

Sul Ross State University

**State Government
Political Science 2306-001
Web-based Format
Sul Ross State University
Summer II 2017**

Contact Information

David Watson

Office: Lawrence Building room 203.

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-4:30pm, and by appointment.

Office Phone: 837-8742

Email: dwatson@sulross.edu

Course Website: <http://bbsrsu.sulross.edu/>

**Our course Blackboard page includes important information for this course, including the course syllabus, grades, notes, and course announcements.

Course Description

This is an introductory course covering state politics and Texas public policy. The purposes of this class include introducing students to the most salient and contentious policy debates in Texas as well as providing the tools and knowledge necessary for students to critically and intelligently evaluate policy. It is my hope that the information you learn in this class will increase your interest in politics as well as make you a more informed citizen.

Student Learning Outcomes (Political Science)

The graduating student will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.

TEexas Domain III Competency 19: The teacher understands and applies social science knowledge and skills to plan, organize, and implement instruction and assess learning.

TEexas Domain III Competency 23: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of concepts of government, democracy, and citizenship, including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems.

Course Goals

1. Describe the essential elements of public policy (To be evaluated on Exam III, and the Final Exam).
2. Explain how Texas political institutions affect the development and implementation of public policy (To be evaluated on Exams I, II, III, and the Final Exam).
3. Analyze the impact of constitutional law on public policy (To be evaluated with Exam II, and the Final Exam).

4. Analyze key public policy issues facing the Texas today (To be evaluated on Exam III, and the Final Exam).
5. Analyze how National, State, and Local government interact to implement policy (To be evaluated on Exam I, Exam II, Exam III, and the Final Exam).

Method of Instruction

This is an online course, and so the method of instruction is somewhat limited. Each week, a series of lectures, readings, and visual aids will be made available to the students. At the end of each week, an exam will be administered through Blackboard 9.0. These exams will be time-limited (an hour, once started) and the grade results will be posted on Blackboard once the exams are graded.

I am here to help you with the course material. Please feel free to come by my office hours or make an appointment with any questions you have. If you find that you are having difficulty with the material please come and see me as soon as possible particularly if you do not do well on the first exam and I can suggest study techniques that may help you do better on subsequent exams. Additionally, you can contact me via email or phone, though email is preferred.

Books

There is no required book for this course. For your support, there is a website we will utilize that has the equivalent of a textbook for Texas Politics that I will link you to so that you can follow along with the various topics we cover. I will also use supplemental links/power points that will be provided to emphasize particular concepts we cover in class. For supplemental information, please see:

<http://cnx.org/contents/W8wOWXNF@13.8:Y1CfqFju@8/Preface>

**You should be able to toggle the contents section of the online book by selecting the chapter that aligns with the topic (top left of the page).

Course Requirements

Semester grades will be determined by each student's performance on four exams and quizzes. The final exam will be cumulative; however emphasis will be placed on the material covered following the second exam. There will be no extra credit offered in this course, save for the occasional attendance "perk".

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Assignment	Date	Percent of Final Grade
Exam I	July 14th	25
Exam II	July 21th	25
Exam III	August 2nd	25
Final Exam	August 10th	25

Grade Scale: A: 100-89 B: 88-79 C: 78-69 D: 68-59 F: 58-0

Exams: The grading for this course will consist of 4 examinations. The exams will cover material from the lectures, textbook, and class discussion. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, and true false questions. The final exam will be cumulative, but greater weight will be placed on the material covered in the latter half of the class.

**Students who come to class on exam day after the first student has completed the exam and left the classroom will not be permitted to take the exam, so it is advised that you arrive on time for all exams.

Makeup Exams: I expect that students will take exams on the day that they are given. If you have to miss an exam you must contact me **in advance** and plan a day to take the makeup exam. Any absences on an

exam day require written documentation (doctor's note, etc.) and I reserve the right not to permit you to take a makeup. All makeup exams consist of essay questions and no one will be allowed to take a makeup for more than one exam. No makeup exams will be given for the final.

ADA: Disability Policy: It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such an accommodation because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact Joyce Sesters (University Center 211), the coordinator for program accessibility 837-8178.

Religious Holiday: A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

Academic Honesty: Students will be expected to adhere to the university honor code for all assignments. Any student who is caught cheating or plagiarizing will be punished by automatically receiving a zero on the assignment in question and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

Cheating is defined in the Student Code of Conduct as:

- 1) Use of any unauthorized aid, sources, and assistance and assisting others in taking a course, quiz, test, or examination, writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out assignments;
- 2) The acquisition without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the University community;
- 3) Alteration of grade records;
- 4) Bribing or attempting to bribe a member of the University community or any other individual to alter a grade.

Plagiarism is defined as: Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgement. Any student, who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines, the Internet, and other reference works, or from the themes, reports, or other writings of a fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes:

- 1) Deliberate copying or use of another's work without citing the source.
- 2) Cutting and pasting of information off of the Internet without citing the source.
- 3) The use of an exact sentence from a source (book, Internet, etc.) without quotes.

Drop/Withdrawal Policy: August 3rd is the last day to drop a course with a "W". Once the deadline to withdrawal has passed, the student receives an 'F' for the course if he/she still chooses to withdraw. Thus, it is imperative for students to be cognizant of these dates to avoid earning an 'F' for the course.

Important Dates: July 21st is also the last day to drop a course and receive a refund (Does not apply to students who drop below zero hours).

Schedule of Classes (Supplemental Reading)**

07/06 Course introduction and overview (Chapter 1)

07/07 Texas History I and II

07/10 Political Culture, People and Land of Texas (Chapter 1)

07/11 Economic Development (Chapter 2)

07/12 Federalism (Chapter 3)

07/13 State Constitutions, Texas Constitution, Review

07/14 *Test #1**

07/17 Governor/Legislature (Chapter 11, 12)

07/18 Interest Groups/Bureaucracy (Chapter 15)

07/19 Judicial Branch/Local Government (Chapter 13)
07/20 Political Parties and Elections/Review (Chapter 7)
07/21 *Test #2**
07/24 The Welfare State
07/25 Healthcare Policy/Education Policy (Chapter 11)
07/26 Agriculture Policy/Immigration Policy (Chapter 11)
07/27 Business Regulation (Enron Video)
07/28 Drug Policy, Crime Policy (Chapter 11)
07/31 Environmental Policy (last day to withdraw with a "W")
08/01 Tax Policy, Review (Chapter 16)
08/02 **Test #3
08/03 Civil Rights/Civil Liberties (Chapter 5)
08/04 The Media/Public Opinion
08/07 Civil Rights Video (Chapter 4)
08/08 Review of Semester
08/09 Review
08/10 Final Exam

*****Final Exam*****
Online Thursday, August 10th