



PSCI 4335 - International Politics: International Politics (SSII - July 06 to Aug 06)

Summer 2026 Syllabus, Section 480, CRN 53072

Instructor Information

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by appointment

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Please use Blackboard Message to contact me.

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

This course will explore and analyze various topics in international politics. Emphasis will be given to major theories and their application to related areas, issues, and regions. May be repeated once when topic changes. Prerequisite: Junior or senior standing.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Course Objectives: This course introduces students to the study of international relations. International relations is the study of the interactions among the various actors that participate in international politics. The course begins with a historical overview of the international system and the rise and functions of the nation-state. We then examine various levels of analysis and theoretical approaches— Liberalism, Realism, and Constructivism— and discuss the nature of foreign policy decision making. The remainder of the course then applies these concepts to issues such as war and peace, the politics of international economic relations, international organizations, ethnic conflict, the environment, human rights, and globalization.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the key concepts in International Relations and the three major perspectives (Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism [plus demonstrate some knowledge of the Marxist perspective—a 4th perspective]) and use them to analyze and evaluate issues in world politics.
- demonstrate an understanding of the three levels of analysis (system, state and individual levels) to evaluate and analyze international events and issues.
- demonstrate an understanding of the actors, issues and the tools they use to pursue their interests in the international arena.
- demonstrate the ability to analyze and evaluate current and historical events and issues in international relations.
- be able to define, analyze and evaluate how power affects the relations between international actors and structures their interactions and decision-making processes.



- demonstrate an understanding of how to analyze and evaluate the interaction between politics and economy in the international arena.

Important Dates

Visit the Academic Calendar ([tamui.edu](https://www.tamui.edu/academiccalendar/)) (<https://www.tamui.edu/academiccalendar/>) page to view the term's important dates.

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Essentials of International Relations, 9th Ed.	Karen A. Mingst and Heather Elko McKibben	9780393441703

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	91-100
B	80-90.9
C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

RUBRICS

Discussion Grading Rubrics

All discussions are worth a maximum of 10 points. Grades may fall between the scores listed below.

10 points: Student comment is on subject and fully answers the discussion prompt with an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Student has also commented on two other students' comments.

8 points: student comment is on subject and almost fully answers the discussion prompt, but may lack an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Student has also commented on two other students' comments, or the student's post complies with the 5-point criteria, but the student only commented on one other student's post.

6 points: Student comment is on subject and answers the discussion prompt but incompletely and lacks an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Student has also commented on one other student's comments. Or the student discussion post complies with the 4-point criteria, and the student did not comment on any other students' posts.

4 points: Student comment is on subject but incompletely and uses poor grammar and spelling. Student has not also commented on any other student' comments.

2 points: Student comment is present, but is off the subject or of extremely poor quality. Student has not also commented on any other student' comments.

0 points: No attempt to respond.

Essay Exam Question Rubric

Exam essays should be at least 3 paragraphs, with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

50 points: Student correctly and thoroughly answer the essay prompt, provides an explanation of the significance for Texas state government and provides an example; and then explains. **The student cites at least two sources; one of these may be the textbook [or perhaps ought to be the textbook].**

40 points: Student correctly and thoroughly answer the essay prompt, provides an explanation of the significance for Texas state government and provides an example, but their explanation is not solid. The student cites at least one source, which may be the course textbook.



30 points: Student correctly answers the essay prompt, but does not provide an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Or student does provide a valid example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government, but the essay response is incorrect. No references are cited.

20 points: Student makes a good faith effort, but more than ½ is missing. No references are cited.

0 points: No attempt or response is wholly incorrect.

Grading Weights

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Quizzes	10%
Discussions	10%
Exams MC	30%
Exam Essays	10%
Final Exam	30%
Final Exam Essay	10%
Total	100%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
7/6	Course Introduction & Approaches to IR (7/6 - 7/7) Ch 1 The Historical Context of Modern IR (7/8 - 7/9) Ch 2	Chapter 1 and Chapter 1 PPT Chapter 2 and Chapter 2 PPT	Quiz 1 due 11:59 pm 7 July Discussion #1 due 11:59 pm 7 July Quiz 2 due 11:59 pm 9 July
7/13	International Relations Theories (7/13 - 7/14) Ch 3 Levels of Analysis (7/15 - 7/16) Ch 4 Exam 1 MC and Exam 1 Essay (7/17)	Chapter 3 and Chapter 3 PPT Chapter 4 and Chapter 4 PPT Exam 1 covers chapters 1 - 4	Quiz 3 due 11:59 pm 14 July Discussion #2 due 11:59 pm 14 July Quiz 4 due 11:59 pm 16 July Both parts of Exam 1 are due by 11:59 pm on 17 July
7/20	The State and the Tools of Statecraft (7/20 - 7/21) Ch 5 War and Security (7/22 - 7/23) Ch 6	Chapter 5 and Chapter 5 PPT Chapter 6 and Chapter 6 PPT	Quiz 5 is due 11:59 pm on 21 July Discussion #3 is due 11:59 pm on 21 July Quiz 6 due 11:59 pm 23 July
7/27	International Cooperation and International Law (7/27 - 7/28) Ch 7 Exam 2 MC and Exam 2 Essay (7/29) International Political Economy (7/31) Ch 8	Chapter 7 and Chapter 7 PPT Exam 2 covers chapters 5 - 7 Chapter 8 and Chapter 8 Essay	Quiz 7 is due by 11:59 pm on 28 July Discussion #4 is due by 11:59 pm on 28 July Both parts of Exam 2 are due by 11:59 pm on 29 July Quiz 8 is due by 11:59 pm on 31 July
8/3	International Intergovernmental Organizations and Nongovernmental Organizations (8/3 - 8/4) Ch 9 Human Rights (8/5 - 8/6) Ch 10 Final Exam (8/7)	Chapter 9 and Chapter 9 PPT Chapter 10 and Chapter 10 PPT The Final Exam is comprehensive, but 1/2 the questions are from Chapters 8 -10	Quiz 9 is due by 11:59 pm on 4 August Discussion #5 is due by 11:59 pm on 4 August Quiz 10 is due by 11:59 pm on 6 August Both parts of the Final Exam are due by 11:59 pm on 7 August

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.



COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

In the classroom, students are expected to listen attentively, participate respectfully, and adhere to established rules. Behavior that interferes with the class lecture may result in disciplinary action, ensuring a productive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Any disputes over academic matters should be addressed calmly and constructively, ideally during designated times such as office hours or after class. If a student does not agree with a decision, they can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss their concerns in more detail. Should further resolution be needed, the student may escalate the matter to the department head or use formal grievance procedures as outlined in the sections below. (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4 (<https://www.tamtu.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

TAMU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMU student, you are bound by the TAMU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMU student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at Student Handbook (<https://www.tamtu.edu/handbook/index.shtml>).

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where



an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMIU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism:** Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
 - **Caution:** Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
 - **Caution:** Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.
- **Penalties for Cheating:** Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an "F" in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an "F" in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."
 - **Caution:** Chat groups that start off as "study groups" can easily devolve into "cheating groups." Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMIU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member's charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member's e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

You may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course. In general, you should get credit for a work product only once.

AI Policies

Your instructor will provide you with their personal policy on the use of AI in the classroom setting and associated coursework.

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download the SafeZone app, which is a free mobile app for all University faculty, staff, and students. SafeZone allows you to: report safety concerns (24/7), get connected with mental health professionals, activate location sharing with authorities, and anonymously report incidents. Go to SafeZone (<https://www.tamiu.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml>) for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not



suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services for Students located in Student Center 124. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Office of Disability Services for Students.

For accommodations or assistance with disabilities, contact the Disability Coordinator, Karla Pedraza, at karla.pedraza@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2763, or visit Student Center 124.

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the "Leave of Absence Request" form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: [Student Handbook \(https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml\)](https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml)).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. Students who experience or observe alleged or suspected discrimination due to their pregnant/parenting status, should report to the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site, *Report It*, at <https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/index.shtml>).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodation. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student needs a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.#As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOAs for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule.#Both rules can be found in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.

For parenting-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the Parenting Liaison, Mayra Hernandez, at mghernandez@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2265, or visit Student Center 226.

For pregnancy-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the TIX Coordinator, Lorissa Cortez, at lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2857, or visit Killam Library 159.

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, *ReportIt* (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit>) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a "W." To qualify for an "incomplete" and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a "W", and the student must be passing the course;



2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an "Incomplete Grade Contract" and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the "I" to automatically be converted to an "F"; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an "incomplete" may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar's Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamiu.edu) (<https://www.tamiu.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Distance Education Courses

This course is a fully online non-synchronous course.

How does the course work?

If you are planning to take this course you must be self-motivated. Because there is no classroom to report to every other day it is all too easy to allow yourself to inadvertently fall behind and become discouraged. Therefore, you should set aside a daily time when you can visit the course for at least a two-hour period as a part of your regular schedule. At the beginning of the semester you will be assigned a user name and a password [your TAMIU student email account name and password]. You will need to keep these in a safe place, because they are required to log into the course in Blackboard.

1. The Calendar: Please refer to the course calendar in Blackboard often. It will show when [Module] Discussions are open for comment [they are required], when quizzes are open [4-day window], when exams are open [12 hour window], and when and if extra-credit lectures are available.



2. This course requires each student to log into the course's Blackboard site at least every day, but you can do this at any time you wish at any hour of the day or night (except for the times when the university computer or the Blackboard is being worked on). Please remember (especially if you are a night person) that I may not actually be physically present when you log into the course!
3. You are expected to read the appropriate chapters in the textbook as you progress through the course. Read each chapter thoroughly and read each chapter a minimum of three times. Skim the chapter before you review each chapter's online presentation to get an idea about the subject matter about to be presented. Then after you have reviewed the online presentation read the chapter more seriously and thoroughly, taking notes or at least highlighting. Remember, that you will be responsible on exams for all the material in the chapter, even if the Blackboard presentation does not cover all the chapter's material. Lastly, in preparation for the exam read the chapter(s) again
4. Discussions: For about every other chapter/module I will initiate a class discussion based upon a subject of the respective chapter. We will conduct these within the Blackboard Discussion Area. Each student is required to read the on-going discussion about every week, and each student is required to contribute to each and every discussion. What should I contribute, you may be asking? Add your own comments to the discussion, type out anything from a few sentences to a paragraph (this is all that's required – you may do more). Perhaps you read a similar article in another newspaper or magazine and want to tell the class how the information presented is different or the same. Perhaps you read an editorial of political commentary on the subject–tell us about it. You will also need to read any other student's discussion response and make a two or three or more sentence comment in reaction to what they have posted. This also means that everyone should read all of the discussions, questions, comments, and responses. Discussions are a graded component of the online course. Each discussion is worth 1 point.
5. AI Policy: Students are allowed to utilize AI to do research and find information for their discussion posts and exam essays. You may not, however, use more than 20% of the information generated by AI in their responses. Turnitin can check for the proportion of AI content just as it does for plagiarism. Any response with more than 20% nonhuman content will not be accepted and given a zero.
6. We will have three exams during the course: two mid-term exams and a final exam. You will take these online.

Expectations of the Course

Students are expected to:

- Review the "Start Here" materials, but especially this Syllabus.
- Participate and contribute to all the Discussions.
- Review and follow the **Course Calendar**.
- Log-in at least every weekday, MTWH.
- Respond to Discussions by the corresponding deadline.
 - One initial discussion response to the prompt, plus two comments in response to other students' discussion responses.
 - Responses are not required on the Meet and Greet Discussion nor for Texas News #5.
- Respond to Blackboard Message, if necessary, within 2 days.
- Take Quizzes and Exams by the corresponding deadlines.
- Exams require Respondus Lockdown Browser. Quizzes do not.

The professor will:

- Log-in to the course at least every class day.
- Respond to emails within **two business days**.
- Grade assignments within **four days of the assignment deadline**.

Announcements/Course Messages/Emails

Announcements will be posted as needed. Please do not use TAMIU email, instead send and receive messages via Blackboard Message.

Assignments and Assessment

Quizzes: there is a quiz for each chapter. You have two attempts for each quiz and only the highest grade will be recorded. Do each quiz twice.

Discussions: there are five discussion session in the course. you will need to write a response to the discussion prompt. These will normally be two to three paragraphs long. You will also need to read any other student's discussion response and make a two or three or more comment in reaction to what they have posted.

Exams: there will be three exams, two mid-term exams and a comprehensive final exam. The exams will include one essay each. The topics will be displayed at least five days prior to the exam essay's due date. In your three to four paragraph long essay, you should informally cite or list [at the end] at least two sources.



Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

There are course expectations concerning etiquette or how we should treat each other online. We must consider these values as we communicate with one another. Visit **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' web page on Netiquette** (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml>) for further instruction.

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodation for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodation. For more information, contact the online at **Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS)**, via phone at 956.326.3086 or by visiting the staff at the Student Center, room 118. A link to the Disabilities Services for Students site has also been included under the "Resources" tab inside the course.

Student Support Resources

The University wishes to have all students succeed in their courses. To provide support to our students, an array of services in the areas of technology support, academic support, student support, and accessibility support may be found at the University. For more information, visit the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services page on **University Resources and Support Services**.

Computer/Technology Requirements

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Students in distance education should have knowledge of basic computer and Internet skills, as mentioned on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/knowledge-and-skills.shtml>). Additional skills required for this course include knowing how to use Turnitin (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/technology/turnitin.shtml>). If you use an Apple computer, you need to change the word processor files to a .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .txt format. Turnitin cannot read Apple word processor files. For more information see: [https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Student_Guides/Turnitin_Classic_\(Deprecated\)/09_Submitting_a_Paper](https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Student_Guides/Turnitin_Classic_(Deprecated)/09_Submitting_a_Paper)

Computer/Technology Requirements

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Online students will need regular access to a personal computer that runs on a broadband Internet connection.

It is recommended that you meet the technical requirements listed on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml>) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: Microsoft PowerPoint for viewing lesson presentations and Microsoft Word for viewing course files and submitting assignments. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamiau.edu/>. This site also provides students access to download the Microsoft suite for educational use. See instructions for downloading the Microsoft Office suite (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/documents/Microsoft-Office-2016-Download-Instructions.pdf>).

Note: Students if you do not own the required hardware, software or do not have access to internet, it will be more than highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you to find solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either be found free of charge at TAMIU's library, computer labs, and classrooms. In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at <http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/elearning-orientation.shtml> or by contacting the eLearning team at elearning@tamiau.edu.

Technical Support Services

Because of the nature of distance education courses, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) computing and information services are vital to the success of online students. This webpage covers contact information for Distance Education Services (Blackboard Support), the OIT Help Desk, and E-mail support: Technical Support Services (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/technical-support-services.shtml>).

Respondus LockDown Browser

This course requires the use of Respondus Lockdown Browser. The above-mentioned fee pays for a whole academic year. I do not use Lockdown Monitor, as this is far too intrusive.



Watch this short video (<http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml>) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser. A student Quick Start Guide (PDF) (<http://www.respondus.com/products/monitor/guides.shtml>) is also available.

Download Instructions

Click the **Student Support** top-middle tab located in Blackboard. Locate the *Download Respondus LockDown Browser* module and click on the icon or link. You will be redirected to the information for Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor. Links to download the software for PC and Mac are listed *Installing the Respondus LockDown Browser Download* section. It is **free** to download and install the software (on its own). Note: computers in TAMU computer labs already have this program.

Once Installed

- Open LockDown Browser
- Log into Blackboard Learn
- Navigate to the test and begin

Note: You won't be able to access tests with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Cost for Respondus Monitor

There is a **\$15 fee** for the webcam feature that's used with LockDown Browser (sometimes referred to as Respondus Monitor). This course does not require Respondus Monitor. This is a one-time fee, valid for 12 months (365 days) for all courses or exams that use Respondus Monitor. You will be prompted to make the purchase the first time an exam requires the use of LockDown Browser's webcam feature. Payment can be made with PayPal, Visa or Mastercard.

To pay for Respondus Monitor:

1. Start Respondus LockDown Browser (http://www.jsu.edu/online/current-students/resp_lock_browser_students.html).
2. Navigate to your test.
3. Complete the set-up process, which includes a payment screen for entering credit card information.
4. Payment and entering credit card information is only necessary one-time per course.

Guidelines

When taking an online exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Turn off all other devices (e.g. tablets, phones, second computers)
- Clear your area of all external materials — books, papers, other devices
- Remain at your computer for the duration of the test
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted.

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with Lockdown Browser:

- The Windows and Mac versions of Lockdown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues.
- If you have problems downloading, installing, or taking a test with Respondus Lockdown Browser, email the TAMU eLearning Team at elarning@tamiu.edu.

Web Conferences

I will hold online office hours Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm, but simultaneously I will be present in my AIC 335 faculty office,

RUBRICS

Discussion Grading Rubrics

All discussions are worth a maximum of 10 points. Grades may fall between the scores listed below.



10 points: Student comment is on subject and fully answers the discussion prompt with an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Student has also commented on two other students' comments.

8 points: student comment is on subject and almost fully answers the discussion prompt but may lack an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Student has also commented on another student's discussion responses.

6 points: Student comment is on subject and answers the discussion prompt but incompletely and lacks an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. The student discussion post complies with the 8-point criteria, and the student did not comment on any other students' posts.

4 points: Student comment is on subject but incompletely and uses poor grammar and spelling. Student has not also commented on any other student's comments.

2 points: Student comment is present, but is off the subject or of extremely poor quality. Student has not also commented on any other student's comments.

0 points: No attempt to respond.

Essay Exam Question Rubric

Exam essays should be at least 3 paragraphs, with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The essay should also informally cite two sources. The textbook is a valid source.

50 points: Student correctly and thoroughly answer the essay prompt, provides an explanation of the significance for Texas state government and provides an example; and then explains. **The student cites at least two sources; one of these may be the textbook [or perhaps ought to be the textbook].**

40 points: Student correctly and thoroughly answer the essay prompt, provides an explanation of the significance for Texas state government and provides an example, but their explanation is not solid. The student cites at least one source, which may be the course textbook.

30 points: Student correctly answers the essay prompt but does not provide an example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government. Or student does provide a valid example and/or mention of the significance or importance for the study of Texas government, but the essay response is incorrect. No references are cited.

20 points: Student makes a good faith effort, but more than ½ is missing. No references are cited.

0 points: No attempt or response is wholly incorrect.

Late Work Policy

Late work will not usually be accepted, except under extraordinary circumstances.

Course Evaluation

At the end of this course, students are encouraged to complete a course evaluation that will be distributed to them via email and through a course link.

Accessibility and Privacy Statements on Course Technologies

At Texas A&M International University, we believe that all students should have equal technology opportunities in the classroom. These technologies/sites may also require user data, such as the creation of a username and password. You may find the accessibility and privacy policies of the technologies used in this class on the following pages: **Accessibility Statements and Privacy Statements**.

Syllabus Subject to Change

While information and assurances are provided in this course syllabus, it should be understood that content may change in keeping with new research and literature and that events beyond the control of the instructor could occur. Students will be informed of any substantive occurrences that will produce syllabus changes.

Special Note for Online Courses

This course is designed to present you with the same material as you would receive in a traditional class. Some students who have taken these courses before realize that all of the lecture material is online and that they can move ahead of the rest of the class. However, if you do not attend to the material at least once a week together with discussion participation, you will fall behind and it will be difficult if not impossible to catch up. Because you are not going to a lecture hall at a specified time, in your mind it will be easy to think that this course can be put to one side. Take it from someone who did poorly in self-paced courses as an undergrad for that very reason: resist this impulse.



Closing Notes to Students

Please remember the following:

- I am always happy to meet with students to discuss their concerns about the course, by appointment. I will be available for most of the semester.
- Student is totally responsible for keeping track of their grades. The course Blackboard page allows you to check your grades within the course. Don't worry, you and the professor are the only ones who can see your grades. The Blackboard gradebook is sometimes messed up. Ask if in doubt. It often makes you think you are doing much worse [or occasionally much better] than you really are. If there are questions about grades or other problems, it is the student's responsibility to politely let the professor know of these.
- The procedures described in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Announcement in class or through the course's Blackboard page is considered sufficient notice.
- There will be material on the tests that is not covered in online lectures but is in the textbook.
- It is essential that you read each text carefully and thoroughly. This is a college course and much reading is required. I recommend you read the textbook three times. Skim the assigned chapter before class, then read it thoroughly after class, and last read it again when studying for the exam.
- I want you to do well. Please work hard and please read.
- **GOOD LUCK!** [but it's not really mostly luck]