COURSE OBJECTIVE:
The purpose of the course is to acquaint the student with Texas state and local government. The student will be introduced to: (a) a framework for analyzing Texas politics and government; (b) the constitutional basis for Texas government; (c) the processes of Texas politics and government; (d) the institutions of Texas politics and government; and (e) policies of Texas government. Specific behavioral objectives will accompany each unit of instruction.

GRADING PROCEDURES:
The student will be evaluated through four (4) unit examinations and one written assignment. The unit examinations will consist of objective and essay questions. Each unit examination will consist of forty (40) multiple-choice and true/false questions and two (2) short essay questions. The questions will cover the behavioral objectives for the assigned chapters in the Keith and Haag textbook and the lectures. Each multiple-choice question will be worth (1) point and each essay question will be worth five (5) points. A student may earn a maximum of 200 points on the four unit examinations.

The written assignment will be a research paper on a problem in Texas state or local government. The paper is described on pages 3 and 4 of this syllabus. A student may earn a maximum of 100 points for his or her research paper.

The total number of points accumulated during the semester will determine a student's grade for the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>TOTAL POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>270-300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>240-269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>210-239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>180-209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>179 or fewer</td>
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TESTING PROCEDURES:
The four unit examinations will be administered in class on the dates indicated on the course activity calendar. Students who are unable to take the examination because of an excused absence will take a make-up examination in the PIN Testing Center (Room 706). Students who miss an examination because of an unexcused absence will not be allowed to take the examination in the testing center during the semester; however, those students may take an examination on that unit as a retest on the last class meeting of the semester. Students will not be allowed to take more than one unit examination on the last class meeting of the semester. The instructor will determine, on an individual basis, what constitutes an excused absence.

RETESTING PROCEDURES:
Students may retest one unit examination on the last class meeting of the semester. Students may also retest one unit examination in the PIN Testing Center (706) during the semester. The examination format for retests will be the same as for the original examination and will cover the behavioral objectives for the unit; however, the questions will be different. If a student elects to take a retest, the retest score will replace the score on the original examination. A permission slip, issued and signed by the instructor, is required before a student can retest in the PIN Testing Center (706).

EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS:
Students will be provided an opportunity to earn extra credit points after each unit examination. The extra credit assignments will involve a variety of activities that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the material covered in the unit. There will be several options for extra credit, but students may complete only one extra credit option for each unit of instruction. The extra credit assignment will be worth a maximum of five (5) points and will be due on the scheduled date for the next unit examination.

INCOMPLETE GRADES:
A student may receive a temporary grade of "I" under the following conditions: (a) the student has a valid, medical reason for requesting an incomplete and has accumulated at least 100 points; (b) the student requests a grade of "I" and completes the required form; and (c) the student agrees to complete the course by the deadline established on the Report of Incomplete Grade form.

ATTENDANCE AND PROGRESS REQUIREMENTS:
Regular attendance is considered essential to the successful completion of this course. Supplemental material covered in lectures will be covered on the unit examinations. To remain enrolled in the course, students must attend class regularly and must not accumulate an excessive number of unexcused absences during the semester. The instructor will determine, on an individual basis, what constitutes an excessive number of absences and whether an absence is excused or unexcused. The student is responsible for informing the instructor of the reason for any absence from class.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES:
Students who withdraw prior to the twelfth class day will not receive any grade on their records. After that date and until November 27, 2006, students who withdraw or are withdrawn by the instructor will receive a nonpunitive grade of "W" for the course. After November 27, 2006, students may not withdraw nor may the instructor withdraw them. Those students will receive a performance grade (A, B, C, D, or F).

The instructor is permitted to withdraw students whose attendance and/or progress is not satisfactory; however, the student is responsible for withdrawing from this course if she or he is no longer interested in completing the course.
SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:
As described in Austin Community College Student Handbook, scholastic dishonesty constitutes a violation of college rules and regulations and is punishable as outlined in the Handbook. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination (either providing answers to or stealing answers from another student), plagiarism, and collusion. Plagiarism includes the use of another author's words or arguments without attribution. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of any course requirement. If a student commits any of the offenses cited above in this class or in the Testing Center, the instructor will recommend and actively seek a grade of "F" for the student for the course.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM:
As described in Austin Community College Policy V-72, academic freedom protects professors and students in their search for truth and its free expression. However, professors and students also share a responsibility to respect the opinions of others and to ensure that course materials and discussions are relevant to the course objectives.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Students with Disabilities at PIN 221 (phone number 223-8300) as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

TEXTBOOK:

UNITs OF INSTRUCTION AND TEXTBOOK ASSIGNMENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit I: The Context for Texas Government and Politics</th>
<th>Chapters 1-2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit II: Parties, Interest Groups, and the Media</td>
<td>Chapters 3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit III: the Legislature, Executive, Bureaucracy, and Judiciary</td>
<td>Chapters 5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit IV: Local Governments and Public Policies</td>
<td>Chapters 7-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESEARCH PAPER:
Every student is required to submit a research paper on a problem in Texas government.

Purpose: The purpose of the research paper is threefold: to give the student an opportunity to explore a problem in Texas state or local government, to give the student experience in formal writing, and to assist the student in developing his or her analytical skills.

Topic: The topic of the research paper must be a problem in Texas state or local government. The student is expected to select a topic of interest to him or her. However, the student should discuss the appropriateness of the topic with the instructor before beginning the paper. The topic should have been selected and submitted to the instructor by September 6, 2006.

Format: The research paper must be legibly handwritten or typed with a total length of between 8 and 10 pages, not counting the title page and the Works Cited page. The title page will include the research
question, the student's name, the course number, and the section number. In writing the research paper, the student is expected to use a variety of sources, including books, journals, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and the Internet. Sources used in writing the paper must be documented in the body of the paper and listed on a Works Cited page at the end of the paper. The citations must conform to the Modern Language Association (MLA) style.

The research paper should consist of three sections. The first section, approximately one page in length, should state the problem and should be titled "Statement of the Problem." The second section, approximately four pages in length, should describe and analyze, using a variety of sources, the attempts by government to deal with the problem and should be titled "Government's Attempted Solutions." The third section, approximately three pages in length, should present the student's solution to the problem and should be titled "My Solution."

**Grading:** The research paper will be graded using the following criteria: appropriateness of the topic (10 points); quantity and quality of the sources used to write the paper (10 points); description and analysis of the government's attempts to solve the problem (30 points); the student's solution to the problem (30 points); grammar, spelling, writing style, and proper documentation of sources (20 points).

**Deadline:** The research paper is due on **November 29, 2006. Five (5) points will be deducted for each class meeting date that the paper is late.**