<u>**Introductory Texas Politics**</u>
POLS 2306 – Summer 2025
Syllabus

Katarina Stadelmann, M.S.
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:00am-12:00pm by appointment (via Zoom)
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Canvas:
This online class will be conducted through Canvas. If you experience any problems logging into Canvas or any technical problems with the system you should seek help from Campus Computing. They can be reached via email at itsupport@patriots.uttyler.edu. Please include your full name, student ID number and date of birth in any communications you send to them.

Course Description:
This course offers a survey of contemporary government and politics in the State of Texas. It will examine political development in Texas with special attention to its context, institutions, and the electoral process. Furthermore, this course will emphasize the theoretical and practical understanding of how and why the Texas political system produces the kind of policies it does, and how the system itself is structured.

Content Objectives:
The primary goal is to successfully complete a required course with minimal pain and suffering while gathering useful information. To that end, after successfully completing this course, students should be able to demonstrate:

- To acquaint you with the study of political science, and

- To improve your understanding of the institutions and processes that govern Texas and other states, as well as the localities (such as cities and counties) within them.

- The student will become familiar with the historical antecedents which make up the political culture and regions of Texas.

- The student will learn to characterize the trends in Texas' political history.

- The student will be able to trace the changing political partisan face of Texas from a one-party Democratic state to a state with a strong Republican party.

- The student will become cognizant of the changes facing Texas in ethnic diversity and population growth.

Required Reading and Materials:
<u>Textbook</u>:

The textbook is a free PDF – *Uncovering Texas Politics.* You will also be given book chapters and other materials that will be uploaded onto Canvas. They are a required part of the course and you are responsible for the information presented in them. There is no official textbook for you to purchase.

 Course Structure:
This course will be conducted in three units and there will be one exam over the material in each unit. There is also a comprehensive final exam. All units will be available for a limited period of time, and you may work through them at your own pace so long as you complete all required materials for each unit before the exam for that unit ends. The units will close (i.e. no longer be available) at the end of the exam period for that unit. Check Canvas for due dates.

You are expected to log on each week and complete work in a current module. Waiting until the last minute to do the assignments is not advised. Having a computer issue, internet issue, Canvas issue, or any other issue at the end of the day that assignments due is not an excuse for not completing them, and no additional time will be granted. If you do the work early and an issue presents itself, then there is time for us to work together and resolve it so that you can submit the work by the due date. The university has computer labs for you to use.

Also, as all quizzes, assignments, and exams are available online for some period of time, they cannot be made up if they are not completed by the due date. Remember to check Canvas for due dates.

Online Reading Quizzes: Each reading quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice/true-false questions derived from the text. This will assess how well you are reading the chapters and digesting the information. Reading quizzes will be worth 10 points per quiz and cannot be made up unless there are extenuating circumstances. There is one reading quiz for every chapter covered this semester, and will occur on a weekly to biweekly basis.

Online Exams:
There will be three-unit tests and a final. Each test will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions for a total of 100 points. The final will be cumulative and only include multiple choice questions. If you miss a test, there are no make-up exams given for individual exams. Test count for a total of 400 points. **These exams are taken online in Canvas and no lockdown browser or proctoring software is required.**

Points Breakdown:
Online Quizzes: 80 pts
Exam I: 100 pts
Exam II: 100 pts
Exam III: 100 pts
Final Exam: 100 pts
480 points total

Final Grade Scale:
More than 89.5% of total points available = A
79.5% - 89.4% of pts = B
69.5% – 79.4% of pts = C

59.5% - 69.4% of pts = D
Below 59.5% of total points available = F

Course Schedule: <mark>**Check Canvas for Due Dates**</mark>

UNIT 1

Readings:

- The Getting Started Module
- Module 1: Texas Political Culture and Diversity
- Module 2: Texas in the Federal System and the Texas Constitution
- Module 3: Voting and Elections

Assignments and Exam: check Canvas for specific assignments and due dates – 1st exam

UNIT 2

Readings:
- Module 4: Political Parties
- Module 5: Interest Groups
- Module 6: The Legislature

Assignments and Exam: check Canvas for specific assignments and due dates – 2nd exam

UNIT 3

Readings:
- Module 7: The Executive
- Module 8: The Judiciary

Assignments and Exam: check Canvas for specific assignments and due dates - 3rd exam and Final

Late Assignment Policy
As a general rule, I do not accept late assignments. I never spring any last-minute assignments on you – from the first day of class, you will know what is due and when it is due to me. It is up to you to plan accordingly as you have ample time to complete these assignments. If you do not turn in your assignments on time, it is a zero in the gradebook and I will not grade the

assignment. If you have a documented excuse (death in the family, illness, car accident, etc...), you must inform me of your situation within 2 days of the missed assignment and it is mandatory for you to provide documentation to me in order to be eligible for a make-up. Please note that having to work is not an excused absence. While I am sympathetic and understanding of your work schedule, you have made a choice to enroll in this class and it must be considered a priority. First responders and military personnel will receive exemptions from the work policy in this class on an individual basis.

Syllabus Notice
The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus; however, students will be given ample warning to any possible changes.

Communication Policy
I like to keep open lanes of communication between students and myself. If you need to ask any questions or discuss anything class related, please do not hesitate to email through Canvas. Please include POLS 2306 in the subject line so I know that it is class related. While you may email me through Canvas, please do not leave comments in the assignments themselves. I do not go back and check for those. My preferred method of contact is through Canvas, please try that first.

You are responsible for checking your email daily. I frequently email students individually or as a group – if I send you an email, I assume that you have read it and are informed with the message. It is a pet peeve of mine when students do not check their email – I will not hound you trying to get you to reply to my emails. At most, I will send you two emails and if I do not have a response in a reasonable amount of time then I will assume you have chosen not to reply to me, and I will act accordingly.

Instructor Expectations
Just as I have certain expectations of you, you should have certain expectations of me. I will be available by appointment and if I am unavailable, you will be notified. If you email me, you will receive a response within 48 hours during the business week and business hours. Email responses during late hours and the weekend are not a guarantee, so last-minute questions for assignments may not receive answers if they are sent during those times. As for grading, you will receive feedback on all assignments. Please do not email within a day or two of the assignment submission looking for a graded assignment. If there is a technological issue, please get in touch with the university IT department. I am unable to fix Canvas issues that are system based.

Required Artificial Intelligence Syllabus Language:

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the

guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

AI is not permitted in this course at all. I expect all the work students submit for this course to be their own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.