FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
POLS 207 Professor Tucker

CLASS MEETINGS
Where does the class meet?
Blocker 102.

When does the class meet?
Tuesday and Thursday, 9:35-10:50.

Where will tests be administered?
In the room where the class meets.

When will tests be administered?
During class time.

Where will makeup tests be administered?
That information is above.

SYLLABUS
Why is this course syllabus so long?
• To help students learn to acquire information through written documents;
• To save students the time and trouble of asking the instructor;
• To save the instructor the time and effort of answering the same questions to hundreds of students.

In a typical semester, what proportion of questions do students ask concerning course procedures that are answered on the course syllabus?
More than 98%.

How do you know what questions students are going to ask?
Past students have already asked them.

What do you do when students ask questions concerning course procedures that should be answered on the course syllabus but are not?
• I answer the students;
• If appropriate, I discuss the questions and answers in class;
• If appropriate, I email the questions and answers to students registered in the course.

Do you appreciate questions that you think should be answered on the course syllabus but are not answered on the course syllabus?
I appreciate the questions and I appreciate the students who ask them.

Do you solicit questions that are answered on the course syllabus?
No.

Do you intend to answer questions students ask this semester that are answered on this syllabus?
No.

Why do you not intend to answer questions students ask this semester that are answered on this syllabus?
• To help students learn to acquire information through written documents;
• To save students the time and trouble of asking the instructor;
• To save the instructor the time and effort of answering the same questions to hundreds of students.

Why do you want students to learn to acquire information through written documents?
Employers (and others) expect graduates of Texas A&M University to have this skill.
COURSE WEB SITE
Where is the course web site?
   http://www.ELearning.tamu.edu

COMMUNICATING WITH THE PROFESSOR
Why have you not replied to my email or telephone message?
   Email messages must have Pols 207, the correct section number and your name as listed by the University Registrar in the message subject line. Email must be sent from a TAMU email address. I cannot reply to email or telephone messages until after I have received the communication. Do not expect replies to questions answered on this course syllabus. Do not expect replies to inquiries about and requests for alternatives to the grading criteria specified in the course syllabus.

   Why won't you give information about test scores and grades by telephone or email?
   That could be a violation of university policy and federal law.

STUDYING AND TESTS
Will there be Supplemental Instruction sessions for this class?
   Yes.

Where is information posted about Supplemental Instruction times and locations?
   On the course web site.

Where is information posted about changes to Supplemental Instruction times and locations?
   On the course web site.

I have not attended class and want to know whether announcements about Supplemental Instruction were made but are not yet posted on the course web site. Should I ask Professor Tucker?
   No.

I have not attended class and want to know whether announcements about Supplemental Instruction were made but are not yet posted on the course web site. What should I do?
   Contact students who attended class and/or keep checking the course web site.

What are the dates for tests and makeup tests?
   That information is above.

What are the times for tests and makeup tests?
   That information is above.

Where will tests and makeup tests be held?
   That information is above.

How should I prepare for class lectures?
   Read the material specified on the course syllabus before each class.

If I miss a lecture how can I get lecture notes?
   Ask other students, particularly students attending Supplemental Instruction sessions, to share their notes with you.

Does Professor Tucker provide detailed notes to students who miss lectures?
   No.

Have you authorized anyone to sell lecture notes?
   No.

Have you authorized anyone to sell summaries of material in the textbook?
   No.
Is attendance at class lectures recorded?
   No.

Must I inform the instructor in advance if I am going to miss a lecture?
   No.

Must I inform the instructor after I miss a lecture?
   No.

How will you let me know if a test will be given on a date other than those specified on the course syllabus?
   In case of emergency an email message will be sent to your Texas A&M University email address.

What should I do to prepare for tests?
   Read the material multiple times. At the end of each section of text ask yourself, “What multiple choice questions from this material would the person who wrote the material ask?”

What else should I do to prepare for tests?
   Read material multiple times before it is covered in lectures.

What else should I do to prepare for tests?
   Attend Supplemental Instruction sessions.

What else should I do to prepare for tests?
   Get together with other students and ask each other what questions will be on the test.

What else should I do to prepare for tests?
   Anything you do to help yourself think actively about what you have read will be beneficial. Answering essay questions, writing down the major points of the chapter and asking yourself what multiple choice questions could be asked are all examples.

What else should I do to prepare for tests?
   Remember that the questions are about what is written in the text and what was said during lectures.

Do I need to know all values for all states presented in all scatterplots, maps and tables in the text?
   No.

What do I need to know about the information in each scatterplot?
   • Whether or not the relationship is strong.
   • If it is strong, is the direction positive or negative.
   • Anything specifically discussed in the text about causality and/or spuriousness.

Will there be numbers and dates in some of the test questions and answers?
   Yes. But, dates and numbers in answers will not be close together. You will not be asked whether a value is 5% or 7% or 9%. You might be asked whether a value is 5% or 30% or 75%.

What should I remember as I am taking tests?
   Remember that you are seeking the best answer. More than one answer may be correct or partially correct. It is possible that no answer is completely correct. Read all answers before choosing the best answer.

Are there old tests I can review?
   No.

Why not?
   The questions tend to stay the same but the correct or best answers change.

Where can I find examples of multiple choice questions similar to those on tests?
   In the textbook.
What must I bring to tests?
You must bring one of the following that has your photograph: TAMU student ID card, driver’s license or passport, a number 2 pencil, and a gray 8½ by 11 Scantron form.

Does the photo ID have to be a TAMU student ID?
That question is answered immediately above.

What if I don’t bring a photo ID card to a test?
You will not be allowed to take the test.

What should I do if I don’t bring a photo ID to a test?
You may retrieve an existing ID or go to the General Services Complex and get a new student ID card. If you return before the first person taking a test leaves the room, you may use the remaining class time to take the test.

What should I do if all my acceptable photo identifications have been lost or stolen?
Go to the General Services Complex and get a new student ID card. They will issue a new ID card even if you cannot pay immediately.

May I start the test if I arrange for someone to bring my photo ID card?
No.

If I am late for a test will I have 60 minutes to complete it?
No. Your time will end when time ends for students who were on time for the test.

Is there an exam I must take other than the three scheduled tests?
No.

May I take tests other than the three tests specified on the syllabus?
No.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES**

What is your policy on excused absences from tests?
University attendance policy as defined in Student Rule 7 will be strictly followed [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07).

Will you excuse absences for reasons not explicitly listed in Student Rule 7, such as: job interviews, professional or academic conferences, weddings and other social events, advance purchase of nonrefundable goods or services, and activities related to TAMU activities but not explicitly listed as excused absences, etc.?
No.

What is required to document an excused absence for injury of illness?
For injuries or illnesses, students must provide written confirmation of a visit to a health care professional from the professional. It must specify the date and time of the visit and also specify that the medical service was for an acute injury or illness that made it necessary for a student to be absent from class.

What is required to document other university excused absences?
For absences listed in Rule 7.1.1, a communication from the appropriate university official. For observance of religious holy days, send an email providing the name of the religious holy day. I will let you know if I need further information. For absences listed in Rules 7.1.2, 7.1.3, 7.1.4, 7.1.5, 7.1.7 and 7.1.8, the communication from an associate dean or designee of your college specified in rule 7.2, [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07).

Why do you want documentation of excused absences sent to you by email?
- We both have a record of the message and when it was sent and received
- I am less likely to misplace email with course number, section number and student name than I am to misplace a piece of paper given to me in the classroom.

Must I inform the instructor either before or after I miss a test?
Yes. That is required by Student Rule 7, [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07).
When must I inform the instructor before I miss a test? When must I inform the instructor after I have missed a test? 

Are there deadlines for informing the instructor I have missed a test? 

Where can I find information about deadlines for informing the instructor I have missed a test? 

Are there deadlines for submitting documentation of an excused absence that is acceptable to the instructor? 
Yes, See Student Rule 7, http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07

If my documentation of an excused absence is not acceptable to the instructor, may I still provide the communication from an associate dean or designee of my college? 
If it is received by the instructor within one week of the last date of the excused absence, Yes.

If you do not accept my documentation for an excused absence, will the deadline for providing verification of an excused absence from the associate dean or designee of my college be extended? 
No.

Why do I have to provide documentation of an excused absence that is acceptable to the instructor within one week of the last date of the excused absence? 
It is required by Student Rule 7.3.

I missed both opportunities to get my MARS individual test report but I have excused absences for both class meetings. How can I get my test report? 
Document the excused absences using the procedures discussed in Student Rule 7 and above by the deadlines specified in Student Rule 7. Send me the documentation by email.

MAKEUP TESTS
Who is eligible to take a makeup test? 
Only students who have documented excused absences following the instructions above and who have received emails stating they are eligible to take a makeup test.

Are students who took a scheduled test and are unhappy with their grades eligible to take a makeup test? 
No.

What kind of questions will be makeup tests? 
That information is above.

What material will each makeup test cover? 
That information is above.

Is one of the photo IDs listed above necessary to take a makeup test? 
Yes.

TEST RESULTS AND COURSE GRADES
When can I criticize test questions and request that a different answer or more than one answer be deemed best or ask that an unfair question be excluded from grades? 
You must raise questions or issues immediately after all students have finished taking the test on its original administration.

What should I do if I think there is an error in the answer key used to grade a test? 
Inform the instructor in person or by email.

Is there a deadline for reporting suspected errors in answer keys?
Yes. Suspected errors must be reported after individual test results are available to students and answer keys are first available for review.

How are test results reported to students?
By individual error reports posted on ELearning.tamu.edu.

Where and when can I review the test questions I missed?
That information is above.

Where and when can I talk with the instructor about my test results?
At the first opportunity to review individual error reports and test keys.

What if I cannot meet with the instructor in the classroom at the times specified for talking about my test results?
Schedule an office appointment for one of the days when test results may be discussed in the classroom.

When will grades be posted on ELearning?
The same day each test is administered—unless Measurement and Research Services does not have test results available.

I think there is a mistake in my posted grade. How should I request a correction?
By email.

After I have taken a test, what can I do to improve my grades on future tests?
Review test results to see if there is a pattern to the questions you have missed. Increase the quantity and/or quality of your studying.

Given my scores on the tests I have taken, what scores do I need on remaining tests for the final course grade I want?
Texas A&M University faculty members expect Texas A&M University students to have arithmetic skills to answer this question themselves.

What if I need help finding my test results?
That information is above.

What if I can’t remember some or all of my test scores at the end of the semester?

What are the numerical cutoffs for each course letter grade?
That information is above.

Is there a final exam?
No.

Is there an exam I must take other than the three scheduled tests?
No.

Can my course grade be determined by a method other than averaging my three test grades?
No.

Will there be curving of grades at the end of the semester?
No.

**DROPPING**
Should I q-drop or should I take the remaining test or tests?
Academic programs at Texas A&M University set their own grade requirements for “passing” Pols 207. Some require a grade of D and others require a grade of C. Check with an academic adviser in your department, program or college about grade requirements. That adviser can explain your options for “freshman grade forgiveness” and q-dropping. Use arithmetic to calculate what scores you need on remaining tests for course letter grades at the end of the semester.
PROBLEMS

How do I find my test results?
That information is above.

I had a university excused absence to miss a scheduled test but I chose to take the scheduled test. Is it possible for me also to take the makeup test?
No.

DISSATISFACTION WITH COURSE GRADES

Does Professor Tucker know that Texas Aggies prefer higher course grades to lower grades?
Yes.

Should I communicate to Professor Tucker that I am a Texas Aggie and I prefer a higher course grade?
No. I already know.

After I have taken Test 1, Test 2 and Test 3, what can I do to receive a higher course grade?
Nothing.

Has Professor Tucker ever graded Pols 207 students on criteria other than those on his course syllabi?
No.

I have a compelling reason or explanation for why I did not have higher test scores. May I have course grade opportunities not available to other students?
No.

I have a compelling reason or explanation for why I did not have higher test scores. Can my course grade be determined by criteria not available to other students?
No.

If I explain in an email that I prefer a higher course grade, will Professor Tucker give me opportunities not available to other students or determine my course grade by criteria not available to other students?
No.

If I explain in person that I prefer a higher course grade, will Professor Tucker give me opportunities not available to other students or determine my course grade by criteria not available to other students?
No.

Professor Tucker insists on grading me the way he grades all other students. I am unhappy. Who can help me?
Communicate with the associate dean for undergraduate programs, or the dean’s designee, of your college. Ask that person to waive college grade or degree requirements or college or university deadlines, limitations or other requirements.

My college dean or designate will not waive deadlines or requirements for me. Should I ask Professor Tucker again?
No.

I want to appeal my course grade. How do I do it?

How do I discuss a course grade dispute with the instructor as specified in Student Rule 48?
Send me a written appeal by email or in a letter.

How many opportunities may I have to discuss a course grade dispute with the instructor?
One.

Why do you want to discuss grade disputes in writing rather than in person or by telephone?
- There is information about when your message was sent and/or received
- There is a record of the content of your message and my reply