



**Course** GOVT 2306.002  
**Course Title** State and Local Government  
**Professor** Mr. Evan M. Lowe  
**Term** Fall 2017  
**Meetings** MWF 8:00 – 8:50am • SLC 1.102

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Professor

Name Evan M. Lowe  
Office Phone 972.883.4897  
Office Location GR 3.822  
Email Address [Evan.Lowe@utdallas.edu](mailto:Evan.Lowe@utdallas.edu)  
Office Hours MWF 9:00-10:00am & by appointment  
Other Information Best means to reach me is email. No email response Friday night or Saturday.

#### Teaching Assistants

|                 |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Name            | Soham Das (students A-L)   | A. Furkan Zengin (students M-Z)  |
| Office Location | GR 3.314   | GR.3.314   |
| Email Address   | <a href="mailto:sd153330@utdallas.edu">sd153330@utdallas.edu</a> | <a href="mailto:AbdullahFurkan.Zengin@utdallas.edu">AbdullahFurkan.Zengin@utdallas.edu</a> |
| Office Hours    | Tues. 10:00am – 1:00pm   | Thurs. 12:00 – 3:00pm  |

#### Supplemental Instructor (SI)

Name Anishya Idicula  
Email Address [Anishya.Idicula@utdallas.edu](mailto:Anishya.Idicula@utdallas.edu)  
Sessions: Monday 9:00 – 9:50am (MC 1.502 CD)  
[sessions begin 8/27] Wednesday 4:00 – 4:50pm (MC 1.502 CD)  
Friday 10:00 – 10:50am (MC 1.502 AB)

*Supplemental Instruction (SI) is offered for this course. For more information about days, times, and locations of SI sessions, please refer to [www.utdallas.edu/studentssuccess/leaders/si.html](http://www.utdallas.edu/studentssuccess/leaders/si.html). Research has demonstrated that students who actively and repeatedly participate in SI sessions do, on average, nearly a full letter grade better in their courses. Please consider taking advantage of this resource.*

### GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions There are no prerequisites for this course, other than an eagerness to learn and commitment to active engagement in class.

Course Description This course will provide students with an introduction to Texas State government and politics. The course covers topics that relate to state governmental institutions, political behavior, and public policy.

Learning Outcomes By the end of the course, a student who has mastered the course material will be able to:

- Evaluate the role of interest groups, political parties, and public opinion in shaping Texas politics and policies
- Analyze and think critically about contemporary developments in Texas politics
- Identify, describe, and evaluate electoral and institutional processes
- Recognize and understand historical trends in the development of state institutions and the Texas constitution
- Relate course topics meaningfully to living in Texas

Required Texts & Materials

- (1) Champagne, Anthony, Edward J. Harpham, and Jason P. Casellas. *Governing Texas* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). New York: W. W. Norton Publishing. ISBN: 978393283679
  - Available at on and off campus bookstores
  - Amazon: <http://amzn.to/2vRFedB> (\$39.43 rent, \$93.54 new)
  - eBook may be least expensive [direct from publisher](#) (\$45.00 eBook)
- (2) Miller, Banks and Jennifer Holmes. *Readings in State and Local Government*. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company. ISBN: 9781524936082 (eBook)
  - Available at on and off campus bookstores
  - Direct access for purchase: <https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/readings-american-state-and-local-government> (\$40 eBook)

*Purchasing (or renting, if available) these editions is strongly encouraged. Course instruction and readings are based on these editions. Students who intend to use other editions do so at their own risk.*

Suggested Texts, Readings, & Materials

Additional readings may be posted on the course’s eLearning page. Reading political news in either print or electronic media is encouraged.

**COURSE POLICIES**

Grading (credit) Criteria

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Assignment weighting:</b> |             |
| Exam 1:                      | 25%         |
| Exam 2:                      | 25%         |
| Exam 3:                      | 25%         |
| <u>Reading quizzes:</u>      | <u>28%</u>  |
| <b>Total:</b>                | <b>103%</b> |

University standard grading scale:

A (94%+), A- (90-93%), B+ (87-89%), B (84-86%), B- (80-83%), C+ (77-79), C (74-76%), C- (70-73%), D+ (67-69%), D (64-66%), D- (60-63%), F (<60%)

Grades will not be changed unless I make a computational error. Similarly, the extra 3% you may earn by successfully completing the reading quizzes means that course grades will *not* be rounded up.

If you have trouble meeting your expectations grade-wise, I encourage you to seek assistance from the Teaching Assistants or me as soon as possible. We will be happy to work with you to develop a plan for success in the course.

Grade disputes

Any and all grade disputes must be addressed *in person* with the instructor within 7 days of receiving the grade. You should email me (a) a clear explanation of the basis for the dispute, (b) what grade is more representative and why, and (c) a reference that supports your objection. From there we will schedule a meeting to discuss. Grade disputes raised after 7 days will not be addressed.

**Grade Components**

**Exams**

Procedure:

- Exams will be given in class. Scantrons will be provided, but students must bring a #2 pencil.
- Exams will begin at the start of class. Once the first student has turned in their exam, no other exams will be given out. Be on time!

Final Exam (optional)

- The final exam will be cumulative and optional
- Final exam score will replace your lowest exam score (if you score better on the final)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Make-up Exams             | Make up exams will be given <i>only</i> for University excused absences with documentation. Should a student miss an exam without a University excused absence, that student should plan to take the optional cumulative final exam.  |
| <b>Reader Assignments</b> | Assignments based on the assigned readings in <i>Readings in State and Local Government</i> will be made available in eLearning. Students will be given multiple attempts to complete these Assignments prior to the due date for each. The highest score will be recorded. Assignments will no longer be available for credit once the due date has passed.<br><br>Please see instructions in eLearning. |
| Extra Credit              | No extra credit will be offered that is not mentioned in the syllabus. Please do not make requests for extra credit, as they will not be granted.   |
| Late Work                 | No late work will be accepted.  |
| Class Attendance          | <b>Expected.</b> No grade is assigned, but attendance may be taken periodically and will be considered as a part of the final grading calculation.  |

### Course Conduct

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Classroom Citizenship | Laptops or other electronic devices may be used to take notes in class. Under no circumstances, however, will electronic devices be allowed to be a distraction to other students. Should this occur, you will be asked to put your device away or to leave the class.<br><br>Drinks are acceptable in class, but please do not bring food.   |
| Email & Communication | Students are expected to either check their UTD email or to make arrangements so that their UTD mail is delivered to an inbox that is checked. All course communication will be either through eLearning or UTD email. It is the student's responsibility to be sure they receive course communications.<br><br>While in-person contact is preferred, if you must email the instructor, please observe the following email requirements. <i>Emails which do not meet these requirements will not be answered.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include your name, course number, appropriate salutation, and a direct question. I teach multiple courses and need to know who you are, what course you're in, and how to respond.</li> <li>- Check the syllabus for an answer to your question. If the question is directly addressed by the syllabus, I will not respond. If you see your question is addressed but you need clarification, please indicate that and I will be happy to help.</li> <li>- Do not use texting language. While I understand language norms change and evolve, if u r gonna email me about sumthin in tha class n u wtn me 2 kno wat u mean cuz like im not gonna guess @ wat u mean n send responses about sumin I think u meant but like isn't actually wat u meant. This is a matter of clarity and professionalism.</li> <li>- If you do not receive a response in a reasonable amount of time (and you've checked to be sure your email doesn't fall into one of the above categories), please follow up. I intend to respond to all emails within 24-48 hours and it is possible that yours has been accidentally overlooked.</li> </ul> |

Comet Creed *This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:*

*“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”*

In short: Academic integrity will be taken especially seriously and violations will be reported according to University policy. Please don't cheat.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures *The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.*

*Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.*

### **Miscellaneous**

Religious Observances I will make accommodations for religious holidays and observances that conflict with course assignments and due dates. It will be the student's responsibility to bring any conflict to my attention so we can discuss the accommodation.

Sexual Discrimination Policy The course will abide by Title IX & UT Dallas' sexual harassment and sexual misconduct policy (UTDBP3102). Please find the policy details here: <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdbp3102>

Incidents in or out of class may be reported here: <http://www.utdallas.edu/oiec/complaints/>

ADA Compliance The course follows policies and procedures articulated by UT Dallas with respect to ADA compliance. ([Policy UTDBP3100](#))

Qualifying students seeking reasonable accommodation for a disability should see the Office of Student Accessibility, which will determine eligibility and implementation plans for reasonable accommodation. Student seeking accommodation should see the OSA and bring the action plan to the course instructor as early as possible in the course. Should you choose not to use the accommodation, you may. Nevertheless, to use the accommodation approved by OSA, the instructor must have the documentation ahead of time.

Mental Health Students who feel anxious, overburdened, or otherwise in need of support, should be aware of the resources UT Dallas offers with respect to mental health. The Student Counseling Center provides services and programs to assist students in achieving emotional well-being and to help manage personal demands that may get in the one of your academic success. They provide counselling, learning disability assessments, and a variety of other services. Please see their website for more information: <http://www.utdallas.edu/counseling/>

## ASSIGNMENTS & ACADEMIC CALENDAR

| Date(s)                                      | Readings & Assignments   | Due<br><small>[Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date indicated]</small> |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Week 1</b><br>21-25 Aug.                  | Introduction to Texas Politics   |   |
| <b>Week 2</b><br>28 Aug – 1 Sept.<br>4 Sept. | Texas Political Culture<br>- <i>Textbook</i> : Chapter 1<br><b>NO CLASS (Labor Day) • University Closed</b>              | 8/28 – last day late registration   |
| <b>Week 3</b><br>6-8 Sept.                   | The Texas Constitution(s)<br>- <i>Textbook</i> : Chapter 2   | 9/6 – course drop deadline  |
| <b>Week 4</b><br>11-15 Sept.                 | Federalism<br>- <i>Text</i> : Chapter 3, <i>Reader</i> : Chapter 2   | <b>9/17 – Reader Assignment #1 due</b>  |
| <b>Week 5</b><br>18-22 Sept.                 | Local Government<br>- <i>Text</i> : Chapter 10, <i>Reader</i> : Chapter 10<br>Exam Review (9/20)<br><b>EXAM 1 (9/22)</b> | <b>9/22 – Reader Assignment #2 due</b>  |
| <b>Week 6</b><br>25-29 Sept.                 | Legislature<br>- <i>Text</i> : Chapter 7, <i>Reader</i> : Chapter 7  |   |
| <b>Week 7</b><br>2-6 Oct.                    | Legislature<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 7, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 7  | <b>10/6 – Reader Assignment #3 due</b>  |
| <b>Week 8</b><br>9-13 Oct.                   | Executive<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 8, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 8  | <b>10/13 – Reader Assignment #4 due</b>   |
| <b>Week 9</b><br>16-20 Oct.                  | Judiciary<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 9, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 9  |   |
| <b>Week 10</b><br>23-27 Oct.                 | Judiciary<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 9, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 9<br>Exam Review (10/25)<br><b>EXAM 2 (10/27)</b>            | <b>10/27 – Reader Assignment #5 due</b>   |
| <b>Week 11</b><br>30 Oct. – 3 Nov.           | Elections<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 5, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 3  | <b>11/3 – Reader Assignment #6 due</b>  |
| <b>Week 12</b><br>6-10 Nov.                  | Political Parties<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 4, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 5  | <b>11/10 – Reader Assignment #7 due</b>   |
| <b>Week 13</b><br>13-17 Nov.                 | Interest Groups & Lobbying<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapter 6, <i>Reader</i> Chapter 6   | <b>11/17 – Reader Assignment # 8 due</b>  |
| <b>Week 14</b><br>20-24 Nov.                 | <b>NO CLASS • Fall Break &amp; Thanksgiving</b>  |   |
| <b>Week 15</b><br>27 Nov. – 1 Dec.           | Policy & Finance<br>- <i>Text</i> Chapters 12, 11  |   |
| <b>Week 16</b><br>4-6 Dec.<br>7 Dec          | Exam Review (12/4)<br><b>EXAM 3 (12/6)</b><br><b>NO CLASS • University Reading Day</b>                                   |   |
| <b>11 December</b>                           | <b>FINAL EXAM (optional)</b><br><b>8:00-10:45am</b>  |   |
|  |  |   |

*The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*