

Course Syllabus

Course Information

Course Number/Section	Govt 2301-005
Course Title	The Constitution and Political Behavior, U.S. & TX
Term	Fall 2007
Days & Times	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10am–11:15

Professor Contact Information

Professor	Carole J. Wilson
Office Phone	972.883.4957
Email Address	cjwilson@utdallas.edu
Office Location	GR 3.230
Office Hours	Mondays 2:00-4:00 or by appointment

Teaching Assistant Contact Information

Teaching Assistant	
Office Phone	
Email Address	
Office Location	
Office Hours	

I encourage all students to contact me or the TA in person, by phone, email, or WebCT if you have any problems. If you use WebCT mail, it will not automatically forward replies to your email inbox unless you set your preferences to do so. If you contact me or the TA by email, we will only respond to email originating from your UTD account (per University regulations). If you are unable to meet during my office hours, please email me to setup an alternative meeting time.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the basics of American and Texas politics. The first section will focus on the founding era of the United States and Texas. Then, we will investigate political culture, political participation, public opinion, campaigning, party dynamics, the role of interest groups and media in politics today. It is my hope that through this course students will be able to engage in current events and politics such that they understand the role that citizens play in a democratic society.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Provide examples and apply important theoretical and scholarly approaches to explaining state and national institutional behavior, citizen involvement, and interaction between citizens and institutions of government.
2. Analyze and appreciate historical trends in the development of government institutions and their constitutional foundations.
3. Identify, describe, and analyze various mechanisms of citizen political involvement.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts:

- (TXP) Jillson, Cal. 2007. *Texas Politics: Governing the Lone Star State*. 1st ed. McGraw Hill. [ISBN 9780073387314].
- (WTP) Patterson, Thomas E. 2007. *We the People: A Concise Introduction to American Politics*. 7th ed. McGraw Hill. [ISBN 9780073403861].

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Readings: Students are responsible for reading assignments each class. Assignments are to be read before the date beside which they are listed.

Date	Topic	Readings	Important Dates
Aug 16	Introduction		
Aug 21-23	American & Texas Political Culture	WTP-1 & TXP-1	
Aug 27	Founding & Constitution I	WTP-2	
Aug 30	No Class		Aug 31–last day to drop without a “W”
Sept 4	Founding & Constitution II	TXP-2	
Sept 6	Federalism I	WTP-3	
Sept 11	Exam 1		Exam 1
Sept 13	Federalism II		
Sept 18-20	Civil Liberties	WTP-4	Sept 20–Paper 1 Due
Sept 25-Oct 2	Civil Rights	WTP-5	Oct 3–midterm grades available online
Oct 4-11	Public Opinion	WTP-6	Oct 11–last day to withdraw
Oct 16	Exam 2		Exam 2
Oct 18-25	Voting	WTP-7 & TXP-3	
Oct 30-Nov 6	Parties and Elections	WTP-8 & TXP-5	
Nov 8	Interest Groups	WTP-9 & TXP-4	Nov 13–Paper 2 Due
Nov 13	Media	WTP-10	
Nov 15	Catch-up & Review		
Nov 20	Exam 3		Exam 3
Nov 22	No Class –Thanksgiving Holiday		
Nov 29 [8am]	Final Exam	8:00 am	Dec 7–grades available online

Exams

- There will be three midterm exams and one optional cumulative final in this class. Exams will cover material from the readings and from the lectures. Each of the exams will constitute 25% of your exam grade.
- Exams are scheduled well in advance so that you can plan around these dates. If you miss one of the midterm exams, you must take the final (it is no longer optional). The optional final will also serve as the make-up exam if you must miss a midterm for a university related event. The missed 25% of your grade will be allocated over the other exams so that each exam is worth 33.3% of your exam grade. If you miss more than one exam, you will receive a zero for the additional missed exam. The only exceptions to this will be cases of *extreme* emergency where there is substantial documentation. Medical appointments, viruses, colds, headaches, flat tires, childcare issues, weddings, etc. do not qualify as *extreme* emergencies.
- If you have taken all three mid-terms, and are satisfied with your course grade, do not take the final. If, however, you are not satisfied with your grade, you may take the cumulative final. Remember, the final can either raise or lower your course grade. The final is scheduled for Thursday, November 29th at 8am.
- Once you sit for any exam, you will receive a grade for that exam.
- Bring your comet card for identification to each exam.

Papers

- There will be two short optional papers assigned in this class. These papers will not require outside research. Each paper will constitute 10% of your final grade.
- Paper topics will be given one week before the due dates.
- Instructions for writing and turning in the paper assignments are provided at the end of this syllabus.
- Academic dishonesty policies will apply to all work in this course including optional papers. You should read the University policy regarding plagiarism. If you have any questions about plagiarism or concerns about your paper, discuss them with me before you turn in the paper.

Grading Policy

Grades in this course are based on the exams and any papers you choose to write. The formula used to calculate your final grade will be:

$$\text{Final Grade} = \frac{\sum \text{of exam grades}}{\# \text{ of exams taken}} * (1 - \frac{\# \text{ of papers written}}{10}) + \frac{\sum \text{of paper grades}}{\# \text{ of papers written}} * \frac{\# \text{ of papers written}}{10}$$

If you take all four exams, and write both papers, your final grade would be:

$$\text{Final Grade} = \frac{\sum \text{of exam grades}}{4} * 0.80 + \frac{\sum \text{of paper grades}}{2} * 0.20$$

If you take only three exams, and write no papers, your final grade would be:

$$\text{Final Grade} = \frac{\sum \text{of exam grades}}{3}$$

The most assignments you can receive credit for is 4 exams and 2 papers. The minimum necessary to complete the course is 3 exams.

Grading Scale

100=A+	87-89=B+	77-79=C+	67-69=D+	
93-99=A	83-86=B	73-76=C	63-66=D	Below 60=F
90-92=A-	80-82=B-	70-72=C-	60-62=D-	

Course Policies

Make-up exams: Exams are scheduled well in advance so that you can plan around these dates. If you miss one of the midterm exams, you must take the final (it is no longer optional). The optional final will also serve as the make-up exam if you must miss a midterm for a university related event. The missed 25% of your grade will be allocated over the other exams so that each exam is worth 33.3% of your exam grade. If you miss more than one exam, you will receive a zero for the additional missed exam. The only exceptions to this will be cases of *extreme* emergency where there is substantial documentation. Medical appointments, viruses, colds, headaches, flat tires, childcare issues, weddings, etc. do not qualify as *extreme* emergencies.

Extra Credit: There is no extra credit available in this course.

Late Work: Assignments turned in late will not be accepted.

Class Attendance: There is no attendance policy for this course. However, if students expect to do well in the course, regular attendance is necessary. Under no circumstances will I provide notes for students missing class.

Classroom Citizenship: Because participation is important, I want the classroom to be a place where students are comfortable expressing opinions and discussing material. I insist that students are polite in all fora.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Field Trip Policies / Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, A to Z Guide, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's Handbook of Operating Procedures. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, col-

lusion, the 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.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on

Student Services and Activities, of the university's Handbook of Operating Procedures.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)
disabilityservice@utdallas.edu

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated. The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment. If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee. These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

Paper Instructions:

You will write an essay of 900–1100 words that answers the assigned question. Your essay will provide a thesis in the opening paragraph that states your argument. Subsequent paragraphs will support your thesis. The paper will be well written and grammatically correct. Papers should be double spaced and in 12pt font. Please use one of the following fonts: Arial, Courier, Garamond, or Times New Roman.

You will submit your papers electronically, by 10am on the due date in the syllabus, to <http://www.turnitin.com>. Allow yourself extra time for submission of your paper in case you encounter “technical difficulties”. You also need to hand in a paper copy (stapled) to the TA on the due date (by class time).

Prior to submitting the paper, you will register at turnitin.com for this course. The class ID is **1939521** and the enrollment password is **don't_cheat**. Your paper will include (1) your name and (2) the word count at the top of the first page.

If you have used other people’s words and or ideas, you must cite this. If you are unsure of proper citation format, please consult one of the many style guides available in the library or on the web.

If you need help using turnitin.com, click on the “Training” button on the homepage.

Some of the questions I will ask myself when grading your essay:

- Can the conclusion of this paper be convincingly drawn from the thesis and the argument made in the body of the paper?
- Does the introduction of this paper give you a clear idea of the argument to follow?
- Does each paragraph of this paper logically progress from the former ones?
- How smoothly does this paper integrate examples into its own argument?
- Does it clearly illustrate connections between the evidence it cites and the ideas they support, or does it merely assume them?
- Are there any general grammatical or mechanical problems with the essay?
- Does the writer have any stylistic peculiarities (for example, a tendency to overuse certain words, passive constructions, or excessively lengthy sentences) that would need to be fixed?
- Could the readability, clarity, or style of this paper be improved?

The academic dishonesty policies will apply to all work in this course including optional papers. You should read the University policy regarding plagiarism. If you have any questions about plagiarism or concerns about your paper, discuss them with me before you turn in the paper.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.