Instructor Information

E-mail: ocullison@uttyler.edu (best contact method)
Phone: (903) 566-7163
Office: BUS 224
Office Hours: Monday, 1:30 -2:30; Tuesday, 1:00-2:00; Wednesday, 1:30 - 3:30; or by appointment
(please email to schedule an appointment)

I am guaranteed to check email frequently during in-person office hours, though if I am with a student responses to email may be delayed during this time period. For any email sent outside of office hours, you should expect a response within 48 hours (excepting Sundays).

Email policy: per university request, I will only communicate with students via your Patriot email accounts. The university has had several problems reaching students with vital questions or information because they do not check their Patriot email, and they have asked faculty to require that students use their Patriot email accounts. All responses to student email will be sent only to your Patriot email account (even if you send the email from some other account). After September 4th (the census date), email sent from any non-Patriot email account will not be answered.

Required Course Materials

Maxwell, Crain, and Santos
ISBN: 9780495909484

This text is available in print from the campus bookstore or as a NOOKstudy ebook from Barnes & Noble.

Course Description & Objectives

This course offers an introduction to Texas state and local government. It will supply the student with a framework for analyzing the constitutional basis for Texas government, the processes of Texas government as well as the institutions and the policies of Texas government. In addition to understanding the formal structures and processes of government emphasis is also placed on the realities of the political system.

At the conclusion of this class students should:
• be able to identify top elected officials in Texas government and their primary duties
• understand the Texas budget process
• have a basic understanding of the Texas judicial system and the process of electing judges
• have a working knowledge of the legislative process, legislative leaders, the committee system and policy decisions facing state leaders and be familiar with the duties of county and city officials.

This course is meant to be an overview of Texas government with the main purpose of showing students how the process works and the responsibility of citizens to follow politics and become active participants beyond voting.

Blackboard

This class will be conducted through Blackboard. All of your course materials, assignments, and exams will be here. If you experience any problems logging into Blackboard, you should seek help from Campus Computing.
Their office is located in BUS 101, and 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 Structure

This course will be conducted in five units and there will be one exam over the material in each unit (note: there is no comprehensive final exam in this course). 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 begins. The units will close (no longer be available) at the beginning of the exam period for that unit. Exams will be available for an 8 hour period, and once you begin you will have 1 hour to complete the exam. Unit availability is as follows:

**Unit 1: Chapters 1 and 2**
Availability: Aug. 20 to Sept. 4
Exam One: Sept. 4, 2:00-10:00 PM

**Unit 2: Chapters 3, 4, and 5**
Availability: Sept. 5 to Sept. 25
Exam Two: Sept. 28, 2:00-10:00 PM

**Unit 3: Chapters 6, 7, and 8**
Availability: Sept. 26 to Oct. 16
Exam Three: Oct. 16, 2:00-10:00 PM

**Unit 4: Chapters 9, 10, and 11**
Availability: Oct. 17 to Nov. 7
Exam Four: Nov. 7, 2:00-10:00 PM

**Unit 5: Chapters 12, 13, and 14**
Availability: Nov. 8 to Dec. 12
Exam Five: Dec. 12, 2:00-10:00 PM

Grading

Your grade in this class will consist of three components:

• Reading Quizzes (100 points) – There will be a syllabus quiz and one quiz for each learning unit. Your quiz scores will be averaged – no quizzes will be dropped from this average, and it is the average that will count toward your course point total.

• Exercises (100 points) – for each unit there will be two or three assigned exercises to choose from. They may be quizzes, short writing assignments (about one page), or participation exercises. Scores on all exercises will be averaged – no scores will be dropped, and it is the average that will count toward your course point total.

• Exams (200 points) – there will be five exams (one over each unit), each worth 50 points. Your lowest exam grade will be dropped.

Course grades will be assigned as follows:

• A = 400 - 360 points
• B = 359 - 320 points
• C = 319 - 280 points
• D = 279 - 240 points
• F = 239 points or less

Please note that your points will not be converted to percentages and rounded up – final grades will be assigned based solely on your total points accumulated (not your point total divided by 400).

Late & Make-Up Work

As all quizzes and assignments are available online for some period of time, they cannot be made up if they are not completed before the unit closes.

Since exams are available for an 8 hour period, individual exams may not be made up. If a student misses one exam, that exam score (a zero) will be dropped from their course point total. A second missed exam will stand as a zero. No make-up exams will be offered.
Academic Dishonesty

The UT Tyler community regards cheating as an extremely serious matter and deals severely with those who violate the standards of academic integrity.

Examples of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to):
• Copying from another person’s test paper
• During a test, possession of materials not authorized by the person administering the test
• Discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination or the divulging of examination contents to another when an instructor has allowed the exam to be kept by the student
• Working with others in taking tests or preparing academic assignments when not authorized by the course instructor
• Obtaining by any means another person’s work and submitting that work as one’s own. This included the downloading of academic papers or the purchase of papers written by others.

If a student is suspected of academic dishonesty, the classroom instructor may ask the student to meet with him or her to discuss the incident. A student may admit to allegations of academic dishonesty, waive the right to a hearing and accept penalties imposed by the instructor. The student may also deny all allegations and ask to see the Dean of Student Affairs. An accused student may accept the decision of the Dean of Student Affairs or ask for a hearing before an impartial hearing officer appointed by the university. Witnesses may be called and evidence presented. The hearing officer will consider all evidence and make a decision. The decision of the hearing officer may be appealed to the President by either the student or the Dean of Student Affairs. For a discussion of possible penalties, please see the Guide to Student Conduct and Discipline.

University Policies

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://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php

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. 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 is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. 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 Services**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu

**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.

**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.

**Important Dates**

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<td>Census Date</td>
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<td>Final Day to Drop/Withdraw</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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