POSC 2332 American and Texas Government II
Summer II 2015

Dr. Jon R. Taylor
Meeting Time: 10:20am – 12:30pm M-TH Malloy 113
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Office Hours: 7:00am – 10:00am and 12:30pm – 5:00pm M – TH
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Required Text:


Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the institutional elements of the American and Texas political systems: legislative, executive, and judicial. These elements are examined at the national, state and local levels with a special emphasis on their roles in the development of public policy.

Exams and Research Requirements:

There will be three exams – two mid-terms and a final exam – which will cover the approaches and ideas covered in class. The following is the grading breakdown for the course:

- Class participation: 10%
- Examination 1: 25%
- Examination 2: 25%
- Final Examination: 40%

Students are expected to prepare thoroughly for each class session, to submit written materials on time, and to participate actively and constructively in class. Attendance is critical.

Class Rules:

- Arriving late is strongly discouraged
- Reading course assignments is expected
- Showing respect to other students and the professor is expected
- Make up work will be limited to special circumstances (and with prior notification only)
- Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will result in a failing grade.
Attendance and Miscellaneous:

I rarely take roll in class. That does not mean I fail to notice the lack of your presence in the classroom. On the contrary. With such intimate classes as offered at the University of St. Thomas, your absence is quite noticeable. I like to have you in class. I value your input. But I make the presumption that since you are in college that you are a reasonably responsible adult. It bothers me very little if you have found someone or something better than attending my class. Of course, it bothers me very little to flunk you as result of your finding that someone/something better. If you don't show up for class and/or blow-off or do extraordinarily poor on the homework assignments, exams, and the article review, you may be looking at crime or a job in the fast food industry as a succinct alternative to the stresses of higher education.

Let’s face it: Technology breaks. Servers go down. Transfers time out. Files become corrupt. The list goes on and on. These are not considered emergencies. They are part of the normal production process. An issue you may have with technology is no excuse for late work. You need to protect yourself by managing your time and backing up your work.

Academic Integrity:

"It would have been better if he had never been born"– Mark 14:21.

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and reported to the University's Academic Misconduct Committee.

As stated in the Academic Misconduct Code for the University of St. Thomas, academic misconduct includes: (a) cheating (using an authorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement; (b) assisting others in any such act; or (c) attempting to engage in such acts.

Plagiarism is using the work or another person and claiming it as your own. The most common types of plagiarism include:

- Using a paper or portion of a paper prepared by someone else;
- Quoting someone else’s language or words without proper quotation or citation; and
- Paraphrasing someone else’s ideas, framework, or insights without giving credit to the original author in a citation.

Academic misconduct in any form is unacceptable and suspected violations will be pursued aggressively.
Students with Disabilities:

Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact me after class or during office hours. Additionally, students will need to contact Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. This office can be reached at (713) 525-2169 or 6953. If you have a documented disability that will impact your work in this class, please contact me to discuss your needs. Additionally, you will need to register with the Counseling and Disability Services Office in Crooker Center. This office can be reached at (713) 525-2169 or 6953.

Course Schedule (Readings will be assigned on a weekly basis in class):

- Week 1: Introduction and Course Overview
- Week 2: The Presidency; Texas Governor; Congress; Texas State Legislature
  
  1st Exam

- Week 3: The Bureaucracy: National, State, and Local; The Federal Judiciary/Legal System; Texas Judiciary/Legal System
  
  2nd Exam

- Week 4: Civil Liberties; Civil Rights; Economic Policy; Foreign Policy; Wrap-up

Final Exam: August 6, 2015