

Central Texas College
Ft. Riley, KS
GOVT 2306 Texas Government
Independent Study

Instructor: Kathy Lillich

Contact: email: kathy.mackenzie@ctcd.edu

cell: 785-477-4290

Due to reception issues and scheduling, I will very often not be able to answer my cell phone right away. I do, however, check my e-mail constantly and can respond in a timely manner to your messages. Therefore, I highly encourage you to use e-mail as your primary method of communication if you have any questions or concerns you need me to address.

*Due to limited enrollment in this course this semester, the class will be taught as an independent study class. This means that we will not be meeting on a regular basis every week. Instead, I have prepared a weekly schedule for you to follow, to include due dates for all assignments. You will access CTC's Blackboard for our course, which will contain pre-recorded lectures and Power Points, and will have the option of teleconferencing with me through Skype if you so choose. If you need to meet with me face-to-face, we can schedule a time that will work best for all.

I. Introduction

Texas Government is an introductory, survey course on various Texas government topics. This course includes study of the origin and development of the Texas constitution, structure and powers of state and

local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas.

II. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
- Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
- Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
- Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
- Analyze the state and local election process.
- Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
- Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

III. Required Text

Texas Politics, 12th Edition, Newell, Prindle, Riddlesperger, Cengage Publishing , 2014.

IV. Course Requirements

Reading assignments will be given for each class period, and I will expect each student to complete the reading assignment, and email me with any questions or concerns.

For each date given, the chapter or chapters to be covered that day are noted. Exams and review periods are likewise listed.

August 12th: Class introduction, syllabus, basic class overview.

August 14th: Chapter 1: The Context of Texas Politics

August 19th: Chapter 15: Federalism

August 21st: Chapter 2: The Constitutional Setting

August 26th: Chapter 6: The Texas Legislature

August 28th: Chapter 7: The Governor

September 2nd: Chapter 9: The Judiciary; Chapter 10: The Substance of Justice

September 4th: Chapter 8: The Administrative State

September 9th: Mid-term exam will be emailed out, and must be returned **NO LATER THAN** midnight.

September 11th: Chapter 3: Interest Groups

September 16th: Chapter 4: Political Parties

September 18th: Chapter 5: Voting, Campaigns, and Elections

September 23rd: Chapter 12: The State Economy and the Financing of State Government

September 25th: Chapter 11: Local Government

September 30th: Chapter 13: Public Policy – People; Chapter 14: Public Policy – Resources

October 2nd: Final exam will be emailed out, and must be returned **NO LATER THAN** midnight, last date paper will be accepted

Paper: One 3-5 page written paper will be completed, with the content and topics to be discussed during class.

Class Performance: Because we will not be meeting regularly, students are expected to read all of the assigned material, contact the instructor with any questions or concerns, and complete and turn in all exams and paper by the given due dates. Late work will not be accepted.

V. Grades

Grades are based on the following scale:

90 - 100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D

0 - 59 = F

Semester grades will be computed by the following percentages:

Written paper: 25%

Mid-term exam: 25%

Final Exam: 40%

Class Participation: 10%

*Class participation will include regular involvement in Blackboard discussions.

VI. Withdrawal and Incomplete Policies

A. Withdrawal from Course: It is the student's responsibility to officially drop a class if circumstances prevent attendance. Any student who desires to, or must, officially withdraw from a course after the first scheduled class

meeting must file an Application for Withdrawal or an Application for Refund. The withdrawal form must be signed by the student. Application for Withdrawal will be accepted at any time prior to Friday of the 6th week of classes.

Students who officially withdraw will be awarded the grade of "W", provided his/her attendance and academic performance are satisfactory at the time of official withdrawal. Students must file a withdrawal application with the college before they may be considered for withdrawal.

A student may not withdraw from a class for which the instructor has previously issued the student a grade of "F" or "FN" for nonattendance.

B. Administrative Withdrawal: An administrative withdrawal may be initiated when the student fails to meet College attendance requirements. The instructor will assign the appropriate grade on the Administrative Withdrawal Form for submission to the registrar.

C. Incomplete Grade: The College catalog states, "An incomplete grade may be given in those cases where the student has completed the majority of the course work but, because of personal illness, death in the immediate family, or military orders, the student is unable to complete the requirements for a course..." Prior approval from the instructor is required before the grade of "I" is recorded. A student who fails to show for the final exam will receive a zero for the final and an "F" for the course.

D. Instructor Discretion: The instructor reserves the right of final decision in course requirements.

E. Civility: Individuals are expected to be cognizant of what a constructive educational experience is and respectful of those participating in a learning

environment. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.