Introductory Texas Politics

Class Meeting Times
Classes will meet Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00 am to 9:20 am in COB 180

Text
*Government and Politics in the Lone Star State* by Gibson and Robinson – 10th ed. – Pearson Publishing

Important Dates to Remember
- September 10 – Census Date
- October 15 – Midterm Grades
- November 5 - last day to withdraw from class with a “W”
- November 19-24 – Thanksgiving Break
- December 11-15 – Final Exam Week

Course Description
Study of the institutions governing Texas and related policy processes. Includes a focus on the legislative process, the executive branch, and the judicial system. May be taken in fulfillment of statutory requirements for a baccalaureate degree.

This class will focus on local and state political offices, the governing bodies at the local and state level, and the structure of the state legislature, judicial, and executive branches. Considering that this year is a mid-year election year emphasis will be placed on certain political campaigns as well as a special focus on the Governor race. It is hoped that this course will better inform the student about the political process, reasons one should be concerned about politics (local and national), and the manner in which the government functions.

Learning Outcomes:
After successfully completing this course, students should be able to demonstrate:
- familiarity with terminology used to study political science and state and local government
- basic knowledge of the historical evolution of Texas governmental structures
- an understanding of the constitutional, institutional, political and legal processes and structures of the state of Texas
- comprehension of the interrelationships of national and local state governments
- awareness of basic values of Texas political culture
Grading Scale

Exams will be graded on a 100-point scale. Make up exams will only be scheduled for students with a valid and credible excuse and will consist of different questions than the regular exam. Each exam will be worth 100 points. The total points possible will be 300 points.

The grading scale will be the following:
- 270 - 300 points = A
- 240 - 269 points = B
- 210 - 239 points = C
- 180 - 209 points = D
- 179 and below = F

Course Outline

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<tr>
<th>Week of Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>Introduction, Chapter 1, Texas History Background</td>
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<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Chapter 2, Texas Constitution</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Chapter 3 Voting and Elections</td>
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<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>Chapter 4, Political Parties</td>
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<td>Sept 24</td>
<td>Chapter 5, Interest Groups</td>
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<td><strong>First Exam September 29</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>Chapter 6, The Legislature</td>
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<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Chapter 7, The Legislative Process</td>
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<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Chapter 8, The Governor</td>
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<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>Chapter 9, the Bureaucracy</td>
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<td><strong>October 31 - Last Day to Withdraw From Classes</strong></td>
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<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>Chapter 10, The Judiciary</td>
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<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Chapter 11, Law and Due Process</td>
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<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Chapter 11, Law and Due Process</td>
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<td>Nov 19-24</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving Break</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 26</td>
<td>Chapter 12, Taxing and Budgeting</td>
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<td>Chapter 13, Spending and Services</td>
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<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Chapter 14, Local Government</td>
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<td>Dec 11-15</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam Week</strong></td>
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Class Etiquette and Expectations

In my experience most people understand that in college there are expectations that the student should act as an adult in the classroom. Most of the time students conduct themselves with good manners and are greeted with respect from their fellow students as well as the instructor. However, from time to time a student disrupts the classroom with unacceptable behavior. To keep such disturbances to a minimum I will briefly give my expectations of the students in the classroom.
Tardiness is understood; sometimes we simply cannot help being late. If you must enter the class late please do so quietly and do not let tardiness become a habit. **Please turn cell phones and pagers off before entering class. Please don’t talk to other students in class or text message friends! Stay off of your phone during class time!** It is disruptive and disrespectful to the other students in class. **You will be asked to leave class if you cannot stay off of your phone.**

Students are expected to remain polite during classroom discussions. Even during heated debates, you must treat your classmates with respect. For example, you should not make derogatory remarks about your classmates’ ideas. Instead, explain why you think they are wrong, backing up your viewpoint with sound logical analysis and refraining from personal attacks. Students should remain quiet while someone else (including your instructor!) has the floor.

**Class Attendance:**
Experience shows me that students that diligently attend their classes and keep good notes tend to make high grades in their coursework, whereas students that are lax in their attendance and/or do not take lecture notes tend to make poor or failing grades in their classes. Remember this when you come to me wondering why you are failing this course. My first two questions will be are you attending class and are you taking good notes?

**UT Tyler Honor Code**
Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

**Students Rights and Responsibilities**
To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: [http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php)

**Campus Carry**
We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at [http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php)

**UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University**
All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.
Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

**Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies**

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Fall, the Census Date is Sept. 12.) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date (Sept. 12th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

**State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.
Disability/Accessibility Services
In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance
Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester. Revised 05/17

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities
If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement
It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation
Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct
Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another
person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

I. “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:
   • copying from another student’s test paper;
   • using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
   • failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
   • possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
   • using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
   • collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
   • discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
   • divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
   • substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
   • paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, homework solution or computer program;
   • falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
   • taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
   • misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

II. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.

III. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

IV. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.
**UT Tyler Resources for Students**

- UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
- UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)