COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description
This is an undergraduate honors course on the American and Texas system of governments. This course is meant to introduce the student to the how the American and Texas Governments work. In this course we will cover such topics as American and Texan political institutions and American and Texan public policy.

Required Text

The text is offered in *ebook* format here: [http://nortonebooks.com](http://nortonebooks.com)

You must purchase the *ebook* as you would a regular textbook, but the *ebook* offers some extra benefits (such as a text search) that a hard copy does not.

Course Website:
I maintain a course website that will keep you up to date on what is happening in your course. You can get to the website by visiting this link:

[http://faculty.mwsu.edu/politicalscience/jeremy.duff/teaching.asp](http://faculty.mwsu.edu/politicalscience/jeremy.duff/teaching.asp)

Then click on the link that goes to your course.

Office Hours:
By appointment (send me an e-mail to schedule an appointment)

Student Responsibilities
*Attendance:* Class attendance is strongly encouraged. It has been my experience that those who do not attend class tend to have a difficult time with the course and generally receive lower grades. I will not regularly take attendance, however, throughout the course of the semester I may feel it necessary to take attendance in order to provide extra points on exams for those who are putting forth the effort to come to class.
Readings: The readings serve as a point of departure for lectures and discussions. Therefore, it is imperative that each student completes the assigned reading before a topic is taken up in class. Remember, the readings are a point of departure from class lectures. You will be held accountable not only for my discussion in lecture, but also for anything in the textbooks that may not be covered in lecture or discussion.

Participation: Students should feel free to raise questions concerning the readings, the instructor's discussion, and the comments of other students. Participation enhances course quality.

Quizzes: There will be periodic “pop” quizzes given in class covering lecture and textbook material. This should encourage class attendance and also help make sure students are keeping up with the reading. If you are not present for a quiz and do not have a University approved excuse, you will be given a grade of ZERO on that quiz.

Projects: Throughout the course of the semester students will spend time working in-class and outside of class on small individual or group projects. Information about these projects will be given at the time you are to begin working on them. For now, view the class schedule below to see the titles of these projects and when you will be working on them. I may also add projects to the ones listed as we go along. These projects will be due AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS on specified dates. LATE PROJECTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL BE GIVEN A GRADE OF ZERO.

Required Examinations: There will be three required examinations. The scheduled examination dates (tentative) are as follows:

- Exam 1: July 9, 2012
- Exam 2: July 23, 2012
- Final Exam: August 2, 2012

Please note that for whatever reason you arrive late for an exam, you will not be able to take the exam once one student has “legitimately” taken the exam and left the exam room. I reserve the right to change any of the above dates as I feel necessary. This means that in some cases exams may be pushed back to later dates or moved forward to earlier dates.

Basic Policies

Make-up Policy -- Examinations. If a student has a University-approved excuse AND if the instructor is notified IN WRITING, PRIOR to the examination, arrangements for a make-up will be made. If a student fails to notify the instructor, the student will receive a zero for the exam.
Exam, Quizzes, and Grading. If you are unhappy with your grade on a particular exam, please do not discuss it with me during or directly after any class period, and particularly the class in which I hand the exams back. I want you to take time to look over your exam thoroughly, outside of the classroom before you make an argument for a different grade. Any discussion of exam grades should take place within my office hours or by appointment in my office if you are not able to attend the scheduled office hours. If you feel that you and another student provided similar or equal answers to an exam question and you received a lower grade on that question, then both students must come to the assigned office hours with their exams in order for me to evaluate the answers equally and fairly. Keep in mind that in some cases I may lower the grade of the other student and not raise yours after reviewing both answers, if I feel that the situation deems it necessary.

Taking Exams Early. Only under extraordinary circumstances will a student be allowed to take an exam, including the final, early. Only university approved excuses, death in the family, illness, etc. will be considered for taking an exam early. You must request to take an exam early IN WRITING.

Wikipedia. At no time will a student be allowed to use Wikipedia as a source for any project or paper in my class. If it is determined that Wikipedia was used as a source for a project or paper, the student will be given a grade of ZERO automatically.

Classroom Behavior

Cellphones, pagers, etc. These should be turned off when entering the classroom, unless prior arrangements have been made with me concerning a family emergency. If your cell phone goes off during an exam or quiz, IT WILL BE CONFISCATED and returned to you when you hand in the exam or quiz.

AT NO TIME WILL YOU BE ALLOWED TO LOOK AT YOUR CELLPHONE/PAGER DURING AN EXAM OR QUIZ. IF YOU ARE OBSERVED LOOKING AT YOUR CELLPHONE/PAGER ONCE AN EXAM OR QUIZ HAS BEEN HANDED TO YOU, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO FOR THAT EXAM OR QUIZ.

General Behavior. Students are expected to act like responsible adults in class. There should be no passing notes, kissing, or any other juvenile behavior. There should be no talking while I am lecturing or while another student is answering a question or sharing their opinion on the subject matter of the class. If this occurs, students will be warned and if the disruptive behavior continues you will be removed from the class.

Lateness. If you miss a quiz because you arrive late to class, you will receive a grade of zero on that quiz.
**Grading.** The three exams will count 75% (25% a piece) toward your final grade. The quiz and project grades will be averaged. The average will make up 10% of your grade. Finally, the City Council Project will make up 15% of your grade.

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<tr>
<th>Cut Off</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>60-69%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
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**Class Schedule (Tentative)**
Reading will consist of chapters in the required text.

**July**

2: Introduction and overview of course
   Congress
   Chapter 12

3: The Presidency
   Chapter 13
   Separation of Powers Project Introduced

4: **No Class (Holiday)**

5: United States Bureaucracy
   Chapter 14

6: The Federal Courts
   Chapter 15

9: **Exam I**

10: Civil Liberties
    Chapter 4
    Separation of Powers Project Due

11: Civil Rights
    Chapter 5

12: What Would You Change and How Project Introduced

16: Government and the Economy
    Chapter 16
17: Social Policy
   Chapter 17

18: Movie Day: Documentary on the US Education System
   What Would you Change and How Project Due

19: Foreign Policy
   Chapter 18

23: Exam II

24: Texas Legislature
   Chapter 23
   What Am I Having a Hard Time Learning Project Introduced

25: The Texas Executive Branch
   Chapter 24

26: The Texas Judiciary
   Chapter 25

30: Public Policy in Texas
   Chapter 26
   What Am I Having a Hard Time Learning Project Due

31: Going Over What Am I Having a Hard Time Learning Project Issues

August

1: Catch-up and Review Day

2: Final Exam