GOV 105: Texas Government

This course provides an in-depth orientation to the actors, processes, and institutions that make up the political system in Texas, with a strong emphasis on the development of applied knowledge. Instructional material in the course focuses on how politics in Texas shapes the operation of Texas political institutions, with particular attention to the interplay between public opinion, conflict among elites, and the policy environment in the state.

Prerequisites

None.

Required Materials


All students are required to have access to an internet-enabled laptop or desktop computer. Tablets and smartphones are not supported. Your computer should meet the following requirements:

- Operating System: Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8 (windows updates run)
- Operating System: Mac OS X 10.6.8, 10.7.5, 10.8.4, 10.9.4
- Browsers: Chrome, Safari, Firefox (most recent 2 versions only)
- Adobe Flash: must be installed and updated
- Javascript enabled

Course Organization

This course provides students wide discretion in terms of when to complete the required work. Students may only submit one module of assignments at a time, and will not be able to move forward until assignments in that module have been graded. This structure allows for receipt of feedback on work that may be used for preparing for future assignments and the final exam.

Course topics include:

- **Topic 1: The Political Culture and History of Texas**
  - Module 1: The Political Culture & History of Texas
  - Module 2: The Texas Constitution
- **Topic 2: Public Opinion and Political Behavior**
  - Module 3: Public Opinion
  - Module 4: Voting, Campaigns, & Elections
- **Topic 3: Representation and Organizing Interests**
  - Module 5: Political Parties
  - Module 6: Interest Groups
The course concludes with a comprehensive final exam, which must be taken in a proctored location with arrangements to be made by the student.

The overall course grade will be calculated as follows:

- Study questions: 15%
- Lecture quizzes: 15%
- Texas Insiders video quizzes: 15%
- Short answer exercises: 30%
- Final Exam: 25%

An instructor is available via a message center to provide feedback on written work and respond to questions regarding course content. Students are required to complete all assignments and earn a score of at least 60% on the final exam in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

This course is independent study and is self-paced. Students have five months upon registration in which to complete all coursework, plus an additional thirty days in which to take the final final.

University Extension

For more information about University Extension courses and policies, please visit http://extendedcampus.utexas.edu/uex. Questions may be directed to our office at (512) 471-2900 or uex@austin.utexas.edu. Office hours are M – F, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. CST.