American Government 2306- 91405            Dr. Raymond Sandoval
Fall semester                      Office Hours: by email
Richland College                 Office: Wichita 280(contact by email)
3 credit hours                        Telephone: 9722386265 (Please
LEAD Division                           use email instead – I can call you if
Crockett 243                               necessary also)

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Email: rsandoval@dcccd.edu

Course Description:
This course provides an overview of Texas government including Texas varied social and political culture, institutions, economy, thought and structure. We approach Texas Politics through examining the many faces of cultures and the reflection of those cultures in our basic political values and understandings as seen today and in the past. We also discuss the institutions, structure and processes that are part of the American governmental process and part of our Federal system in which states such as Texas have powers. This course is designed to be an introduction course that provides a connection to and basic understanding of all of the varied aspects of Texas Politics as experienced or known by you.

All political entities/organizations are made up of people- many of them quite different from each other. How these people see themselves and others is important to political development and the political process. We start with an understanding of how Texas as a state develops from the interaction of the cultures of three main groups: Native Americans, Northern Mexicans and later Anglo immigrants. We explore how this interaction formed a base for Texas political and economic development. We then focus on the interaction of African Americans as part of the culture interaction process. Then we turn our attention to some basic ideas of daily life including current issues and questions and then explore their foundation in these cultures and past events, social processes, political structures, institutions and ideas.

The United States as a nation was formed from the prior existence of colonies (or states) and derives much of its form and structure from those prior entities. As the United States expanded and enveloped the western regions, these other areas (to become states within the United States) usually reflected both the origin of their new conquerors as well as the changing United States political economic structure. These new areas which were to become states also had peoples living there and they had an impact on the developing processes and structures and sometimes a great impact as
is the case for the Southwest. Texas is both southern and southwestern and reflects the immigration of initially (and for many years) primarily Anglo southerners but also importantly the culture, institutions and processes of peoples living in what we now know as Texas long before Anglo immigrants came to the area. Texas development is an interaction of these diverse populations and very differing world views.

Topics of the course include the cultural conflict between Northern Mexicanos and the later Anglo immigration to Tejas (Or Texas), the manifestation of immigrant cultures and the development of the dominant political culture which had different goals, origin and development of Texas constitutional democracy; the development of the political institutions transformed by the multi-cultural and historical experience of Texas. We also cover current events and topics relevant to the course. (To ensure transferability, students should plan to take both Government 2305 and 2306 within the DCCCD.).

The course relies on a multi media approach and includes web sites and links, reference to short video clips, film clips, and when possible full length movies, music, outlines, power points and readings.

**Reading the textbook and other assigned readings is extremely important** and you cannot be successful in this course by not reading the material or procrastinating and “cramming” the night before an exam. You must read in a **TIMELY** manner (as the course goes along not at the last minute)

**That means that you need to start to read the textbook immediately and you need to participate in all online activities.**

I will attempt to respond to emails within a few hours or even sooner although there may be times when this is not possible. It may take a day or two sometimes.

I want you to be successful and will try to work with you and assist you. If you need help, please contact me.

**Course Objectives:**
To provide a foundation for understanding Texas politics and local government including relationships with and comparisons with other states. Texas exists in a Federal system and state development both reflects and is reflected in other states and the state building process and where relevant, state and local politics. To connect an understanding of American politics to the students personal experience. To provide critical thinking and problem solving skills.

**Compliance with Core Curriculum Guidelines:**
This Government 2305 or 2306 Course develops the following Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies:
1 - READING: the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials - books, documents, and articles - above 12th grade level.

2 - WRITING: the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience - above 12th grade level.

3 - CRITICAL THINKING: think and analyze at a critical level.

4 - COMPUTER LITERACY: understand our technological society, use computer based technology in communication, solving problems, acquiring information.

This course also addresses the following Core Curriculum Educational Objectives:

1 – To comprehend the origins and evolution of the Texas political system, with a focus on the growth of political institutions including the constitution of Texas, the legislature, the Governor’s office, the judiciary, local government, federalism as reflected in Texas, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.

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

3 – 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.

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

5 – To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.

6 – To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the areas of politics under study.

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

Developing Learning Power

This is a Developing Learning Power class and part of Richland College’s Learning to Learn: Developing Learning Power Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in which your professor uses specific Thinking Routines to help you develop your learning power, become an even more engaged, successful learner, and master course content. Participating in Thinking Routines provides you a
greater understanding of how you best learn and offers you techniques to boost your capacity to change and learn through effort and the intentional practice of thinking. Developing Learning Power shapes an exceptional learning experience, helps you advance in your academic career, and fosters traits in you of an effective lifelong learner. At the end of the course, you will be asked to reflect on your experience through an assignment about how you have changed as a learner.

Texts:


**The Buenavida Dilemma** by Jose Uranga

Extra Credit (Only by special permission after the first test and boards are due)

**Bless Me Ultima** a movie based on a book by Rudolfo Anaya

**Emergencies**

In case of emergencies or ecampus outages or ecampus email is not accessible, please email me at the back up email address raymondsandoval@msn.com. **But use this only in the case of emergencies which is defined as ecampus and email** is not accessible. Your being bumped off a test or being called out of town is not such an emergency unless ecampus is down or campus email is down.

**Assessments**

1. There are 3 tests. In addition there is a POSSIBLE extra credit paper which you may choose to complete EARLY in the course (no late papers which means no paper the last 10-12 days.) but is dependent on permission from the instructor after examining work to date. These test vary in value. **There are also discussion boards due at specific dates. The assignments tab at ecampus has the exact dues due for all assignments.**

2. **Discussion Forums**; You also must respond at least 2 times to each of 4-6 discussion forums **(THERE MAY BE MORE ADDED)**. The purpose of the boards is to generate discussions with your fellow students and to develop critical thinking skills about subjects related to our course material and not have a dialog with me. The board
narratives are intentionally developed to generate discussions and points of view. **You must respond 2 times to each of the discussion forums and those responses to each board must be spaced out at least by a day (24 hours) between responses.** The first of those posts is an original post and the second is a reply to a fellow student. But more posts are encouraged- that is a minimum.

That means you cannot post 2 times in one day to any one board to fulfil your posting requirements but you must come back to the same board at least a second day (24 hours later) You can always respond or post more than 2 times to each board but the minimum I expect for each board topic is 2 responses and 2 of these responses must be a day apart

I suggest you do much more as the minimum is exactly that -a minimum and will usually receive minimum points. You are expected to post an idea (original thought) supported by several (more than 2) references and research (research is essential and valuable as I want more than just opinions but logic and sources to support research generated thesis and ideas - **you must seek out significant and diverse scholarly material to research your responses** and then you must reply to another student’s post with measured reasoned observations (thus 2 posts). Opinions are not enough-you must cite evidence and have logical arguments to bolster your opinions. You may use personal or family examples but I want you to reach beyond your personal experiences. After your original post you then respond to another student’s idea.

You must respond to any discussion forums that are required as soon as they are assigned and before the actual day of start of the next test (but I fully expect that you will post well before the test dates). For example, the first 2 forums require your response now and before the 1st assignment (which is a test). That means you must post by midnight to EACH of those two forums 2 times by the date due.

I really want dialogs with each other so you need to post now. There may be other forums added at any time. You must respond thoughtfully and present logical arguments and also politely. You must never disparage another class member in your posts or attack them personally. You are graded on the content of your posts and following protocol in number (2) OR MORE and when you posted. **You have to post on time** by dates due. It does little good to post on the last day before a test as that does not facilitate dialogue and it is not acceptable to post after a test date starts for few if any students will look at your posts and you receive no points for late posting. I would advise posting at least 12-25 sentences per post and using other research or sources in your posts. **Much more than that is expected for higher points boards so more logical, thoughtful, researched discussion is expected for 20-30-40 point**
boards. I want carefully thought responses not “what a great idea” or “I agree”. I want you to reach beyond your personal experiences (although they are a starting point) and expand your ideas.

Forums 1-2 are graded and the grades visible for you to see and discuss as soon as possible. However boards 3-6 are often graded last and their individual grades are not immediately visible but are rolled into the final total score at the end of the class.

You are also provided a model board (or model boards) under announcements after the first 2 boards deadline to assist you in quality posting.

Each discussion board has a due date for first posts and for final posts.

**Format for Email, Documents:** There is a strict format for email and documents. You must always put in the subject line of all emails yourname-2306-81450-Bless Me Ultima. I have several classes and this allows me to know who you are, what class you are in, and what you are requesting. The same type of format is used when you save documents or and send me your attachment). Yourname -2306-81450-subject (for example rsmith-2306-81450-bio). That means you must save the file with this name **BEFORE** you upload it. **DO NOT USE 9000 numbers.** Try to send any documents in rtf format not word and do not use html extensions.

**Extra Credit- Discussion Forums:** Extra credit is usually not given. There is however the extra credit paper to be submitted in the early part of the course but you must request permission well in advance. Frequently is short courses (4 weeks or less) this option is **NOT** available.

**Grading Scale:**

The grading scale for the course unless otherwise adjusted is as follows:

- 90-100% = A
- 78-89% = B
- 68-78% = C
- 60-67% = D
- 59%-below = F

You can determine your grade at any time by looking at your total points and dividing by the number possible at that time. That gives you a percentage and that generally is your grade.

For example if you have 177 points after paper, you divide 177 by 200 = 88 or a high B.
If you have questions at any time of what is your overall grade, you may email me except during the last four days of class. I will provide you as much information as possible.

**Make Up Tests:**

Make up tests are provided only for extraordinary reasons. If you fail to take a test, then you may be provided an opportunity to take a make up test. You must not miss the final exam for any reason. **There is no make up test for the final exam for any reason.**

**Success Keys**

Read the text book as suggested and at the time assigned. This is very important, as reading is essential to your understanding of course material. If you are not used to reading, now is the time to start reading more. **It is very important to read the material when it is assigned.** This is particularly true for online courses which depend on reading and writing to a greater extent.

Use the course documents material and any extra material that may be available for the course under course documents and posted in other folders.

Try reading a few pages (3-4) and then close the book and write down three or four points that you just read in outline form. Then read the next 3-4 pages, etc. This will take time but is a good way to take notes and retain material.

Please see me, email or call me if you have questions. **I am available to help you in any way possible. If you do not understand material, please contact me. I will help. YOU MUST CHECK YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES AT BOTH ECAMPUS AND ECONNECT.** I email using both sources to all students and if your address is not correct you will not receive important emails concerning the course.

You must make quality posts to the discussion boards, using SCHOLARLY sources with MULTIPLE CITATIONS with thoughtful analysis NOT opinions.

**Documents**

Keep all your emails, papers and tests if you have copies in case they are lost.

Follow the format for naming documents that you send me.
### Institutional policies

| **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 "W". 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/6drop](https://www1.dcccd.edu/6drop) |
<p>| <strong>Withdrawal Policy</strong> | If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. The withdrawal request must be received in the Registrar’s Office by (instructor inserts semester’s drop date here). Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an “F.” If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a “W” (Withdraw) in each class dropped. For more information about drop deadlines, refer to the current printed Credit Class Schedule, contact the Admissions/Student Records office at 972-238-6100 or 6101 (Thunderduck Hall, T170), or contact the division office. |
| <strong>Repeating a Course</strong> | 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 of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 Semester. <a href="http://www.dcccd.edu/thirdcourseattempt/">See Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course at</a> |</p>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Financial Aid</strong></th>
<th>If you are receiving any form of financial aid, you should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop date are also subject to this policy.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Honesty</strong></td>
<td>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 <a href="http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm">DCCCD Code of Student Conduct</a> published in the DCCCD Catalog at <a href="http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm">http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm</a> (Select Purpose)</td>
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<td><strong>ADA Statement</strong></td>
<td>If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires accommodations, please contact the college Disability Services Office at 972-238-6180 (Voice/TTY), visit Thunderduck Hall, suite T120, or go to <a href="http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/Student+Services/Disability+Services/">http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/Student+Services/Disability+Services/</a> (CTRL + Click to access “Current Students” site to “Student Services” to “Disability Services”)</td>
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<td><strong>Religious Holidays</strong></td>
<td>Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused. A student whose absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to contract with the instructor to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.</td>
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<td><strong>Campus Emergency Operation Plan</strong></td>
<td>Richland College and the Dallas County Community College District have developed policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies that may occur on campus. To familiarize yourself with these procedures, please take time to watch the overview video: <a href="http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv">http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv</a> The complete Emergency Operations Plan can be viewed and printed at the following website:</td>
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If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Richland College Office of Emergency Management. This office can be reached by phone (972/238-3794) or by e-mail (rlcoem@dccc.edu).

Students are encouraged to discuss academic goals and degree completion with their instructors. Specific advising is available throughout the semester. Check Step 6 - Advisement and Registration at www.richlandcollege.edu/admissions/process.php for more details.

Richland College is piloting its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in select classes. The QEP provides techniques, practices, and tools to help students develop the habits, traits or behaviors needed to be effective and successful lifelong learners in college and in life. For more information, please log onto http://www.richlandcollege.edu/qep2013/.

Core Objectives

“The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has established six core objectives – Communication (Written, Oral, and Visual), Critical Thinking, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility that are to be taught throughout the 42-hour Texas Core Curriculum. Students are expected to gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for learning. In this course, you should learn:"

- **Critical Thinking Skills** – to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication

- **Communication Skills** – to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication

- **Personal Responsibility** – to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

- **Social Responsibility** – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
Empirical and Quantitative Skills – to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions

Teamwork – to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal

Withdrawal/Drop Deadlines

Last day to drop with a w is Dec 8

The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary

Topics covered in the course as time permits: due to time limitations and the nature of the course not all topics may be addressed during a course time frame.

1: The Cultures of Texas: The many faces of Texas (This chapter may be broken into 2 chapters One discussing world views of differing cultures and impact on politics and the other discussing immigration in general)

2: Understanding Texas and other States: The Western way

3: Federalism and Texas: How Does Texas Reflect the National Government?

4: Over and Over Again: Creating Texas and the Constitutions(s)

5: Weak and Strong Governors: The State Executive

6: Getting things done: The Legislature

7: Education, Health Care, Jobs. Marriage, Debt and Public Policy

8: Red, Blue or Green?: Winning Office and Political Parties:

9: Getting a speeding ticket: Local Governments and State Authority

10: Taxes, Balanced Budgets, Jobs, growth: The contradictions

11: Laws, Courts, and Justice: Hang ’em High?