Course Description and Focus:

An examination of the institutional elements of the American and Texas political systems: legislative, executive, and judicial. The courses will also exam the links between politics and personal liberty, civil rights, the economy, social welfare, and national security. These elements are examined at the national, state and local levels with a special emphasis on their roles in the development of public policy.

This course is designed to help students gain a better understanding of the American political system and how it is changing in the modern world; and, the American system as compared to other institutions and processes elsewhere. Students will also acquire an understanding of how American political institutions and behaviors shape congressional and presidential perspectives on global politics, in particular in our relations in regions deemed of critical importance by the federal government. In essence, what happens elsewhere in the world influences (and is influenced by) American politics.

American and Texas Government II is meant to supply the tools for critical reasoning and analysis of the American political system of government, and the knowledge and understanding needed in order to become a responsible citizen in terms of political participation.

Required Text:

For the American content of the course:
ISBN# 9780134081557

For the Texas content of the course:
ONLINE FREE TEXT (Bookmark this link!):
http://texaspolitics.utexas.edu/

Additional readings will be handed out during the course. Power point presentations and handouts will be posted to Blackboard.
BRING YOUR SYLLABUS WITH YOU TO EACH CLASS!

Grading*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination 2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination 3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes &amp; In-class / film assignments</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Journal / Service-Learning Reflective Paper**</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation (5 points per class not including exam days - 3 for showing up + up to 2 for participating)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL POSSIBLE** 600

*I reserve the right to add additional work if students come to class unprepared.
Instructor also has the right to change or make amendments to the syllabus at any time.

** Students have the option of doing the article journal or the service-learning hours and reflection paper- decision must be made by September 1st, 2015

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examinations and quizzes will include any variety of the following: multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer (fill in the blank), and/or some essay. Exams will be in class and closed book; however, students may use their own notes from class.

Students are expected to prepare thoroughly for each class session, to submit written materials on time, and to participate actively and constructively in class. It is NOT permitted to do assignments for another course during class time. **Attendance is critical.**

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 register with the Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. Their office can be reached at (713) 525-6953 or 2169. If you have a letter of accommodation (LOA) that will impact your work in this class, please contact me to discuss your needs.
Class Policies:

- Arriving late is strongly discouraged and a participation point will be deducted for the class period.

- Failure to attend class and participate in class discussion will be reflected in your class participation points.

- Reading course assignments is expected.

- Showing respect to other students and the professor is expected. This type of course can present some pretty heated opinions and debates; however, this classroom is an open forum and a civic dialogue can be accomplished with the practice of respect and open-mindedness.

- Emailed assignments will not be accepted. You must hand in a hard copy.

- **Electronic devices are not permitted during class. No laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.**
  If you have a disability requiring the use of an electronic device as an accommodation, please give me your letter from the Counseling and Disability Services Center immediately.

- Cell phones must be turned to vibrate, silent or off. If you are caught texting or using your phone during class, you will be asked to leave class for that day and a **ZERO will be given for class participation for that day.**

- Make up exams –
  - If you have prior knowledge that you will miss the exam, you must contact me BEFORE the exam day to schedule the make-up test.
  - If there is an emergency on the day of the exam, you should contact me as soon as possible. If documentation is required to show proof of the emergency, you must present this documentation within one week of the exam unless other arrangements are made with the professor.
  - **ALL make-up exams must be taken within one week of the exam date unless serious circumstances apply.**
  - Make up tests must be scheduled (with my approval) and taken in the Testing Center in Crocker Center. Once you set an appointment time, you must contact me with the date and time the exam is scheduled.

- Quizzes and Films / In-class work –
  - Some quizzes are announced, others are not. Films will be shown in class with an assignment due at the beginning of the next class. If you miss a quiz, film, or an in-class assignment, you must complete an absence assignment for the missed points. If you are an athlete and miss quizzes, films, or in-class assignments because of games, see me ASAP for alternate assignments. Let me know immediately of an upcoming game which conflicts with our course schedule.
Late assignment penalties and extensions

- All assignments are due at the start of class on the date indicated on the syllabus.
- After I have collected them in class, a late penalty of 5% will be assessed on the assignment.
- After class, a late penalty of 10% will be assessed.
- An additional late penalty of 10% will be assessed each following day that it is late until a 50% penalty is reached.
- Assignments will NOT be accepted for credit or grade one week after the assignment is due.
- Computer problems, failure to save your work, and/or printing issues are not excuses for late papers.
- If there is a conflict with sports, extracurricular activities, or another approved absence or issue, it is the student’s responsibility to turn in the assignment early or make other arrangements with me BEFORE the due date.
- No assignment will be accepted after the final exam.
- In the rare instance when students are having difficulty managing their academic workloads, it is possible to ask for an extension on an assignment before the due date. An extension penalty of 3% will be assessed on all extended work. If a student fails to turn in an assignment by the new due date, the regular late penalties will apply. Extensions are for extraordinary circumstances.

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will be punished to the fullest extent allowable by the Academic Committee at the University of St. Thomas. ALL instances of suspected academic dishonesty MUST be reported to the University. Students have the right to appeal. (Refer to the UST Student Handbook). Any work in question exemplifying academic dishonesty will receive a ZERO grade.

A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will not be given in this course except in the most extraordinary of circumstances.

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1 This section is used with permission by Dr. Lisa Mundey, UST History Department. August 2013.
Absence Assignments

If a student has missed a quiz, in-class assignment or film, then an additional reading will be assigned and a 1 ½ – 2 page summary must be turned in at the beginning of the next class.

Articles are located on Blackboard in the Absence Assignments folder. Please see me for the article relating to the subject you missed.

The following is required:

1. Student’s name and date must be in the top left hand corner and single spaced. No other information is to be included
2. Times New Roman font in 12pt. (NOT Arial or Calibri)
3. 1 in. margins on all sides with left alignment
4. Double space all text lines of the summary
5. Summary must be written in paragraph form – bullet points, numbered points, etc. are not allowed.
6. No contractions (don’t, can’t, shouldn’t, weren’t, etc.) are allowed.
7. Within the intro to the summary include the author and title.
8. What is the topic of the article and/or the statement or position the author is trying to make?
9. Briefly describe the author’s points to support his/her statement or position. Is he/she trying to target a particular audience or type or reader?
10. Do you agree or disagree with the article? Why or why not?
# SCHEDULE OF READINGS, LECTURES, QUIZZES AND EXAMS

*(Subject to change)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Aug. 25</td>
<td>Introduction to course / Article Journal and Service-Learning Project Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Aug. 27</td>
<td>Ch. 10 Congress; film <em>The Legislative Branch</em> (Films on Demand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Sept. 1</td>
<td>**** Congress continued****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BEGIN YOUR ARTICLE JOURNAL THIS WEEK!!!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Sept. 3</td>
<td>Ch. 11 The President; film <em>The Executive Branch</em> (Films on Demand)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Sept. 8</td>
<td>**** The President continued****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Sept. 10</td>
<td>Ch. 12 The Bureaucracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Sept. 15</td>
<td>**** The Bureaucracy continued****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Sept. 17</td>
<td>Ch. 13 Courts; film <em>The Judicial Branch</em> (Films on Demand)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Sept. 22</td>
<td>**** The Courts continued****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Sept. 24</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Sept. 29</td>
<td>Texas Politics - 03: The Legislature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Oct. 1</td>
<td>Texas Politics – 04: The Legislative Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Oct. 6</td>
<td>Texas Politics – 05: The Executive Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Oct. 8</td>
<td>Texas Politics – 06: The Governor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Oct. 13</td>
<td>FALL BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Oct. 15</td>
<td>Texas Politics – 07: The Justice System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Oct. 20</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Oct. 22</td>
<td>Ch. 14 Politics &amp; Personal Liberty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Oct. 27</td>
<td>**** Politics &amp; Personal Liberty continued****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Oct. 29</td>
<td>Ch. 15 Politics &amp; Civil Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Nov. 3</td>
<td>**** Politics &amp; Civil Rights continued****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Nov. 5</td>
<td>Film <em>The Strange Demise of Jim Crow</em> (Films on Demand)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues. Nov. 10</td>
<td>Film assignment due; Ch. 16 Politics &amp; The Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Nov. 12</td>
<td>Ch. 17 Politics &amp; Social Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Nov. 17</td>
<td>**** Politics &amp; Social Welfare continued ****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Nov. 19</td>
<td>Ch. 18 Politics and National Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Nov. 24</td>
<td>**** Politics &amp; National Security continued ****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Possible guest speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. Nov. 26</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Dec. 1</td>
<td>Article Journal / Service-Learning Reflective Paper &amp; Log Due; TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs. Dec. 3</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues. Dec. 10</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM (Exam #3) 8:00am – 10:30am; <em>Return graded article journals and service-learning reflective papers</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARTICLE JOURNAL
Due at the beginning of class December 1, 2015

Guidelines:

- 2 articles per week (13 weeks) from an acceptable source (see list below) and must relate to the topics covered during this course. See your reading list for chapter headings.
- Begin your assignment the week of September 1st to make sure you stay on track!
- Summarize the article and the author’s point of view. Include your opinion at the end.
- Completed journal must be in a 3-brad soft folder or report cover with plastic spine (see picture); journals MUST be in some type of folder and not loose or stapled. Journals will NOT be accepted otherwise
- Include a title page with your name, course name, instructor’s name, and course term
- Times New Roman 12pt font (NOT Arial or Calibri)
- Single spaced
- Paginated
- ½ to 1 inch margins on all sides with left alignment
- Follow the example and grading rubric to receive full credit

Examples of other sources are:

- periodicals such as CQ Weekly, The Brookings Review and Cato
- magazines such as The New Republic, The Progressive, The National Review, Time, Newsweek, The Economist, Texas Monthly, etc.
- newspapers (online or print) such as the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, the Christian Science Monitor, etc.
- Other online sources:
  - NPR http://www.npr.org
  - Christian Science Monitor http://www.csmonitor.com/
  - Real Clear Politics http://www.realclearpolitics.com/
  - Politico http://www.politico.com/
  - The Huffington Post http://www.huffingtonpost.com/politics/
  - CNN http://www.cnn.com/POLITICS/
  - Reuters http://www.reuters.com/politics
  - The Texas Tribune http://www.texastribune.org
  - Bloomberg http://www.bloomberg.com/
  - Salon http://www.salon.com/
  - Washington Examiner http://washingtonexaminer.com/
  - The Guardian http://www.theguardian.com/us
  - Al Jazeera America http://america.aljazeera.com/topics/topic/categories/us.html
  - The Houston Chronicle http://www.chron.com/
  - Pew Research Center http://www.pewresearch.org
# ARTICLE JOURNAL RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Graded</th>
<th>Total points possible</th>
<th>Your points received</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>26 Articles (2 per wk x 13 wks)</strong> – 6-8 sentences including summary and opinion; grammar, spelling, and punctuation; article date, title, and author source</td>
<td>130 (5 points per article)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Folder</strong> – folder must be included; no loose and/or unbound pages</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title Page</strong> – Name, course name, instructor’s name, course term</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format</strong> – ½” – 1” margins on all sides; left alignment; Times New Roman font; 12pt; single spaced; paginated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Late Penalty</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>150</td>
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</table>

Additional Comments: __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
If you chose this option in place of the article journal, you will be expected to spend at least **15 hours** using your in-class knowledge and volunteering for an organization. Requirements for the Service-Learning Project include the following:

1. Choose a partner agency of interest to you. The agency must relate to one of the topics being covered in this course. (For example: working on a campaign, working with an interest group, volunteering for the City of Houston, Volunteer Houston, etc.)

2. Contact the agency you have chosen. Once I approve your choice, arrange a visit with the person who will be coordinating volunteer activity for this project.

3. Take the contract to the coordinator at the agency. Have him/her complete his/her portion. You, the volunteer coordinator, and I will need to sign the contract before you begin your volunteer activity.

4. Once your service has begun, you **MUST** arrive on time and be reliable. You will also need to be prepared to perform the duties listed on the contract. See me if you have any difficulties.

5. You must complete the log form with the days and times you are performing your service and any service activities.

6. After you have completed your service activities, you will need to write a reflective paper with the following guidelines:
   - 6-8 pages in length **STAPLED**
   - Times New Roman 12pt font (NOT Arial or Calibri)
   - Double spaced
   - 1 inch margins on all sides with left alignment
   - Paginated
   - Written in APA or MLA format if citing
   - Include a title page
   - Discuss the organization / campaign, your experiences there, what you learned about yourself and the community, how it is relevant to the course material, and what you liked most and least about the experience.
   - Include examples of any handouts, pamphlets, lesson plans, work completed, etc. at agency/organization
   - Follow all guidelines on rubric
VOLUNTEER IDEAS FOR SERVICE-LEARNING OPTION

Note: These are only ideas; look for non-profit agencies and special interest groups if not volunteering with the city or state government or with a political campaign / party.
You may also want to look up your city council member or congressional member for opportunities.
See more for more ideas.

Volunteer Houston (They have a Service-Learning tab on the homepage) – your choice MUST relate to the course
- http://volunteerhouston.org/
- Various citywide opportunities

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- Terri Burke 713-942-8146 info@aclutx.org
- U.S. Constitutional Rights

GANO/CARECEN - Central American Refugee Center
- Nelson Reyes 713-665-1284 pbnelsonreyes@gmail.com
- Job, Citizenship Education, Housing, Immigration/Naturalization, Legal

Houston Media Source
- Ariana Montelongo de Valdivia 713-524-7700 ext. 12 arianam@hmstv.org
- Arts, Media, Music, Community Issues, Political Affairs, Youth Issues

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- Dave Anderson 281-590-2222 dave.anderson@madd.org
- Drunk Driving, Underage Drinking, Victim Services, Advocacy & Education

Sewa Houston
- Kriti Dogra 281-796-3029 houston@sewahouston.org
- Low-income families, Community, Civic engagement, Humanity

Harris County Offices
- http://www.co.harris.tx.us/ Then choose the office you are interested in

HoustonService.org
- http://www.houstonservice.org/ to fill out an application and search opportunities in Houston

Harris County Democratic Party
- http://www.harrisdemocrats.com/

Harris County Republican Party
- http://www.harriscountygop.com/

Harris County Libertarian Party