issues
9. have gained insights into practical politics

Course Requirements/Grading

Exams: There will be four (4) timed exams. You can earn more than 100 points on each exam. The exams will consist of true/false statements and multiple choice questions. The exams will test your knowledge of class materials (about 75 percent of the exam) and Textbook readings in Introduction to American Government Structure and Functions and the Texas Politics Workbook (about 25 percent of the exam). Our first exam will be on Thursday, February 11. You need to bring three things to each exam: a Scantron Form No. 882-E, a No. 2 pencil, and a head full of political science knowledge. The final exam will not be comprehensive.

Class Preparation/Required & Bonus Points: You can earn up to 25 required and bonus points for class preparation. Students should carefully read, digest, and critically consider the assigned reading materials before attending class. Students should be fully prepared not only for getting good grades, but for successful careers. To assist in your preparation, you are to take multiple choice quizzes on D2L over the assigned readings and contemporary political news prior to attending class. The quizzes will coincide with a reading designated by "Quiz #" under date of class, on the calendar section of this syllabus. Quizzes will be available from 10:30 a.m. on Mondays or Wednesdays to 10:30 a.m. on the following Tuesdays or Thursdays. Quiz #1 is to be submitted before 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 21. Quiz #1 will cover Texas Chapter 5 and a few contemporary political news items. To receive credit for quizzes you must attend the entire class period after the quiz.

Discussion and Presentation (D&Ps)/Required Points: You can earn up to 80 points on discussion and presentations (D&Ps). There will be four (4) D&Ps, each worth up to 20 points. Starting Thursday, February 4, you will meet with your group to discuss a contemporary political issue and prepare a five (5) to six (6) minute presentation. Topics for these D&Ps will be decided/approved by Dr. Herzog prior to the D&P. Dr. Herzog will grade each D&P using a rubric with 13 items and the main emphasis will be on delivery, organization and content. Dr. Herzog may deduct multiple points for any particular item on the rubric. To assist in the accuracy of grading, Dr. Herzog has the right to record the presentations.

Interesting/Informative D&Ps: The format of your presentations can use a variety of presentation techniques including, debates, role-playing, game shows, editorial, different perspectives, and opposing viewpoints. Avoid descriptive presentations that involve reading your research.

D&Ps/Bonus Points: After each group gives their presentation, you will cast an individual ballot to vote on the BEST group presentation based on delivery, organization, and content. Individuals cannot vote for their own group’s presentation. Dr. Herzog will cast an equal number of votes as the number of student votes. Members of a group cannot vote if they do not participate in discussions and help with the presentation. The members of the group with the most votes will receive four (4) BONUS POINTS. The group members with the second most votes will receive two (2) BONUS POINTS. In case of a tie for first, the groups will divide six (6) points equally and no points will be awarded to second place. In case of a tie for second, the two (2) points will be divided equally. (In all cases, Dr. Herzog will round up.)
You will also be awarded two (2) BONUS POINTS for each D&P if you submit to Dr. Herzog, via D2L Dropbox, evidence of research on your topic (e.g., articles from news pages, typed notes) with proper citation, are prepared to contribute to the discussion, and if you submit a signed ballot at the end of class. Your Dropbox submissions will be due at 8:00 a.m. on D&P days.

D&P groups will be initially assigned on Thursday, January 21. Our first discussion and presentation (D&P) will be on Thursday, February 4.

**Why D&Ps?**
1. to allow you to contribute to the educational process in the classroom
2. to improve your research skills
3. to experience working with other classmates to prepare for and deliver presentations
4. to refine your oral presentation skills
5. to allow you to discuss and present contemporary political topics that peak your interest

**Please Note:** You may not like the D&Ps because the voting is not always fair, they become very political, favoritism may rule over objectivity, and some presentations will appear to waste valuable class time. If some of these reasons become valid, you will have learned valuable lessons about politics.

**Policy Assignment:** There will be a public policy paper assignment in this course that is due on Thursday, April 21. The specifics of this assignment will be announced. You can earn up to 20 points on this assignment.

**Course Evaluation/Bonus Points:** At the end of the semester you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous course evaluation. If you complete the multiple choice and comments sections of the course evaluation, you will be able to earn four (4) BONUS POINTS.

**Final Grades**
This course is graded on a cumulative point system with final grades determined on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 472.5</td>
<td>≥ 90</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>420-472</td>
<td>80 to 89.9</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>367.5-419.5</td>
<td>70 to 79.9</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315-367</td>
<td>60 to 69.9</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 312</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With multiple opportunities for bonus points in this course, there will be no consideration of borderline grades. You will receive the grade that you earn.

Grades will be posted on D2L as earned, and students can monitor their cumulative points and current percentage of points earning in the course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Item</th>
<th>Number of Grades (Total Points Possible)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>4 (400)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>13 (25 plus bonus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D&amp;P</td>
<td>4 (80 plus bonus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Paper</td>
<td>1 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluation</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23 (525)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Make-up Policies**

To take a make-up exam, you must have a legitimate reason (for example, illness, personal matters, and other required university activities). You must contact Dr. Herzog BEFORE the scheduled exam to legitimize your reason. Make-up exams will not be FUN. However, DO NOT attempt to take a scheduled exam on your DEATHBED. There will be limited make-up opportunities on quizzes and D&P opportunities.

**Proper/Mandatory E-mail Etiquette**

If you are responding to the contents of a D2L e-mail I have sent, you do not have to change the subject line. If your message does not relate to the contents of an e-mail that I have sent or if you are e-mailing on a new topic, you need to compose a new D2L e-mail with a descriptive subject line that alludes to the content of the e-mail. Please note that e-mail is NOT a text message as it is more formal communication. You should start every e-mail to me with Dr. Herzog, and I will address you as Ms. or Mr. I will respond to your e-mail after I receive it, regardless of the hour of the day or night.

**Course Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>Syllabus and Schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Student Evaluations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Texas, Chapter 5, pp. 97-106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>The Media and Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: American, Chapter 10, pp. 1-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>The Media and Politics Continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>The Functions of Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: American, Chapter 11, pp. 37-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td><strong>Discussion and Presentation #1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>The Functions of Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td><strong>Exam I</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This exam will test your knowledge of class materials (about 75 percent of the exam) and readings in <em>Texas</em> and <em>American</em> (about 25 percent of the exam).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2/16 <strong>The Texas Legislature</strong></td>
<td><em>Texas</em>, Chapter 1, pp. 1-29; 36-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2/18 <strong>A Model of the Public Policy Process</strong></td>
<td><em>Texas</em>, Chapter 7, pp. 135-166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2/23 <strong>A Model of the Public Policy Process Continued</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>2/25 <strong>Discussion and Presentation #2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>3/1 <strong>The Presidency and The Many Roles of the President</strong></td>
<td><em>American</em>, Chapter 12, pp. 83-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3/3 <strong>Lone Star Legislative Summit</strong>, Class meets in SFA Theatre at Bake Pattillo Student Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>3/8 <strong>The Presidency and The Many Roles of the President Continued</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3/10 <strong>Exam II</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>3/22 <strong>The Consumer Product Safety Commission</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>3/29 <strong>The Bureaucracy &amp; Public Administration</strong></td>
<td><em>American</em>, Chapter 13, pp. 125-159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3/31 <strong>The Powers of the Governor</strong></td>
<td><em>Texas</em>, Chapter 2, pp. 43-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>4/5 <strong>The Plural Executive and the Texas Bureaucracy</strong></td>
<td><em>Texas</em>, Chapter 3, pp. 61-71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4/7 <strong>Discussion and Presentation #3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>4/12 <strong>The Goals of Economic Policy Making</strong></td>
<td><em>American</em>, Chapter 15, pp. 197-206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4/14 <strong>Exam III</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>4/19 <strong>Fiscal Policy and Monetary Policy</strong></td>
<td><em>American</em>, Chapter 15, pp. 216-229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4/21 <strong>Texas Laws and Courts</strong></td>
<td><em>Texas</em>, Chapter 4, pp. 79-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Texas Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Discussion and Presentation #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>The U.S. Supreme Court is an Imperial Judiciary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz #13</td>
<td>Reading: American, Chapter 14, pp. 160-191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Is the U.S. Supreme Court is NOT an Imperial Judiciary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Final Exam 10:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance/Cell Phones/Electronic Devices**

Students are required to attend class and arrive on time. The use of cell phones, even to check the time, during class presentations is prohibited. If Dr. Herzog sees you using a cell phone in class it is considered unacceptable and disruptive behavior. Please turn your cell phone off or to silent when you arrive for class. Other electronic devices (e.g., laptops and iPads) may not be used during class presentations. On D&P class days, when your group is preparing your presentation, you may use electronic devices to conduct additional research, review a presentation (e.g., PowerPoint or Prezi), or call a public official to get information. When the presentations start all electronic devices must not be used.

**Acceptable Student Behavior**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**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/.