

Professor: Watts Email: dwatts2@angelo.edu Phone: 942- 2262

Ras 220, Office Hours: Tues-Wed: 2-2:30 p.m.; all other office meetings by confirmed appointment only.

Please note, I do not have internet access at home due to ongoing online “harassment” activities, according to the FBI, so responses to emails will be delayed.

-Course Description: This is a survey course on Texas state and local government. As part of ASU’s core Curriculum, it is designed to provide students with the basic knowledge and understanding of fundamental concepts related to the roles of state-level governmental and non-governmental political institutions.

-Student learning objectives (SLOs):

Critical Thinking (CT1): Promote students’ ability to think critically about politics, the roles and authority of government institutions and officials, and the dynamic nature of the Texas political system. Thinking critically means more than simply memorizing information, it is the ability to gather, analyze, and synthesize information that is factual and relevant to a question, issue, or event.

Communication (CS1 & CS2): Students will develop the ability to express their knowledge and understanding of concepts through effective written and oral communication.

Social Responsibility (SR2 &SR3): Gain an understanding of the contexts that shape and influence the national government’s actions and decisions on public policy. The study of the U.S. political system allows for a greater appreciation of civic responsibility and ability to engage others in civil discourse.

Personal Responsibility (PR1): Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to understand and evaluate political choices and outcomes.

-Required Text: Rottinghaus, *Inside Texas Politics, 3rd Edition* (2021, Oxford University Press).

-Angelo State policies: As outlined in ASU’s student handbook, students are responsible for regular and punctual attendance at all scheduled classes. The university reserves the right to deal with individual cases of non-attendance. The handbook also outlines the university’s Academic Honor Code, the parameters of academic integrity, and students’ responsibilities. Decisions on Incompletes will be made after consulting with the Office of Student Affairs.

-Blackboard: This course has a Blackboard site where you can obtain a copy of the syllabus, lecture slides, and your grades. When necessary, the course instructional designer or I will post announcements or send responses to emails regarding assignments or any changes to the course schedule that benefit or may be of interest to the entire class.

-Policies on examinations: Anyone caught cheating will immediately forfeit their exam and receive an automatic “F” for the assignment.

-It is your responsibility to contact me if you miss an exam due to a university-recognized accommodation or illness and schedule a makeup for exams 1 or 2. The makeup exam must be taken within one week of the original exam date and before the next exam. Failure to do so within this time frame will result in an automatic “F” for that exam.

-In the case of an emergency or events that prevent you from completing course assignments within their given timeframes, a formal notification from the Office of Student Affairs will be required.

-Accommodations: Any student who needs accommodations due to a disability, participation in university-related activities, religious observances, family matters, or a difficult life event should contact the Office of Student Affairs as soon as possible so they can assist you with necessary arrangements and notifying your professors. The office is located in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, and additional information can be found on ASU’s website.

-Title IX: The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of sexual misconduct. Faculty members are obligated by law and university policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to Michelle Miller, J.D. (michelle.miller@angelo.edu; 325-942-2173), Director of Title IX Compliance, Mayer Administration Building, Room 210.

Assignments and Exams

-Exams (100 points each): All three exams will follow the fill-in-the-blank, or “matching,” format.

-Exams 1 and 2: Chapters covered are noted in the Course Outline section of the syllabus.

-Again, if you miss the first or second exam, it is your responsibility to speak with me and schedule a makeup exam time within one week of the original exam date.

-Final Exam: The Final Exam is comprehensive and will consist of new material from the chapters listed in Part III of the course outline and select terms from the first and second exams.

The date and times of all final exams is determined by the university. The final exam calendar can be found on the university's website.

-Final Exam: Ras 112, Friday, July 8, 2022

(Section 010): 10:15 am - 12:15 pm

(Section 020): 12:30 - 2:30 pm

-Texas Government In-Class Quizzes (25 points each): Seven quizzes will be given throughout the semester and based on the assigned reading.

-The lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester but all quiz columns and scores will still remain visible on Blackboard. A column labelled as the quiz total column will show the points earned with the lowest quiz score dropped and will be the point total calculated into your final grade.

-Texas Government Research and In-Class Discussion (100 points): This assignment is designed to familiarize students with official, state government sources for information on Texas lawmakers and public policy. A print copy of the worksheet with detailed instructions will be provided in class and reviewed. Five points will be deducted for each day past the designated deadline listed in the course outline (**July 5th**).

-Emailed submissions will not be accepted.

-Extra Credit Quiz: An optional quiz that reviews course material will be given sometime prior to the final exam. It will follow the same format as the previous quizzes and is also worth 25 points. Points earned will be added under the Extra Credit column. This is the one and only extra credit opportunity for the course.

Final grades will follow the University's grading scale:

A: 100-90%; B: 89-80%; C: 79-70%; D: 69-60%; F: 59% or below

Missed deadlines: Decisions regarding missed deadlines will be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Additional Notes: Class Etiquette and Student Conduct: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught plagiarizing or cheating on an assignment will receive an F for that assignment. The Department of Political Science and Philosophy is committed to support the learning of all students. As part of maintaining the decorum of the classroom, students are expected to behave appropriately and in a responsible manner.

Course Outline: It is your responsibility to read the assigned material prior to class. You are also expected to bring your textbook to every class.

-Every class will begin with a discussion of current news events. Students are expected to be prepared to discuss news topics, especially those related to the course.

-As previously stated in the syllabus, I do not have internet access at home due to continuing online "harassment" activities, according to the FBI, so responses to emails will be delayed.

-NOTE: Pay attention to the course outline, assigned chapters are not in numerical order)

Part I: Texas Political System

Week 1: June 6 - 10

- First day of class, review of the syllabus.
- Chapter 1**, The Struggle for Texas
- Chapter 2**, The Texas Constitution
- Chapter 3**, Federalism
- Chapter 14**, Public Policy in Texas
- Lecture wrap-up and review, if necessary

Part II: Texas Political Institutions

Weeks 2 and 3: June 13 - 24

-(M) June 13: Exam 1, covers Chapters 1-4

(Part II lectures will begin on Tuesday, June 14)

- Chapter 7**, The Legislature
- Chapter 8**, Governors of Texas
- Chapter 9**, The Plural Executive and the Bureaucracy
- Chapter 10**, The Texas Judiciary
- Lecture wrap-up and review, if necessary

Part III: Texas Elections and Political Organizations

Week 4: June 27 - July 1 (M) June 27: Last day to drop Summer I classes)

-(M) June 27: Exam 2, covers Chapters 7-10

-(T) June 28, Texas Research worksheet in-class distribution and review

(Part III lectures will begin on Wednesday, June 29)

- Chapter 4**, Voting and Elections
- Chapter 5**, Political Parties
- Chapter 6**, Interest Groups

-(F) July 1: Library day: The Texas Government research assignment is due on July 5th, so **use this time** to complete your work before you leave for the holiday weekend.

I will be in my office (Ras 220) to answer any **in-person** questions about the assignment or course material. No appointment is needed for visits during regularly scheduled class times (10 am-1:45 pm).

Week 5: July 4-8

-(M) July 4: Holiday-University is closed. No class.

-(T) July 5, Texas Government research assignment is due.

-(T-TH) July 5-7, Chapters 4-6: Lecture wrap-up and final exam review; Extra credit quiz

-(F) July 8, FINAL EXAM: Content from Exams 1 and 2; Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

(F) July 8th, 2022 (Ras 112): Section 010: 10:15 am - 12:15 pm

Section 020: 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm