Angelo State University  
Department of Political Science and Philosophy  

Summer II 2019  
POLS 2306 Texas Government  

Section # D10 (ONLINE)  

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Course Synopsis  
Political Science 2306 is the second half of a two-sequence course, with Political Science 2305 being the first course. Combined, these 2 courses will satisfy the 6 SCH Angelo State University Core Curriculum requirements in Political Science. Political Science 2306 is designed to introduce you to Texas government and politics. It is an introductory survey course that covers 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.  

Required Text  
*Inside Texas Politics: Power, Policy, and Personality in the Lone Star State, 2e, Rottinghaus**  
**OUP e-Book**  

*Any additional readings that may be assigned will be made available on BB.*  

Course Goals  
We will be working on 4 Core Objectives: Critical Thinking (CT), Communication Skills (CS), Social Responsibility (SR), and Personal Responsibility (PR). Each of these Core Objectives contains its own Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), with 8 in total (listed on back page). We are going to pursue all of these objectives as we proceed through the course.  

Course Format and Expectations  
We are going to work through about 2 major topics from *Inside Texas Politics* per week. There are 2 exams and 5 discussion boards. Lecture slides and short recordings from the instructor will be posted each week to Blackboard to supplement the readings. This is a relatively fast-paced, 3 credit course, and students should be prepared to learn and be assessed on a substantial amount of material in a much more condensed fashion than in a regular fall or spring semester. The instructor will interact with students primarily through Blackboard.
Exams and Quizzes

Exams. There will be a midterm and a final, each testing your knowledge from the assigned readings and posted lecture material. The exams include a section for identifying key terms and an essay section to demonstrate comprehension and an ability to synthesize the material covered. A study guide will be posted 24 hours in advance of the exam, and you will have 24 hours from when the exam is posted to upload your completed exam to Blackboard.

Writing Assignments

Weekly Writing. Every Monday there will be an assigned writing exercise due Thursday of that week, which you will post to the BB discussion board. You will be expected to post at least 2 paragraphs per discussion board posting. Doing this and following any accompanying instructions gets you full credit for your discussion board requirement. If you fail to follow instructions, then credit will be reduced.

You may be required to include citations from the textbook or other scholarly sources in your posting to support your thought or argument. All postings will develop your critical thinking (CT) and communication skills (CS). Some will aim to develop social and personal responsibility (SR and PR).

**EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY**: By responding to any 3 of your classmates on the weekly discussion boards, you may earn extra credit points. Your responses must be serious and substantive, or will not count. You can earn 1 extra credit point per week onto your final grade point average.

Why am I having you do this? First, this is meant to offer you an opportunity to work through your thoughts on various questions and problems raised by our investigation into Texas Government. It is always better to actively think, by writing and discussing, than to passively think, by listening quietly and reading quickly.

Q&A Discussion Board. In addition to the weekly writing assignments that you will post to the appropriate discussion board forum, there will be a running Q&A discussion board available throughout the session. This is where you go to ask questions to the instructor relating to the syllabus and to assigned material. Each student must ask at least 1 unique question on this discussion board at some point prior to each exam. This forum is weighted equally with the other discussion board assignments.

Assignments and Grading

Grade Distribution

- Midterm Exam: 25%
- Final Exam: 35%
- Discussion Boards 40%
Grading Scale
A  100-90
B  89-80
C  79-70
D  69-60
F  59-

**Academic Honesty**
This class strictly adheres to the university’s policy on academic honesty. Please consult the following website for guidelines on the proper citation of sources and for avoiding plagiarism: [http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php](http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php). Sanctions for a violation of Academic Policy can include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and a notation on the academic record, and suspension from the university.

**Religious Observances**
Every effort will be made to accommodate all forms of religious observance in compliance with ASU OP 10.19. Students who require additional arrangements to be made should make these known in good time in order that arrangements can be made.

**Make-up Policy**
Make-ups for missed exams are only allowed on a case-by-case basis. Whenever possible advance notice must be given, excuses must be documented, and grade penalties are at the discretion of the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**
Students that feel that they may need special assistance for any reason should contact the Student Life Office, Rm 112 University Center.
Reading Assignments and Due Dates

Week 1 – Chapters 1 & 2 – Overview of Texas & the TX Constitution
Read pp. 3-9; 15-32; 35-40; 47-61; 65-66 (about 45 pages total)
Discussion Board 1 due Thursday @ 11:59pm

Week 2 – Chapters 3 & 12 – Federalism & Local Gov’t
Read pp. 69-75; 84-96; 375-385; 395-406 (about 40 pages total)
Discussion Board 2 due Thursday @ 11:59pm

Week 3 – Chapters 7, 8, 9 – TX Legislature, Governor & Executive Department
Midterm Exam Tuesday, July 23rd on Chapters 1-3, 12 @ noon
Read pp. 201-221; 231-236; 239-257; 270; 273-275; 280-292; 297 (about 60 pages total)
Discussion Board 3 due Thursday @ 11:59pm

Week 4 – Chapters 10 & 4 – TX Judiciary; Voting & Elections
Read pp. 309-322; 327-342; 99-132 (about 60 pages total)
Discussion Board 4 due Thursday @ 11:59pm

Week 5 – Final Exam
Q&A Discussion Board due Tuesday @ 11:59pm
Final Exam Wednesday, August 7th @ noon
ASU Student Learning Objectives

Critical Thinking Skills (CT)

CT1. Gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue.

CT2. Develop and demonstrate a logical position (i.e. perspective, thesis, hypothesis) that acknowledges ambiguities or contradictions.

Communication Skills (CS)

CS1. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication.

CS2. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective oral communication.

Social Responsibility (SR)

SR1. Demonstrate intercultural competence.

SR2. Demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility.

SR3. Demonstrate the ability to engage effectively in the campus, regional, national or global communities.

Personal Responsibility (PR)

PR1. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate choices, actions and consequences as related to ethical decision-making.