I try to review and grade all newly posted material at least once a day. Also, you can expect me to respond to your e-mails normally within 24-48 hours. Be aware that while this is my general and intended practice, it is subject to the changes and chances of life.

PLEASE RETAIN THIS SYLLABUS AS A REFERENCE FOR REQUIREMENTS AND SCHEDULING THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER.
ALL CELL PHONES SHOULD BE OFF OR IN A SILENT MODE DURING CLASS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

American Government
This is a Texas Common Course Number. This is a DCCCD Core Curriculum Course.
Prerequisite: The following must be met: (1) DREA 0093 or English as a Second Language (ESOL) 0044 or have met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Reading Standard AND (2) Developmental Writing in 0093, or English as a Second Language (ESOL) 0054 or have met the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Writing Standard.
Course Description: This course is an introduction to the study of political science. Topics include the origin and development of constitutional democracy (United States and Texas), federalism and intergovernmental relations, local governmental relations, local government, parties, politics, and political behavior. (To ensure transferability, students should plan to take both Government 2301 and 2302 within the DCCCD.) (3 Lec.)

REQUIRED READING MATERIAL
CORE CURRICULUM INTELLECTUAL COMPETENCIES FOR GOVT 2301

**Reading** – the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials – books, documents, and articles above 12th grade level.

**Writing** – the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience above 12th grade level.

**Speaking** – ability to communicate orally in clear, coherent, and persuasive language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience above 12th grade level.

**Listening** – analyze and interpret various forms of spoken communication, possess sufficient literacy skills of writing, reading – above 12th grade level.

**Critical thinking** – think and analyze at a critical level.

**Computer Literacy** – understand our technological society; use computer-based technology in communication, solving problems, acquiring information.

EXEMPLARY EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR GOVT 2301

To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.

To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the area under study.

To comprehend the origins and evolution of U.S. and Texas political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitutions of the U.S. and Texas, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.

To understand the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.

To analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.

To recognize and assume one’s responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.

To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GOVT 2301

Describe the basic character of political culture in the United States and Texas

Describe the basic structure of the US and Texas Constitutions.

Propose alternative solutions to constitutional problems.

Compare and contrast different systems of government.

Describe elements of the political process at the state and national levels.

Evaluate the claims and arguments made by political leaders.

Use political concepts to examine real-world events.
CALENDAR

Note: Refer to e-Campus Govt. 2302-2002 Course Menu for details on each Unit and Supplemental Materials

UNIT I NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Mon. July 9       Introduction; Chapter 1 The Political Landscape
Tues. July 10     Chapter 2 The Constitution
                   Select/Sign-up for Movie for Film Assessment Project
                   Select/Sign-up for Research/Class Presentation Topic
Wed. July 11     Chapter 3 Federalism; Exam Review
Thurs. July 12    First Exam (in class 1st hour)  Bring BLUE Scantron Form S23357-BC;
                   Research Groups meet (in class 2nd hour); Attendance Certification Day

Mon. July 16      Group Presentation: “Issues in Federalism” – see pages 5 and 14 for details

UNIT II POLITICAL PROCESS

Tues. July 17     Chapter 10 Public Opinion and News Media
Wed. July 18      Chapter 10 Cont’d.; Film Assessment Movie (sample for project)
Thurs. July 19    Chapter 11 Political Parties and Interest Groups

Mon. July 23      Group Presentations: “National Issues for Political Parties” – see pages 5 and 14 for details
Tues. July 24     Chapter 12 Voting, Elections and Campaigns
Wed. July 25      Chapter 12 Cont’d. ; Exam Review
Thurs. July 26    Second Exam (in class 1st Hour) - bring BLUE Scantron; Film Assessment Project Workshop (in class 2nd Hour)
UNIT III  TEXAS GOVERNMENT

Mon.    July 30    Chapter 15 The Context of Texas Politics and Government

Tues.  July 31    Chapter 16 Texas Constitution

Wed.  Aug. 1    Chapter 17 Local Governments and Politics in Texas


   Political Film Evaluation Project Due

   Last day to withdraw with a “W”

   Extra Credit Due

UNIT IV  TEXAS POLITICAL PROCESS

Mon.  Aug. 6    Chapter 21 Political Parties, Interest Groups, Elections and Campaigns in Texas

Tues.  Aug. 7    Chapter 21 Cont’d.

Wed.  Aug. 8    Chapter 21 Cont’d.; Exam Review

Thurs.  Aug. 9    Final Exam (in class) – bring BLUE Scantron.

Final grades will be turned in immediately after the exam.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATION

Students are expected to attend regularly all classes in which they are enrolled. Attendance may be used for Extra Credit. The instructor reserves the right to require attendance if a guest speaker has been invited to class. If you have a problem, I hope that you will discuss it with me.
Grading and Testing Procedures

Your performance will be evaluated on the following basis:

A. Two exams—each one will count as 20% of your final grade.
B. Group Research and Class Presentation. Choose only one topic. This portion of the grade will count as 20% of your final grade:

Each participant will write a 4-6 page paper and participate in a group class presentation on a subject related to

**Issues in Federalism- Monday July 16**

**National Issues for Political Parties- Thursday July 19**

**Texas State and Local Government Issues - Tuesday July 31**

See pages ___ for more details. Provide the MLA citation for all outside sources. All references are to be documented within the body of the assignment and on a Works Cited page. Note cards are not required. A brief handout or visuals may enhance the presentation.

All students who have chosen the same topic comprise a panel to lead class discussion. You will be graded by your individual research and panel participation. Please sign up by Wednesday July 11 so that groups can be formed and members can decide how to divide the research. I will tell you who has chosen the same topic so that you can contact one another to form a group.

C. **Formal Course Assessment** – Political Film Evaluation Project- 20% of your final grade

This project is mandatory in order to pass the class. Deadline to submit your work is Thursday August 2. Details of this project are covered on pages _____.

**Introduction:**

The major project for this course is to view one film that is of personal interest from the list provided below. The films have been screened by the instructor and have been found to be of considerable value as it pertains to the content of a GOVT 2301 course. The final work product is to be a high quality report using the specific guidelines provided for the project. The films listed can be obtained at your local video store or in some cases at your local library. I suggest that you carefully examine the requirements for this activity prior to selecting a film. Then as you watch the film, create a detailed set of notes that you can refer to as you prepare your paper. Again, examine your notes and carefully consider the project guidelines. Spend some time developing your ideas before typing up a report. In general, plan to spend about 10 hours
on this project. That includes the time needed to view the film (possibly twice), write the report and edit the final copy. The final work product is to have a minimum of one page annotating the politics involved in the plot of the film and a minimum of two pages analyzing the film using each of the questions/prompts provided for this activity. **The minimum writing requirement for this project is three full pages in your own words (this does not include the cover page, extensive quotes and the opinion page).** Failure to meet these minimum requirements will result in the report being marked incomplete, thus receiving a zero.

**Grade Value:** The grading scale is based on a maximum value of 100 points. The entire project will be graded using the Film Evaluation Rubric.

**Submission:** The Assignment is to be submitted to the appropriate online dropbox on e-campus prior to the final deadline. Be sure all parts of the project are submitted together in one file (cover page, annotation, analysis, opinion section and works cited).

**LIST OF APPROVED FILMS:**


- **Lions for Lambs (R):** Three parallel storylines, from around the world, share a common bond and a powerful message. One takes place in Afghanistan, one at a California University, and the other in the US Congress. One of the central questions posed asks if politics is relevant. United Artists, 2007.

- **V for Vendetta (R):** A shadowy figure known only as "V" uses terrorist tactics to fight for freedoms against a totalitarian government. Warner Home Video, 2005.

- **Bowling for Columbine (R):** Filmmaker Michael Moore explores the roots of America’s predilection for gun violence and seeks meaning for the right to bear arms. Alliance Atlantis Communications, 2002.

- **The Insider (R):** A research chemist comes under personal and professional attack when he decides to appear in a "60 Minutes" expose on Big Tobacco. Blue Lion Entertainment, 1999.

- **The Siege (R):** A look at how various government entities respond to a series of terrorist attack in New York City and several Constitutional issues. 20th Century Fox, 1998.
LIST OF APPROVED FILMS CONTINUED:

- **Bullworth (R):** A Congressman has a nervous breakdown and decides to tell the public the truth about politics. Twentieth Century Fox, 1998.

- **Primary Colors (R):** Jack Stanton is running for President. The election is seen through the eyes of Henry Burton who is the grandson of the county's most celebrated Civil Rights leader. Along the way Stanton must deal with a sex scandal. Universal, 1998.

- **Wag the Dog (R):** The media spin doctors show how influential they have become in this satirical look at modern politics. New Line Cinema, 1997.

- **The Distinguished Gentleman (R):** A con man uses the likeness of his name to get elected to the US Congress. Once in public office, he must decide between his own interests and those of his constituents. Hollywood Pictures, 1992.

- **All the President's Men (PG):** A film that tells the story of the infamous investigation of the break-in at the Watergate Hotel, which would eventually lead to President Nixon's resignation. Warner Brothers, 1976.

- **Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (NR):** Classic Jimmy Stewart movie shows a naive businessman who takes a courageous stand as a Senator. Columbia,

**Guidelines for the Film Report:**

**Page 1 – The Cover page**

1. Follow all of the formatting guidelines for this course. In this case, place the title of the project, your name, course and section number, instructor’s name, current semester and word count on the cover page.
2. Use the full MLA citation for each film as the title of each report. Once you do this, it will not be necessary to cite the film on your works cited page. See this link for the specific set of rules (using MLA) and an example of what to do when citing films: http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/mla.html

**Page 2 – Starting on a new page, under the heading “Annotation” address item #3 (using one full page only):**

3. Provide a high quality annotation of the film using the following criteria:
a. The annotation must be in your own words, using the language of a political science student. Do not submit something like the film abstract found online or on the back of the DVD (a summary). The purpose of the annotation is to demonstrate your ability to identify the political ideas being conveyed in the plot of the film. In other words, what are the political points being made and how did they evolve during the plot of the film?
b. Someone reading your annotation should get a general feel about the political issues being engaged in the film without having to see it. Writing a good annotation is challenging, this is very different from a "book report" or summary type activity. You may want to review the film more than once before you begin writing. You are to use your own judgment, no one is permitted to use outside sources for this aspect of the project.
c. Do not express your feelings, reactions or personal views in the summary. That is the purpose of the opinion page, a separate requirement within this project. Be sure to keep your opinions separate from your report (stay objective).
d. The annotation for each film report must be 1 full page in length. If too short, it doesn't provide enough information; if too long, you are probably trying to put in all the facts or details, which is not the purpose of annotating.

Page 3 and beyond – Starting on a new page, under the heading “Analysis” address items #4-8 (using a minimum of two full pages in your own words and a maximum of 4 pages for this section.

4. Clearly identify how the film engages four (4) different course topics covered this semester. You are expected to make four (4) specific references using different scenes from the selected film.

5. Indicate whether the film provided sufficient evidence or facts to support the main idea(s). There is always a little truth in fiction. Give specific examples to support your answers. You will need to cite historical or current events to address this prompt. List all outside sources on a works cited page.

6. Explain whether or not the content was biased or objective (films use bias and objectivity intentionally to convey an idea). Provide at least 2 specific examples from the film to support your analysis.

7. Provide the writer's / director's / author's qualifications on the subject matter. Who you investigate depends on the source of the film. If it is based on a book, you would research the author. If you find the qualifications are in another subject area, be sure to mention what you found and where you found it. List your sources on a works cited page.
8. Identify at least 2 things you learned from the film about the world of politics that were not specifically addressed in the formal course readings, lectures or videos.

Starting on a new page, under the heading “Opinion” address item #9:

9. The purpose of the opinion section is to express your affective thoughts separate from your objective thoughts. In other words, simply state your personal opinion of the film. Think of your audience, try to rate it in terms that would appeal to your fellow students. Would they find it useful or interesting? This is where you get to play the role of a film critic. The opinion page should be no more than one paragraph on a separate page.

Finally – Proof and Edit

10. Proofread to ensure the final product is grammatically correct and logically structured. It is your responsibility to find someone (friend, fellow student, English teacher, English tutor, relative, neighbor, etc.) to go over your rough copy and make corrections before your final copy is submitted. I do not expect perfection, but I do expect college level performance. Thus, your writing should demonstrate what you have learned in class through your written analysis. Suggestion: sometimes it's a good idea to read your final copy out loud to yourself to hear if it makes sense.

Project Checklist (do not turn in your report until you answer YES to each question below):

- Have you read, re-read and carefully followed the requirements for the project? Have all the format requirements been met?
- Did you write an concise political annotation of the film in your own words using one full page?
- Have you explained the connection of the film to 4 different course concepts using 4 different scenes from the film?
- Did you indicate whether the film provided sufficient facts based on historical / current events to substantiate the main idea(s)? Have you included a works cited page for these references?
- Did you indicate whether the film was biased or objective? Did you explain and give at least 2 examples?
Project Checklist (Continued)

- Have you provided background information on the writer / director / author? Have you included a works cited page for these references?
- Did you identify and discuss two concepts you learned from the film or program that were not specifically addressed in the course material?
- Is the report a minimum of 3 full pages for the annotation and the analysis (excluding the cover page, the opinion page, the works cited page and any cited text)?
- Does your personal opinion appear on a separate page? Is it written for the appropriate audience?
- Have you done everything possible to ensure the report is grammatically correct? Have you asked someone to proofread your draft before preparing the final copy (preferably a tutor from a campus writing lab)?
- Is the final product the best work you are capable of doing? If not, then keep working on it ahead of the deadline. If it is your best effort, then I expect that all project guidelines are followed and that you have met college level writing standards. Take the time to earn the grade that you want!

D. Final Exam – 20% of your final grade. The Final Exam is not cumulative.

E. Extra Credit – 10 points may be added in averaging your final grade by
   a. Attendance – if you have two or less absences from class. (See —Attendance Policy) or
   b. Attend a lecture or political event, watch a TV program or political event, watch a TV program or movie or read an in-depth article related to class material and approved by the instructor. Write a one-page summary report.

**Deadline for extra credit is Tuesday November 22.**

EXAMS, VOLUNTEER WORK, AND CLASS PRESENTATIONS WILL BE GRADED AS FOLLOWS:

- A = 90 – 100
- D = 60 - 69
- B = 80 – 89
- F = 0 - 59
- C = 70 - 79
WITHDRAWAL
If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. The withdrawal request must be received in the Register’s office by Thursday November 17. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an —Fl. If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a —WI (Withdraw) in each class dropped. For procedures see the Brookhaven College website and select A-Z for a listing and “Add/Drop/Withdraw Information” for a listing.

STOP BEFORE YOU DROP
For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions. Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a —WI. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access: https://www1.dcccd.edu/cat1112/ss/oep/dw.cfm

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the Dallas County Community Colleges Code of Student Conduct published in the Brookhaven College Catalog https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/ss/code.cfm?loc=2

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT INFORMATION
If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires ADA accommodations, please contact your Disability/ Special Services Offices in S-124 or call 972-860-4847 on the Brookhaven Campus.

STUDENTS ABSENT DUE TO RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE
Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused. A student who absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.
REPEATING THIS COURSE
Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in additional tuition to be charged. Developmental Studies and some other courses will not be charged a higher tuition rate. Third attempts include courses taken at any Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 Semester.

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT INFORMATION
If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires ADA accommodations, please contact your Disability/ Special Services Offices in S-124 or call 972-860-4673 on the Brookhaven Campus.

STUDENTS ABSENCES DUE TO RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE
Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused. A student who absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

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RETRIEVING YOUR GRADE AND ECONNECT
Specific instructions for obtaining your grades can be found at https://eConnect.dcccd.edu/eConnect/eConnect. Go the Brookhaven College website and select A-Z and student services to learn about all their services

STUDENTS RECEIVING FINANCIAL AID
If you are receiving Financial Aid grants or loans, you must show participation in this class prior to the certification date ________ by either e-mailing or contacting the instructor or logging on to eCampus at http://ecampus.dcccd.edu. Do not drop or stop attending any class without consulting the Financial Aid office. Changes in your enrollment level and/or failing grades may have adverse consequences. For more information see the Brookhaven College website and select A-Z Financial Aid or phone: the Financial Aid Call Center at 972-587-2599.
GENERAL STATEMENT
The instructor reserves the right to modify any course requirements and calendar due dates as necessary to manage and conduct this course. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor and seeking clarification of any requirement that is not understood.
Other Policies and procedure information is available in the faculty handbook when you visit http://www.brookhavencollege.edu and follow the links A-Z
Under Grading and Testing Procedures “B” in this Syllabus, this assignment is intended as individual research but group coordination and leadership of class discussion. Those of you who choose the same topic need to plan to meet at least two times, once to coordinate your areas of research and once to plan your presentation. Each group will talk for approximately 15-20 minutes (depending upon group size). Class members may want to ask questions.

ISSUES OF FEDERALISM – PRESENTATION MONDAY JULY 16
*Possible Sub-topics
Environmental Protection – EPA regulations v. Texas State CEQ regulations
Immigration Reform–State v. Federal Enforcement
Voter Rights – Federal Voting Rights law v. Texas Voting ID requirements

Controversy exists over these and other topics as to authority and responsibility of the federal government, state governments and/or corporations for policies and events of national and state consequences. There are pending lawsuits on all these issues. The group should (a) explain current federal law and any rulings as well as examples of related state or local statutes and (b) In your opinion, what is the proper role of each entity with regard to your chosen topic? All members of the group do not have to reach the same conclusion.

NATIONAL ISSUES FOR POLITICAL PARTIES – PRESENTATION MONDAY JULY 23
*Possible Sub-Topics
Health Care Reform—Federal Patient Affordable Health Care Act
Civil Unions and Same Sex Marriage
U.S. Economic Growth – Paths to Economic Recovery and Jobs Creation
U.S. Role in Afghanistan

These all are issues discussed during the GOP primary elections and by incumbent President Obama. What is the position taken by the Democratic and Republican Presidential Candidates going into the November general election? The 111th Congress also has debated each of these issues largely along political party lines. For economic recovery, for example, negotiations were held over the federal debt, extending payroll tax reductions and unemployment benefits, and reducing the budget deficit. The group should explain current federal law which the candidate(s) want to repeal.
TEXAS STATE AND LOCAL ISSUES – PRESENTATION THURSDAY AUGUST 2

*Possible Sub-Topics
Air Pollution Dallas-Ft. Worth region
Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness in Texas
Public School Challenges
The group should (a) explain the current situation and agencies involved (b) changes you would recommend to improve government response, quality of life or performance in this area. Has the Governor, State agency officials or Local ISDs taken a position on this issue?

*Other topics may be considered but require approval by the instructor.

Some Sources of Information
Brookhaven Library
Internet (In your Works Cited give Website, Title of Article, Date)
Federal/state/local agencies
Interest groups/lobbyists/affected industries/organizations

If only 1-2 students sign up for a particular topic, the Instructor may ask that you select another topic for group participation. Please, no more than 5 students in one group