ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
POLITICAL SCIENCE 2306 TEXAS GOVERNMENT
Spring 2022
Section 80: Tuesday and Thursday 11-12:15 in Academic 135

Instructor: Brenda J. Norton, J.D., Ph.D.
Email: Brenda.Norton@Angelo.edu
Office: Rassman 222, Office Telephone: 325-486-6106
Office Hours: T.R. 8-10 am, 1-4; Other times by appointment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS: This syllabus has three parts.

PART 1: THIS COURSE
COURSE DESCRIPTION: Political Science 2306 is designed to introduce the student to the Texas state system of government. This introductory survey course covers the origin and development of the Texas Constitution, state and local government structure and powers, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas.

CORE OBJECTIVES:
Critical Thinking: gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue.
Communication: develop, interpret and express ideas through effective written communication
Social Responsibility: demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility
Personal Responsibility: demonstrate the ability to evaluate choices, actions, and consequences as related to ethical decision-making

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. The student will demonstrate knowledge about the Texas government and politics.
2. The student will explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution.
3. The student will explain the origins and evolution of the Texas political system, focusing on the growth of political institutions, the key components of the Texas political system, and federalism.
4. The student will describe how different political systems divide and share power between the state and local governments.
5. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Texas government.
6. Students will evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, political parties, campaigns, and elections in the Texas political system.

7. Students will describe citizens' rights and responsibilities and comment on the role of civic engagement in Texas politics.
8. The student will analyze political issues, demonstrate critical thinking skills, and develop a critical approach to studying policies and the political culture of Texas.

LEARNING RESOURCES:

We are developing an open resource platform for this course. All materials are available to you on the class Blackboard page. This is an ongoing project at ASU, so we welcome any comments or suggestions about the materials that you may have.

REQUIRED ERESOURCE: You are required to purchase access to the Top Hat e-system from TopHat.com. Instructions on purchase and access are posted to the class Blackboard page. If you have purchased Top Hat for another class, you do not have to buy new access. You merely add this class to your roster.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

Classroom etiquette: A proper learning environment is one in which all points of view, all questions asked, and all questions answered are treated with tolerance and respect. The overall goal of classroom decorum is to treat each other with respect and dignity. Any behavior that disrupts this learning environment, such as late arrivals or early departures, is unacceptable and inappropriate behavior will be subject to appropriate sanction.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes in person. You may attend online only through a learning accommodation. See student accommodation office for particulars. Attendance will be taken for every class through Top Hat, and the student is cautioned that excessive absences will jeopardize their final grade for the course. A portion of your final grade is based on your attendance in-class sessions.

- Sleeping/Talking/Using Earbuds/Surfing the web/Texting will be counted as an unexcused absence during class. You will be given one warning and one unexcused absence. _If it continues, you will be marked down one full grade on your final grade_. Any student may anonymously alert me to a concern over a distraction, and I will then determine if there is a problem.
- Arriving late or leaving early without prior permission will be counted as absent. You must be present when attendance is taken via Top Hat and must remain signed in to TopHat throughout the class period. TopHat notifies me when you exit the site.
- Each unexcused absence will result in a grade deduction calculated as a percentage of all class sessions. Thirty percent or more unexcused absences will result in a 0 for attendance. Thus you must attend at least 70 % of classes to receive an attendance grade greater than 0.
- Excused Absences: To receive an excused absence:
  - You may use one (1) no-questions-asked (NQA) excused absence. You may not use this absence on a group discussion day. To use an NQA excused absence, you must notify me by email at least 30 minutes before the start of class that you will be absent that day.

o Other excused absences require written proof, such as a doctor's note, faculty notice that you are out on ASU business, etc. If you are using a written proof excuse on a discussion day, you must make arrangements with me before the absence to complete the work within 24 hours of the end of your excuse.

Grading: This course uses a standard percentage system, 100-90%=A, 89-80%=B, etc. Grading sections are Exams on Blackboard (6 at 100 points each), Group Discussion (6 cumulative for 100 points total), Attendance (100 points for the semester), Semester Project Proposal (100 points), Semester Project Final Paper (200 points). <u>The Final Paper counts double as it takes the place of the final exam.</u> **There is no final exam. The Semester Project will serve as your final exam grade.**

Extra credit is available only as specified. See the extra credit content module on Blackboard. ***<u>Extra credit will not be awarded individually to assist you in bringing up a bad grade.</u>***

Assignments: All deadlines are firm. Extensions due to excused absences are granted, as noted below.

Readings: Readings are listed by the class in which they will be discussed. You are expected to have read the material before that class period. Reading assignments are not a substitute for attending class. We will discuss additional material in class, which will be included in graded assignments.

Exams: **YOU MUST USE A PC TO COMPLETE THE EXAMS. YOU CANNOT USE YOUR PHONE**. There will be online exams using the Respondus Lockdown Browser. The deadlines for these tests are on BlackBoard, and in the course schedule, YOU MAY NOT USE ANY AIDS WHILE TAKING THESE EXAMS. These exams will be T/F, MC, short answer, and cover the reading AND lectures.

The exams open after class on the discussion day and close the Sunday after at 1159 pm. The exams are timed, and you must complete them once you start. If you experience a tech issue while taking the exam, notify me immediately. DO NOT use the send a message tab as that will go to respondus, not me, and I will not know you had a problem. If I find a tech issue interfered with your completing the exam, I will reset it for you.

Respondus Lockdown Browser. It is your responsibility to install the program and to know how to use it. You may access installation and tutorials for Respondus Lockdown Browser via the technology tab on the opening page of Blackboard and posted to Blackboard in the Exam Module. You will NOT use a Respondus webcam. If you have any problems consult ASU Tech Services.

 IPAD ALERT: If you use an Ipad for your exams, let me know immediately so I can set Respondus to accept your work. Waiting until the day of or after an exam to alert me will not extend time to complete the exam.

Participation: Your participation grade will depend on your activity during the group discussion. I will post discussion prompts for each group discussion day to Blackboard in the

group discussion module. The prompts are links to news articles on topics relating to the section we are studying. You are expected to review the news articles and be prepared to discuss them in class. Your group may decide to assign different topics to individual members to lead discussions on that topic. Still, everyone in the group is expected to read at least the linked article on the topic and participate in the discussion on every topic. Your grade will depend on your participation in the group through my observations and peer reviews for your group members.   I alone determine the quality of your participation.

COVID issues: If the administration moves the university to remote or hybrid attendance, group discussion for the duration of the change will be moved to individual discussion essays posted to Blackboard. The deadline for the essay is the same as the date scheduled for group discussion. You will do this essay individually and not with your group. TurnItIn will be active for the essay submission. Additional instructions will be posted to Blackboard.

Semester Project: There is a **two-part** semester project. The first part is your project proposal, and the second is your final project paper. See Blackboard for specifics about the project proposal and final submission. <u>The Final Paper counts double as it also takes the place of the final exam.</u>

        TurnItIn: This course will use TurnItIn for written assignments. You will submit your proposal and final project through the assignment listed on Blackboard. TurnItIn will automatically review your proposal and the final project. TurnItIn only accepts Word or pdf format. If you do not know how to use TurnItIn, see the tutorials on Blackboard. DO NOT submit your project through TurnItIn.com.

        Extensions for Proposal and Project Submission: I rarely allow extensions of the proposal and final project deadlines. Only extraordinary unforeseeable events will receive extensions.

        FYI: Computers crash—you are responsible for saving a backup copy of your project off your hard drive; thus, this is not an excuse for a late project.   Also, the clock on your computer may not align with the one on Blackboard or TurnItIn. The Blackboard and TurnItIn clocks control submission deadlines. Further, it takes time for uploads to be completed. If they are not completed before the Blackboard or TurnItIn clocks reach the deadline, your submission will be blocked, and you will not receive an extension of time.

Dr. Norton's Spring 2022 Course Schedule for POLS 2306-80 (TR 11-12:15 in Academic 135)

January 18: Introduction

January 20: Textbook: Chapter 1

January 25: Textbook: Chapter 2 Federalism; US Constitution

January 27: Textbook: Chapter 3 Texas Constitution; Junnell-Ratliff Proposed Texas Constitution

February 1: **Group Discussion 1**
Exam 1 opens at end of class Chapters 1-3 through Respondus Lockdown Browser due by beginning of calss Thursday February 3 at 11 am

February 3: Textbook: Chapter 4 Elections and Special Interest Groups

February 8: Continue chapter 4 Elections and Special Interest Groups; start chapter 5 Legislature

February 10: Textbook Chapter 5 Legislative Branch

February 15: Textbook Chapter 5 Legislative Branch

February 17: **Group Discussion 2, elections and Legislative Branch: Exam 2 opens at end of class**

Sunday, February 20: Semester Project Proposal AND Exam 2 Chapter 4 and 5 through Respondus Lockdown Browser due to Blackboard by 1159 pm

February 22: Textbook: Chapter 6

February 24: Textbook Chapter 6

March 1: Textbook: Chapter 6

March 3: **Group Discussion 3, the executive branch; Exam 3 opens at end of class**
Sunday March 6 Exam 3, Chapter 6 through Respondus Lockdown Browser due by 1159 pm

March 8: Textbook: Chapter 7 Budget Finances and Policy

March 10: Textbook: Chapter 7 Budget Finances and Policy

March 15 and 17 No class Spring Break

March 22: Textbook chapter 8 Local Government

March 24 Textbook chapter 8 continued

March 29: **Discussion 4 Budget, policy, and local government; Exam 4 opens at end of class**

Thursday March 31 Exam 4, Chapters **7 and 8, through Respondus Lockdown Browser due by 11 am**

March 31: Textbook chapter 9 Judicial Branch

April 5: Textbook chapter 9 Judicial Branch

April 7: Textbook chapter 9 Judicial Branch

April 12: **Discussion 5 judicial branch; exam 5 opens at end of class**

Thursday April 14 Exam 5, judicial branch chapter 9 through Respondus Lockdown Browser by 11 am

April 14: Textbook: Chapter 10 criminal law

April 19: Textbook: Chapter 10 criminal law

April 21: Textbook chapter 11 civil rights and civl liberties in Texas.

April 26: **Discussion 6, criminal law, civil rights and civil liberties; exam 6 opens at end of class**

April 28: **No class; Exam 6, Chapter 10 criminal law and procedure through Respondus Lockdown Browser due by 1159 pm**

April 28 onwards No class; work on semester project

Sunday, May 8   Final semester project paper due to Blackboard by 1159 pm

PART 3: ASU POLICIES AND ASSISTANCE

General Policies related to this course:
All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:
Angelo State University Student Handbook
Angelo State University Catalog

Course Drop
 To view information about dropping this course or calculating important dates relevant to dropping this course, you can visit http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrars_office/course_drop_provisions.php.

Student Disability Services:
ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.
Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website at www.angelo.edu/ADA. The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is: Ms. Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services 325-942-2047 dallas.swafford@angelo.edu Houston Harte University Center 112

Title IX
Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex. You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:
Online: www.angelo.edu/incident-form
Face to Face: Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

Phone: 325-942-2022
Email: michelle.boone@angelo.edu

As a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171). For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State's policy, please visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

Religious Holidays:

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information. It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Student Conduct Policies:

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The College of Science and Engineering adheres to the Statement of Academic Integrity

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU's Academic Integrity policy in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list.

Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center.

Copyright Policy

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

Incomplete Grades

It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Grade Appeal Process

As stated in the Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.03 Student Grade Grievances), a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged first to discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see Operating Procedure 10.03 at http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14196-op-1003-grade-grievance.

LockDown Browser

LockDown Browser (LDB) is used for secure online testing and can be found on every lab computer on the ASU campus. In addition, it is available for download so students can use it on their personal computers as well.

Downloading LDB

1. Begin by logging into **Blackboard**.
2. Select the **Technology Support** tab.
3. Locate the Lockdown Browser Module (See Figure 1).
4. Select the **Download LockDown Browser** hyperlink.
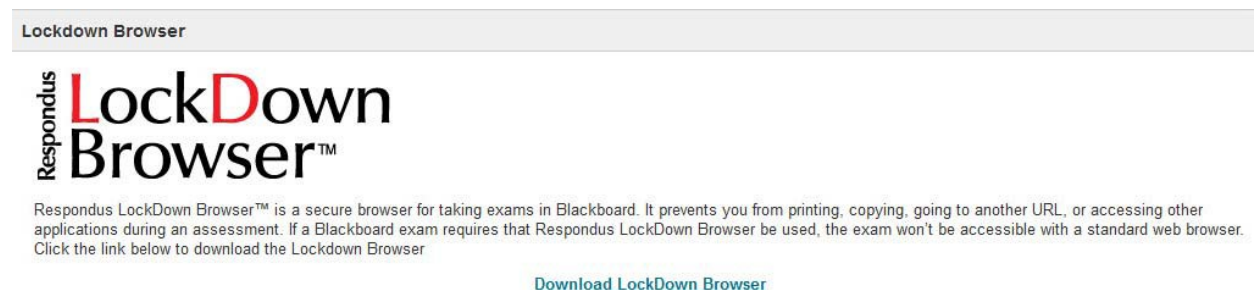5. Follow the instructions on the screen.

Figure 1: Downloading LockDown Browser

Using LDB

Once you have downloaded LDB, an icon in the shape of a padlock will appear on your desktop. If you are using a Mac, look under your applications.

1. Begin using LDB by double-clicking the **LockDown Browser** icon on your desktop to launch this application.
2. Login to **Blackboard** using your RamPort username and password.
3. Select the desired course from the **My Courses** list.
4. Select the test you wish to take from the desired course.
5. When you begin the assessment, **LockDown Browser** will display instructions.
6. Select **Begin** to start the assessment.
7. Your test will launch and you may select an answer for each question.
8. Make sure to save each answer as you go.
9. **Save and Submit** all of your answers once you are done.

Note: If the instructor provided a password to access the exam, a dialog box will appear. Enter the password and select Submit.

Help Center

The **Help Center** provides students with information regarding **Pre-Exam Webcam Check**, **System Network Check**, and **Knowledge Base**. When Lockdown Browser is accessed you are able to access the Help Center. To access the **Help Center**, select the **Help Center Icon** at the top of the page. Upon starting the exam, this will not be available.

- **Pre-exam Webcam Check** confirms that your webcam and microphone work properly. (NOT APPLICABLE TO POLS 2306.D20, NORTON SUMMER II 2018)
- **System Network Check** runs a diagnostic of your computer system and network.
- **Knowledge Base** answers questions to common problems.

Exiting LDB

1. Logout of Blackboard.
2. Exit out of LockDown Browser by selecting the **Red X** in the top right hand corner of your screen.
3. When prompted, select **Yes** to exit.

<u>***NO PASSWORD IS REQUIRED TO TAKE BB TESTS IN THIS CLASS.***</u> If you get a password prompt when trying to take an exam.

Please make sure you are following these steps to access your test:

1. Close out of ALL applications on your computer
2. Launch the LockDown Browser
    a. If you do not have the browser installed, login to Blackboard, then navigate to the Technology Support Tab
    b. Scroll to the bottom and click on Install LockDown Browser
    c. Follow the steps to accept terms and conditions, and finish installing
3. Once you have the LockDown browser open, navigate to https://blackboard.angelo.edu.
4. Login using your credentials, and navigate to the course to begin your exam.

You should not see a password requirement. If you would like further clarification, please contact eLearning at 325-486-6263 or elearning@angelo.edu.