

GOVERNMENT 2306.003
STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Spring 2020; HH 2.402
MWF 9am – 9:50am

Dr. Travis Hadley

Office: GR 3.526

Office Hours: MWF 11am-12pm or by appt.

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I will respond to emails within 24 hours. Emails **must be from your UTD email address. Be sure to indicate **course and section number** in the subject column of your email and clearly identify yourself in the message. Emails should be professional, using proper grammar and salutations.*

TEACHING ASSISTANT(S):

Marcus Sianan

Office: GR 3.314

Office Hours: MW 11:30am-12:30pm; 2:30pm-3:30pm

Email: Marcus.Sianan@UTDallas.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will introduce you to the fundamental aspects of Texas state and local government. First, though, we consider the *purpose* of government in general and of American democracy in particular. This requires a consideration of human nature: are humans by nature peaceful or warlike? Do they require laws? Why? What is the purpose of government? And is democracy the only viable form of government? If so, why? And how should it function?

Second, we will relate these questions to our experience of political life in Texas. Liberalism and federalism, the relationship of the individual to government, and the relations of the different levels of government, will be considered to see how state and local institutions are still highly relevant to our everyday lives in America.

Third, we look at the major institutions of Texas government, including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Key similarities as well as important differences make Texas a model of America, yet also very much a distinct state.

And finally, to further understand how these institutions function, we will examine how public policy is formed, how finance affects what can and will be done, paying special attention to important policy issues such as education, welfare, and healthcare, policy areas that affect every Texan and every American.

UTD'S CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION & INFORMATION:

GOVT 2306 - State and Local Government (3 semester credit hours). Survey of state and local government and politics with special reference to the constitution and politics of Texas.

- Core Curriculum Requirement that also fulfills a Major Requirement. Semester credit hours are counted in the Core Curriculum (070 Government / Political Science)
- Prerequisite(s): None.

<https://catalog.utdallas.edu/current/undergraduate/curriculum/core-curriculum>

TEXTS:

1) READER (REQUIRED): *Readings in State and Local Government*. (Miller, Banks and Jennifer Holmes). Kendall Hunt Publishing Company. ISBN: 9781524961251 (print); 9781524969400 (eBook)

*Rent: \$35-60; Buy: \$65-85

Direct access for purchase from publisher: <http://bit.ly/2ONyQdG> (\$40 eBook, \$80 print)

2) TEXTBOOK (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED): *Governing Texas*. (Anthony Champagne, Edward J. Harpham, and Jason P. Casellas). 3rd Edition. W. W. Norton Publishing. ISBN: 978393283679

*Rent: \$23-48; Buy: \$70-90

Access on Amazon: <https://amzn.to/2MIRtsh> (\$47 eBook, \$23 print)

ELEARNING:

We will be using ELEARNING for: a copy of the Syllabus, PowerPoint lectures, Reader Assignments, Supplementary Readings, record of grades, Study Guides for Exams, and Announcements. Be sure to login to ELEARNING this week and familiarize yourself with its basic features.

CURRENT EVENTS:

To best understand the concepts in this course, keeping up with current events is not only beneficial, but integral. We will inevitably be touching upon current events to apply what we are studying to what is actually happening in Texas and American politics. It is in your interest to sign up for an online newspaper (such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*) or a hard copy subscription. *Dallas Morning News*, *Austin American-Statesman*, *Houston Chronicle* are among the top Texas newspapers, and useful for following current events pertinent to Texas.

****Current events discussed in class are used as material for BONUS QUESTIONS on exams. I will post articles on ELEARNING of the current events I would like you to be aware of.***

GRADING:

Your COURSE GRADE will be calculated as follows:

Reader Assignments	<i>Weekly</i>	25%
Exam #1	<i>M. Feb. 17th</i>	25%
Exam #2	<i>M. Mar. 30th</i>	25%
Exam #3	<i>W. Apr. 29th</i>	25%
Final Exam (<i>Optional</i>)	<i>As per UTD</i>	

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES:

M. Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

M. Mar. 18 – F. Mar. 20: Spring Break

R. Mar. 26 – Last Day to Withdraw from a Class (WL)

University standard grading scale:

A+ (97%+), A (94-96%), A- (90-93%), B+ (87-89%), B (84-86%), B- (80-83%), C+ (77-79), C (74-76%), C- (70-73%), D+ (67-69%), D (64-66%), D- (60-63%), F (<60%)

<https://catalog.utdallas.edu/2018/undergraduate/policies/academic#grading-scale>

READER ASSIGNMENTS: There will be *eight* Reader assignments. Reader assignments must be completed *electronically* on the course ELEARNING page (<https://elearning.utdallas.edu>). You are responsible for reading the appropriate chapter and completing the accompanying exercises. Assignments will be available at least *one week prior* to their due date; they must be submitted by 11:59pm on the due date specified in the CLASS SCHEDULE (below).

**eLearning can sometimes be slow or unresponsive. Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments. Technical difficulties are your responsibility.*

**You must SUBMIT the attempt. If you do not, it will not calculate a grade and any questions you did respond to will not be counted.*

**Late assignments will not be accepted and no extensions will be granted.*

EXAMS: The three **Exams** will contain approximately 50 multiple-choice questions. Each exam will cover one-third of the course. A Study Guide will be administered *two weeks* before each exam. This Guide will contain a list of key terms and topics that will be covered on the exam.

**Material from PowerPoint, lectures, additional readings, and current events is all fair game for Exams.*

You may review your graded exam within *one week* of grades being posted on ELEARNING. Exams will not be available after this time, i.e. *not* at the end of the semester.

There will also be an *optional and cumulative Final Exam* that will allow you to replace your lowest exam grade on one of the previous Exams. Additionally, the Final Exam is also a make-up exam. If you miss an exam and do *not* have an excused absence, you may take the Final Exam.

Any other **make-up exam** will be given *only* in extreme circumstances or with a UTD excused absence, with 48-hour prior notice, and documentation approved by me. Having a cold or sleeping through your alarm doesn't count.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

- *You* are responsible for your education. Our class sessions are like business meetings: You must arrive on time, take adequate notes, submit assignments when they are due, and prepare for all exams. You are also responsible for being aware of the information in this syllabus and the information covered in class.
- I will *not* reveal grades by phone or email, as per FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) policy. Official grades are distributed by UTD at the end of semester.
- Do *not* ask me to change your grades. Your grade is calculated based in the above stated elements of the course. I cannot change it arbitrarily. Forgot an assignment? Missed an exam? Skipped too many classes? These actions are yours, not mine.
- I permit drinks (coffee, tea, water) in class, but food and tobacco are *not* permitted.

- There will be **no** extra credit assignments.
- This syllabus is **not** a contract. Although unlikely, I may make minor changes over the course of the semester if necessary. Any such changes will be announced in class.
- If you are having difficulties, please see me **immediately**. Early difficulties in the course tend to lead to further problems later. I am available during my scheduled office hours and will also do my best to make myself available by appointment if you cannot meet during those times.

TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

- Laptops are permitted, **if** they are properly used. Unfortunately, there is always the temptation to “multitask,” that is, seeing what’s happening on social media. This misuse inevitably creates distractions for you and **for others**. Additionally, numerous studies have shown laptops as **less effective** for both short, and long term, memorization of material than taking notes by hand. Really!

****If laptops are misused and distract other students, I will disallow their use in class.***
- All phones must be turned off and **stowed away** for the duration of each class period. No text messaging or checking calls. Use of phones will result in a warning. Continued use will result in a student being asked to leave class. This policy also applies to headphones, ear buds, etc.

****If you don’t want to hear the lecture, don’t show up.***
- I do **not** allow my lectures to be recorded, photographed, or videotaped. This protects the privacy and free speech of everyone in class. PowerPoint slides will be available on the course ELEARNING page. These slides are outlines of the lectures and I reserve the right to make changes or additions. Therefore, it is in your best interest to attend class sessions, take notes, and **hear what is being discussed**.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The following link details all key UTD policies, including: confidential information, student conduct, academic integrity, email, grievances, accommodations for disabilities and religious observance, along with student resources.

<https://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

CLASS SCHEDULE

Text = Governing Texas

Reader = Readings in State and Local Government

WEEK 1: LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA & TEXAS

M. Jan. 13 – F. Jan. 17: Syllabus and Course Introduction; Introduction to Politics

***Read:** Syllabus; Federalist #1 (ELEARNING)

WEEK 2: POLITICAL CULTURE IN AMERICA & TEXAS

*****M. Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Class)*****

W. Jan. 22 – F. Jan. 24

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 1

WEEK 3: CONSTITUTIONALISM AND TEXAS CONSTITUTION

M. Jan. 27 – M. Feb. 3

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 2; Federalist #10 & 51 (ELEARNING)

WEEK 4: FEDERALISM

W. Feb. 5 – M. Feb. 10

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 3; *Reader* Chapters 1 & 2

Reader Assignment #1 Due (M. Feb. 10)

WEEK 5: LOCAL GOVERNMENT

W. Feb. 12 – F. Feb. 14

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 10; *Reader* Chapter 10

Reader Assignment #2 Due (M. Feb. 17)

*****MONDAY, FEB. 17 – EXAM #1*****

WEEKS 6-7: TEXAS LEGISLATURE

W. Feb. 19 – F. Feb. 28

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 7; *Reader* Chapter 7

Reader Assignment #3 Due (M. Mar. 2)

WEEK 8: TEXAS EXECUTIVE

M. Mar. 2 – F. Mar. 6

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 8; *Reader* Chapter 8; Federalist #70 (ELEARNING)

Reader Assignment #4 Due (M. Mar. 9)

WEEKS 9-10: TEXAS JUDICIARY

M. Mar. 9 – F. Mar. 13

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 9; *Reader* Chapter 9; Federalist #78 (ELEARNING)
Reader Assignment #5 Due (M. Mar. 23)

*****M. Mar. 18 – F. Mar. 20: Spring Break (No Classes)*****

M. Mar. 23 – F. Mar. 27 (cont'd)

***Read:** As above

*****MONDAY, MAR. 30 – EXAM #2*****

WEEK 11-12: ELECTIONS AND PARTICIPATION

W. Apr. 1 – M. Apr. 13

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 5; *Reader* Chapter 3
Reader Assignment #6 Due (M. Apr. 13)

WEEK 13: POLITICAL PARTIES

W. Apr. 15 – F. Apr. 17

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 4; *Reader* Chapter 5
Reader Assignment #7 Due (M. Apr. 20)

WEEKS 14-15: PUBLIC POLICY AND FINANCE

M. Apr. 20 – M. Apr. 27

***Read:** *Text* Chapter 12, 11; *Reader* Chapter 11
Reader Assignment #8 Due (M. Apr. 27)

*****WEDNESDAY, APR. 29 – EXAM #3*****

*****FINAL EXAM (OPTIONAL) – WEDNESDAY, MAY 6TH: 8AM (TENTATIVE)*****

- As per UTD: “Spring 2020 final exams will be available for viewing in Orion by January 29, 2020.”