

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 261**  
Dr. Jim Carter - Summer 2008

**TEXTS:** The Challenge of Democracy with Texas Politics Today, Janda, et al. 9<sup>th</sup> ed.

This course is designed to acquaint students with the fundamental concepts and the institutional arrangements of the American and Texas political systems. The course is also designed to stimulate the student to question the nature and purpose of government in general and the American and Texas political systems in particular. Consequently, it is hoped that during the semester you will develop an understanding of this important influence in your life and reach some conclusions regarding your relationship to government and the nature of the impact you expect it to have on the world around you.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

1. There will be three major exams during the semester. This number includes the final. The three exams will constitute 90% of the course grade. The first two tests will each be worth 30% of the course grade. The “final” will be mildly comprehensive and will be worth 35% of the course grade.
2. A true learning experience requires interaction. Consequently, 5% of the course grade will depend upon class participation. Each student is expected to perform their reading assignments before attending class and to be prepared to ask and answer questions during each class meeting.
3. While there is nothing sacred about class attendance, roll will be taken at each class meeting. A student’s grade will be subject to adjustment following three absences. This does not mean, however, that you have three free absences! Being subject to adjustment on grade does not mean that your grade will be automatically adjusted after 3 absences, but simply that you have forfeited most of the privileges of any special, concerned consideration in the grading process.
4. Make-ups are the responsibility of the student. If an exam is missed, it is the students’ responsibility to call that fact to the attention of the instructor and to make arrangements for a make-up. Otherwise, at the end of the semester the instructor will record a zero for the grade found to be missing.
5. **NO** final examinations will be given early for any reason. Final exam is July 1.
6. **PLAGIARISM** – A writer can be said to be guilty of plagiarism when he or she uses the work of another author without acknowledgment in the text and in the bibliography. We all rely heavily on the work of others as we go about our own research and writing. If information of a common, general nature obtained through background reading is incorporated into a paper in our own words, plagiarism is not involved. On the other hand, it is crucial that you be candid when presenting specific facts, interpretations, or analyses of data which are not your own. Identify your sources and/or supporting evidence. If parts of another writer’s material are used directly, either paraphrased or directly quoted, without

acknowledgment, you are guilty of plagiarism. There are degrees of plagiarism. Complete plagiarism involves submitting a paper, essay, review, etc., that is entirely the work of another person. Substantial plagiarism exists when there has been fairly extensive copying of phrases and/or complete sentences. The reproduction of a lengthy passage without acknowledgment, even though a few words may be changed in each sentence, also constitutes substantial plagiarism. Minor plagiarism exists when one presents the writing in a sentence or two as one's own, when it is not. I do not view plagiarism lightly. It is a serious academic offense, and will be treated as such. The penalty for minor plagiarism is normally a reduction in the grade assigned for the assignment in question. Substantial plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment in question. Repeated instances of substantial plagiarism will result in a grade of F in the course. Complete plagiarism will automatically result in a grade of F in the course.

### **Americans with Disability Act**

It is the policy of SHSU that individuals that otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs, nor shall they be subject to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with me so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

### **Religious Holy Day or Days**

A student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day or days or to travel for the purpose of religious observance may taken an examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time. The student should inform me before or immediately after the absence in writing. The student will have 15 days to complete the assignment or take the exam. If you are to miss the lecture, have a fellow student tape the lecture for you.

### **TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

June 3-6	Intro. To Politics and Govt.; Foundations of American Politics, Theory and Practice JBG 1-4; BLGLB 1-2
June 9-13	Political Participation; Voting and Elections; Political parties; media JBG 6-9; BLGLB 4-5
June 16-20	The Legislative Branch JBG 11; BLGLB 7
June 23-27	Executive and Bureaucracy JBG 12-13; BLGLB 8
June 30-July 1	Courts; Final Exam JBG 14; BLGLB 10

