U.S. & Texas Government II: POLS 2302-91L, Summer 2017
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Political Science Department
* Online Class: To access the course site, log into Blackboard through myUTRGV using your university credential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor: Dr. Mi-son Kim</th>
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<td>Virtual Office Hours: MWF 10:00-11:00AM</td>
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Course Description
This course introduces you to theories about and the practice of American/Texas government. Throughout the semester, we will examine the following questions. Why is our government set up the way it is? How was our government established by our Constitution and the debates of the founding era? How have they evolved over time? How does the American mass public fit into the political process of American government? In doing so, we will explore the foundation and structure of our national and state government, policymaking processes, and public behavior in American and Texas politics.

The course is divided into three sections, three of which will be devoted to the main textbook for the course. The first focuses on the context and political actors in U.S. and Texas politics. The second section introduces the formal institutions of national and state government, such as U.S. Congress, Texas state legislature, U.S. presidency and governor and courts. The third section is on public policy adopted at the national and Texas state level. Students will write a short paper on “The Establishment in Texas Politics: the Primitive Years, 1938-1957”. The book discusses the formation of Texas’s political culture during the early 20th century and its lingering effect on the state’s current politics.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes for the Course
1) To understand the evolution of political, social, and economic development of the U.S. in general and Texas in particular
2) To understand policymaking processes in federal, state, and local governments and their consequences
3) To be able to analyze current political issues based on the theories and principles learned in the course
4) To develop appropriate reading/analytic/writing skills critical for understanding politics and government

How to Succeed in this Class
1) Succeeding in this course will take a significant investment of your time. Be prepared to keep up with reading assignments and review materials periodically to make sure you get main points.
2) Participation in online discussion is strongly encouraged. The course will encompass weekly online discussions, and your participation is necessary to make these discussions/projects profitable.
3) Please turn in assignments including quizzes on time. Late homework assignments will be marked down and could hamper your progress in the class.
4) The key to succeeding in this class is to complete the reading assignments before the day for which they are assigned, turn in assignments on time, and complete quizzes and other activities on time.

Communication is the KEY
Email is the official method of communication for this course. Students can expect to receive emails from the instructor, Dr. Mi-son Kim introducing assigned course work and the topics to be presented on the PowerPoint slides uploaded to Blackboard. Students are expected to check their university email account several times a week. Student questions emailed to Dr. Kim will be answered within one-two working days.

Concerning Email/Blackboard:
1) The subject line of each email must state your full name and section number.
2) Use your university email account (UTRGV) when sending emails to me. I will not respond to those emails sent via outside accounts.
3) It is a good idea to save all correspondence between you and me.
4) Please contact me through email instead of Blackboard “message”.
5) Check the Blackboard page at least once a day for updates. You are responsible for keeping up-to-date with the posts.

The course structure mentioned above assumes students have basic computer skills and know how to use the various programs and hardware used during this session (e.g. Microsoft Word). For information and computer support geared toward online learning, access:
- Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology (COLTT) Help Desk – Edinburg (956) 665-5327 / Brownsville (956) 882-6792 / portal – utrgv.edu/coltthelp
- Blackboard Course Technology page – http://www.utrgv.edu/online/getting-support/course-technology/index.htm
- Student Support Services page – http://www.utrgv.edu/online/getting-support/academic-support/index.htm

Course Requirements
All quizzes and assignments must be taken by the due date listed on the schedule below or they will not be counted. This course requires students to complete the content of the course as it is assigned. However, students have the flexibility to complete the content any time during the week it is assigned.

A. Exams (60%): You will have three (3) exams in this course, each of which counts for 20% of your course grade. These exams are not cumulative, each covering the only topics learned in each period. **There are NO make-up exams.**
- Exam dates are: July 31 Mon, August 13 Sun, and August 18, Fri.

B. Blackboard Quizzes (10%): Five (5) times during the semester, you will be asked to complete a short quiz on recent material via Blackboard. The quiz format will be five multiple-choice or/and T/F items. To ensure that you are prepared for quizzes, I recommend that you review what you have learned after every lecture. You will find that devoting fifteen minutes or so, either later that day or during the next, to looking back over the points that were covered will be very helpful to keeping up with material. **There are NO make-up quizzes.**
• **Quiz dates are:** July 23 Sun, July 30 Sun, August 6 Sun, August 13 Sun, and August 17 Thu.

C. **Short Essay (20%)**: You will write a short analytic essay over Chapters 1 & 2 of “The Establishment in Texas Politics: the Primitive Years, 1938-1957”. You will be asked to answer several questions based on your understanding of the chapters. In answering the questions, you should apply the concepts and theories discussed in class, develop your own arguments, and discuss your views critically. Each answer should be about 2-3 paragraphs. Detailed instructions will be provided later.

• **Paper Submission Deadline: August 11, Fri 11:59PM**

D. **Weekly Discussion Assignments (10%)**: Every week, you will be asked to complete a discussion assignment. The assignments correspond with the topics covered during the week. Your write-up is approximately 1-2 paragraphs, or less than one single-spaced page in length. These assignments will form the basis of the class discussion and be posted on the course website each week. Please do not email me your discussion assignments. The aim of these assignments is to link the theory and practice of politics, by learning about the real (and constantly changing) world of politics. You are responsible for reading the posts of other students, and commenting on TWO of them each week in at least 3 sentences.

The earlier you complete these discussion posts the better it will be for everyone. Please do not wait until the last minute to complete your posts, or your classmates will not be able to respond to them. When you respond to other posts please try to have constructive feedback/comments, but remember to keep them respectful. Simply saying “I agree with you”, “I like your idea”, or “I don’t agree” does not count as a comment. You should discuss why you agree or disagree with the person you comment on.

E. **Grading Rubric**: 100-90 A; 89-80 B; 79-70 C; 69-60 D; 59- F

The final grade for the course will be determined on the basis of your point totals for all assignments over the course of the summer II session. Please email the instructor at any time during the session if you have questions about your grade or progress in the class.

**Required Textbooks**


**Optional Reading**
Class Topics and Readings
Readings are to be completed by the due date assigned to each topic. For each topic you should 1) read the assigned chapters in the textbook, 2) view the PowerPoint slides and 3) do the weekly discussion and post the response to the class discussion list. Discussion assignments will be posted on the website weekly.

Part I: Political Context and Actors

Topic 1 (Due July 16, Sun)
Introduction to U.S. & Texas Politics; Historical and Philosophical Foundation of American Politics
Barbour and Wright (2013) Chapter 3 “Politics of the American Founding”

Weekly Discussion Assignment 1 (Due July 16, Sun 11:59PM)
Weekly Discussion Assignment 1 will be available between July 13 and July 16. Read instructions carefully posted on Blackboard to complete the assignment properly. Remember, you should post your own posting and then comment on TWO other postings by the deadline.

Topic 2 (Due July 19, Wed)
Federalism and the U.S. Constitution
Barbour and Wright (2013) Chapter 4 “Federalism and the U.S. Constitution”

Topic 3 (Due July 23, Sun)
Texas Political Culture and Constitution
Check out Blackboard for possible required readings (i.e. book excerpts, news articles, etc.) assigned to this topic.

Weekly Discussion Assignment 2 (Due July 23, Sun 11:59PM)
Weekly Discussion Assignment 2 will be available between July 17 and July 23. Read instructions carefully posted on Blackboard to complete the assignment properly. Remember, you should post your own posting and then comment on TWO other postings by the deadline.

Blackboard Quiz 1 (Due July 23, Sun 11:59PM)
It covers Topic 1, 2, and 3.
BQ 1 will be made available between July 17 and July 23. Choose the best time for you to complete the quiz within the window.

Part II: Formal Institutions of Federal and Texas Governments

Topic 4 (Due July 26, Wed)
U.S. Congress
Barbour and Wright (2013) Chapter 7 “Congress”

Topic 5 (Due July 30, Sun)
Texas Legislature
Check out Blackboard for possible required readings (i.e. book excerpts, news articles, etc.) assigned to this topic.

**Weekly Discussion Assignment 3 (Due July 30, Sun 11:59PM)**
Weekly Discussion Assignment 3 will be available between July 24 and July 30. Read instructions carefully posted on Blackboard to complete the assignment properly. Remember, you should post your own posting and then comment on TWO other postings by the deadline.

**Blackboard Quiz 2 (Due July 30, Sun 11:59PM)**
It covers Topic 4 and 5.
BQ 2 will be made available between July 24 and July 30. Choose the best time for you to complete the quiz within the window.

**Exam 1 Due July 31, Mon 11:59PM**
Exam 1 will be made available between July 30 8:00AM and July 31 11:59PM. You MUST complete your exam by July 31 11:59PM.

**Topic 6 (Due August 3, Thu)**
The Executive Branch—The U.S. Presidency & Bureaucracy
Barbour and Wright (2013) Chapter 8 “The Presidency”

**Topic 7 (Due August 6, Sun)**
Texas Governors & Bureaucracy
Check out Blackboard for possible required readings (i.e. book excerpts, news articles, etc.) assigned to this topic.

**Weekly Discussion Assignment 4 (Due August 6, Sun 11:59PM)**
Weekly Discussion Assignment 4 will be available between July 31 and August 6. Read instructions carefully posted on Blackboard to complete the assignment properly. Remember, you should post your own posting and then comment on TWO other postings by the deadline.

**Blackboard Quiz 3 (Due August 6, Sun 11:59PM)**
It covers Topic 6 and 7.
BQ 3 will be made available between July 31 and August 6. Choose the best time for you to complete the quiz within the window.

**Topic 8 (Due August 8, Tue)**
The U.S. Judiciary
Barbour and Wright (2013) Chapter 10 “The American Legal System and the Courts”

**Topic 9 (Due August 10, Thu)**
The Judiciary in Texas
Check out Blackboard for possible required readings (i.e. book excerpts, news articles, etc.) assigned to this topic.

Short Essay Due August 11, Fri 11:59PM
Turn in your essay to Blackboard. DO NOT send your essay to my email!

Weekly Discussion Assignment 5 (Due August 13, Sun 11:59PM)
Weekly Discussion Assignment 5 will be available between August 7 and August 13. Read instructions carefully posted on Blackboard to complete the assignment properly. Remember, you should post your own posting and then comment on TWO other postings by the deadline.

Blackboard Quiz 4 (Due August 13, Sun 11:59PM)
It covers Topic 8 and 9.
BQ 4 will be made available between August 7 and August 11. Choose the best time for you to complete the quiz within the window.

Exam 2 Due August 13 Sun 11:59PM
Exam 2 will be made available between August 12 8:00AM and August 13 11:59PM. You MUST complete your exam by August 13 11:59PM.

Part III: Public Policy

Topic 10 (Due August 15, Tue)
Public Policy in the U.S.
Check out Blackboard for possible required readings (i.e. book excerpts, news articles, etc.) assigned to this topic.

Topic 11 (Due August 16, Wed)
Public Policy in Texas
Check out Blackboard for possible required readings (i.e. book excerpts, news articles, etc.) assigned to this topic.

Blackboard Quiz 5 (Due August 17, Thu 11:59PM)
It covers Topic 10 and 11.
BQ 5 will be made available between August 14 and August 17. Choose the best time for you to complete the quiz within the window.

Exam 3 Due August 18, Fri 11:59PM
Exam 3 will be made available between August 17 6:00PM and August 18 11:59PM. You MUST complete your exam by August 18 11:59PM.
**UTRGV Policy Statements**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**
If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

**MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD:**
Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available:

**SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY:**
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; 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. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE:**
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

**COURSE DROPS:**
According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.