

2015-2016 Edition

PRACTICING TEXAS POLITICS



Lyle C. Brown
Joyce A. Langenegger
Sonia R. García
Ted A. Lewis
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PRACTICING **TEXAS** POLITICS

2015–2016 Edition

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Letter to Instructor

Dear Texas Government Instructor:

Texas is a state in transition. The economy and tax system hold fast to the Lone Star State's land-based roots, while the Austin area is often called the new Silicon Valley and biotechnology and nanotechnology flourish in the state's metropolitan areas. Although Texas's population is now majority minority, Anglos continue to hold almost all statewide offices, seats in the state legislature, judicial benches, local offices, and appointive positions on boards and commissions. At the same time the state has eight emerging universities vying for Tier 1-university status, it continues to have the highest number of high school dropouts in the nation. Texas's current economic success attracts thousands of new residents each week, but limited water resources and a decaying infrastructure threaten the state's economic success and growth. Government will play an active role in negotiating and resolving these issues. The students in our classrooms will be the ones who select the policymakers and policies to deal with the multiplicity of concerns that face the Lone Star State in the 21st century. Understanding their government is critical to our students' future role as active, informed citizens.

- ***Practicing Texas Politics*** analyzes **the practices and policies** of the Lone Star State by giving students a realistic introduction to how public policymaking is conducted in Texas. The state's individualistic and traditionalistic political culture is referenced throughout to aid students in placing policy decisions in a historical and cultural context. Students are introduced to current policymakers, their decisions, and the impact of the resulting policies. The roles of political parties, special interest groups, voters, and the media in influencing public policy are also explored. Policymaking and process are integrated within each chapter throughout the book with a special emphasis on public education, higher education, social services, and infrastructure needs both as policy issues in Chapter 10, "Public Policy and Administration," and from a budgetary perspective in Chapter 13, "Finance and Fiscal Policy."

Through learning outcomes, learning checks, and other pedagogical features, students are given an organizational structure that helps them learn, understand, and remember the material.

New to This Edition

- Numbered learning objectives drive each chapter's organization with a learning objective tied to each major section and each paragraph of the chapter summary. Critical thinking questions are now presented with nearly every photo and figure, offering plentiful opportunities for instructors and students to meet this important Texas GOVT 2306 required core objective.
- A **new Chapter 6, "The Media and Politics,"** integrates scholarship with application on the roles and influence of the media, incorporates history as it relates to current roles and issues, and juxtaposes how Texas reflects national patterns with how it differs from them.
- A **new Chapter 11, "The Judicial Branch,"** is dedicated solely to a discussion of the Texas judicial system and the court structure.
- A **new Chapter 12, "The Criminal Justice System,"** focuses on the criminal and juvenile justice systems in the state.
- Updates of new laws passed by the 83rd regular and special sessions are included.
- A timely **selected reading—11 are new—**appears at the end of every chapter prior to the chapter-ending pedagogy. Readings include two Learning Check questions.

- Endnotes have been moved from the end of each chapter to the end of the book.
- Marginal **social media icons** signal new coverage of the use and transformative role of electronic technology, and particularly social media, in Texas politics.

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Our goal, first and foremost, is to help you develop your students into active, informed participants in their democracy. We have attempted to present a realistic and up-to-date picture of how Texas politics is practiced in all branches and at both local and state levels of government. We welcome your feedback on any material or feature in this book.

Sincerely,

The Practicing Texas Politics Author Team

Letter to Student

Dear Student:

Welcome to Texas government. Whether you're a native-born Texan or a newly arrived Texan, you can feel the energy of change all around you. You live in a state that no longer has a majority population from any race or ethnic group and in a few short years will have a majority Latino population. Despite the economic downturn that affected the rest of the world, you're in a state that created more new jobs than any other state for five consecutive years (2009–2013). Job growth has occurred in two economic sectors: energy and technology. The number of people who live here increases by almost 1,100 every week. The fastest growing metropolitan area by number of new residents (Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land) and the fastest growing city by rate of growth (Austin-Round Rock) are here in the Lone Star State. This same state, however, has the most uninsured children in the nation, the highest dropout rate in the country, and one of the greatest gaps in earnings between the wealthy and the poor in the United States. A decaying transportation infrastructure and depleted water resources will require multi-billion-dollar solutions. And who will solve these problems? You, the future voters and taxpayers of Texas will have that responsibility. That's why you need to understand your role and how the system works so you can keep Texas the vibrant state we all want it to be. Helping you become an effective participant in that system is why we wrote *Practicing Texas Politics*.

In this book you'll be introduced to today's important policymakers and learn what we all have a right to expect of them. You'll meet students, just like you, who have chosen to get involved and make a difference at their colleges, in their communities, and in this state. You'll learn about ways you can become involved through internships and other programs, as well as by voting and through political campaigns. You'll see how Texas compares to other states, and you'll be exposed to the diversity of the Lone Star State—home of the first all-female Supreme Court (all the way back to 1924), a host of musicians from Los Lonely Boys to Beyoncé to Willie Nelson, and four former U.S. presidents (Dwight Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush). You'll come to understand what this state could be in the future and how you can shape the outcome.

- Updated **“Students in Action”** features in each chapter help you make a personal connection to the content, highlighting how Texas students like you have participated in the community or providing information on internships and other opportunities for interested students.
- **“Point/Counterpoint”** examines a key controversial issue in Texas politics from both sides of the controversy and asks you to consider your position on each issue.
- **“Learning Checks”** provide a few factual questions at the end of major sections and at the end of each chapter's reading for you to use in checking your knowledge. Answers are provided at the end of the chapter.
- **“How Do We Compare?”** boxes compare Texas with other states.
- A **Marginal Glossary** allows you to access terms as they are needed for easier understanding of the text.
- Following the Selected Reading, **end-of-chapter materials** include a conclusion that wraps up the chapter and offers final thoughts for you to consider, a chapter summary organized by learning outcome, Key Terms, and Learning Check answers.
- Critical thinking questions ask you to think about your political opinion and beliefs on a variety of important issues in this state.
- Charts, graphs, and maps are used to give you a visual image for understanding concepts.
- Social media icons mark explanations of the ways social media is influencing government, affecting political campaigns, and transforming the media.

The Benefits of Using Mindtap as a Student

As a student, the benefits of using MindTap with this book are endless. With automatically graded practice quizzes and activities, automatic detailed revision plans on your essay assignments offered through Write Experience, an easily navigated learning path, and an interactive eBook, you will be able to test yourself in and outside of the classroom with ease. The accessibility of current events coupled with interactive media makes the content fun and engaging. On your computer, phone, or tablet, MindTap is there when you need it, giving you easy access to flashcards, quizzes, readings, and assignments.

You are the people who will guide Texas through the 21st century. It is our hope that when you understand how to get involved in Texas politics, you will choose to do so. And that once you are involved, you will use your vote and influence to create the kind of Texas in which you want to live. It is to you, the students of Texas, that we dedicate this book.

Sincerely,

The Practicing Texas Politics Author Team

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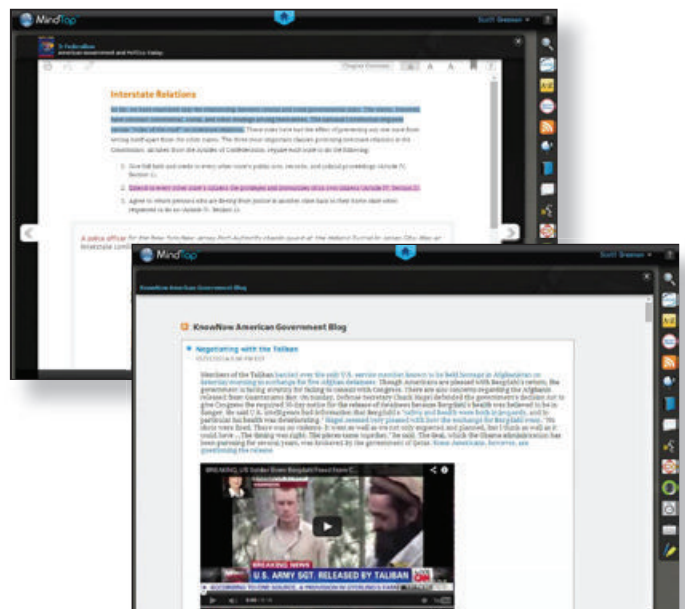


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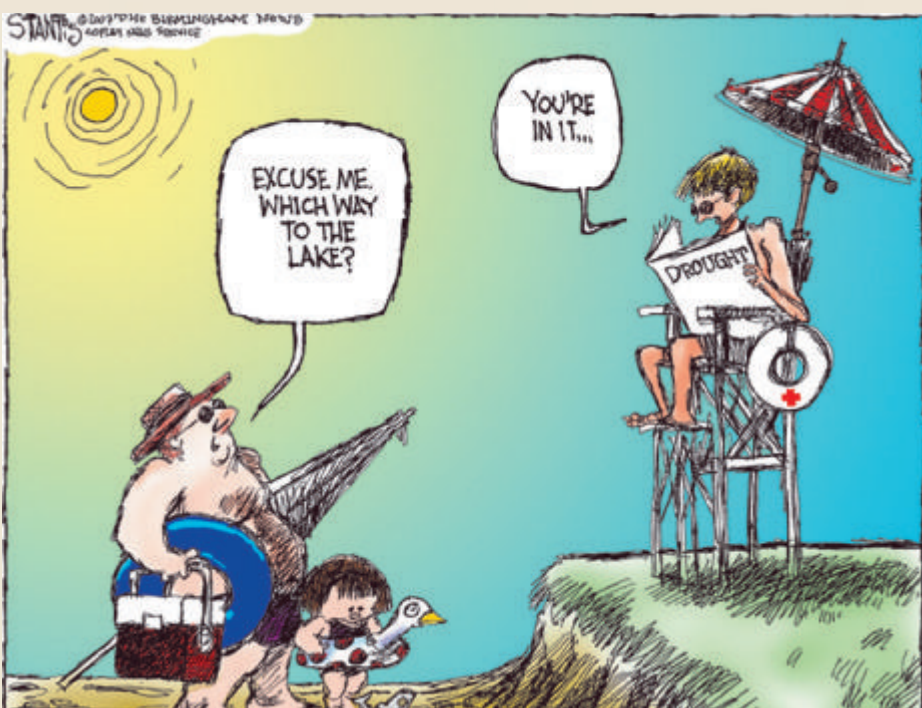
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The Environment of Texas Politics

Learning Objectives

- 1.1 Describe how political culture has shaped Texas's politics, government, and public policy.
- 1.2 Explain the differences among the geographic regions of Texas.
- 1.3 Analyze the relationship between the social history of Texas and the political characteristics of the state's diverse population.
- 1.4 Describe both the four land-based industries that formed the historic basis for the Texas economy and the diversification of the modern Texas economy.
- 1.5 Identify five major policy challenges Texas faces in the 21st century.



The drought that began in 2011 has had major implications for Texas politics and governance.

Scott Stantis/Town hall

CRITICAL THINKING

What impact has the drought that began in 2011 had on the Texas economy and government?

I have said that Texas is a state of mind, but I think it is more than that. It is a mystique closely approximating a religion. And this is true to the extent that people either passionately love Texas or passionately hate it and, as in other religions, few people dare to inspect it for fear of losing their bearings in mystery or paradox. But I think there will be little quarrel with my feeling that Texas is one thing. For all its enormous range of space, climate, and physical appearance, and for all the internal squabbles, contentions, and strivings, Texas has a tight cohesiveness perhaps stronger than any other section of America. Rich, poor, Panhandle, Gulf, city, country, Texas is the obsession, the proper study and the passionate possession of all Texans.

—John Steinbeck, 1962

Everything Is Changing in Texas

They say everything is bigger in Texas. Even the stereotypes are big—big trucks, big belt buckles, big hair—but if that’s all you know about the Lone Star State, you don’t know today’s Texas. Perhaps the biggest things about Texas are the changes it has seen and the diversity that has resulted. It’s the land of Willie Nelson, for certain; but it’s also the land of Los Lonely Boys, Pantera, Erykah Badu, Kelly Clarkson, the Geto Boys, and the Reverend Horton Heat. It’s still the land of cattle barons and oil tycoons; but it’s also the land of high-tech pioneers, international traders, defense contractors, manufacturers, and service providers. Texas’s stunning growth in recent decades has brought massive transformation and breathtaking variety in its people, economy, and politics.

If you live here, these transformations and the way our political system handles them have a significant impact on your life. Better understanding your home state and its political system will help you navigate these changes and contribute to the development of a better government. If you don’t live here, pay attention anyway; the Texas experience is a preview of the changes facing the United States as a whole. The Lone Star State’s successes and failures in negotiating these changes and balancing diverse interests will provide lessons for the rest of the nation. And you’ll probably end up moving here anyway—everyone else seems to be. Nearly 8 million people since 1990 have told their place of origin what David Crockett allegedly told the people of his district: “You may all go to hell, and I’ll go to Texas.” This growth increases both opportunities and challenges, like the persistent water shortages referenced in the cartoon above. Because of the sheer size of Texas, what happens here also has an impact on the direction of the United States as a whole.¹ The 2010 census ranked Texas second largest among the 50 states, with a population that has now exceeded 25 million. That places the Lone Star State between California with its 37 million residents and New York with 20 million.

Substantial changes and diverse interests put democratic institutions of government to the test. The increased population of the Lone Star State

includes more than 18 million men and women of voting age (18 years or older). Our analysis of the politics of Texas's state and local governments will help you understand political action and prepare you to be an active and informed participant in the political life of the state and its counties, cities, and special districts. As Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan once said, "The stakes are too high for government to be a spectator sport." It's time to suit up and play. To help you play effectively, we will introduce you to the playing field (government, political culture, land, and economy of the state), the players (citizens, activists, politicians, public employees, and opinion leaders), and the rules of the game (constitution, laws, and political processes).

Political Behavior Patterns

.....★ **LO1.1** Describe how political culture has shaped Texas's politics, government, and public policy.

There has never been full agreement in democratic societies about the proper size and role of government. Views on that question vary widely and are held deeply. Yet aside from a handful of anarchists, there *is* agreement that society needs rules, or "public policies," by which to live. Making, implementing, and enforcing these policies is the job of **government**. The government of the State of Texas is modeled on that of the United States, with the power to make policy divided among legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Each branch has its own powers, and each has some check on the power of the others. The state government also delegates some policymaking power to local governments, including counties, cities, and special districts. As a result, **public policies** take different forms.

Government, Politics, and Public Policy in Texas

Many policies are laws passed by the legislature, approved by the governor, implemented by an executive department, and interpreted by the courts. Others are constitutional amendments proposed by the legislature and ratified by the voters of Texas. Some policies derive from rules promulgated by state agencies and ordinances passed by local governments. What all of these efforts share in common is that they are attempts to meet a public need or reach a public goal. Government tries to meet public needs by allocating resources. In practice, resources are allocated when a state or local government formulates, adopts, and implements a public policy, such as raising taxes to pay for more police protection or better streets and highways. Government tries to meet public goals by using policy to encourage or discourage specific behaviors. The state can encourage some behaviors using incentives—for example, establishing scholarships or student loans to encourage getting an education. It can discourage other conduct with punishments, such as imposing penitentiary time for selling drugs. In addition, the government can encourage or discourage behaviors through public relations and information campaigns such as the famous "Don't Mess with Texas" campaign against littering.

government

A public institution with authority to formulate, adopt, implement, and enforce public policies for a society.

public policy

Government action designed to meet a public need or goal as determined by a legislative body or other authorized officials.

In the political realm, you may think of public policy as the product, and government as the factory in which it is made. If that's the case, then **politics** is the process that produces public policy. In fact, the government has at times been compared to a sausage factory—even if you like the product it produces, the process isn't always very pleasant to watch. The politics of policymaking often involves conflict among government officials, political parties, interest groups, media figures, citizens, noncitizen residents, and other groups that seek to influence how policies in Texas are enacted and implemented. Such conflict over power and resources can encourage the worst behavior in people, and opportunities for corruption and greed abound. Yet politics also requires cooperation and can inspire noble and courageous action. In sum, politics is the moving force by which government produces public policy, which in turn determines whether and how we use the power of the state to address our challenges and take advantage of our opportunities.

politics

The process of policymaking that involves conflict and cooperation between political parties and other groups that seek to elect government officials or to influence those officials when they make public policy, such as enacting and interpreting laws.

political culture

Attitudes, habits, and general behavior patterns that develop over time and affect the political life of a state or region.

moralistic culture

This culture influences people to view political participation as their duty and to expect that government will be used to advance the public good.

individualistic culture

This culture looks to government to maintain a stable society but with minimum intervention in the lives of the people.

traditionalistic culture

A product of the Old South, this culture uses government as a means of preserving the status quo and its leadership.

Political Culture

Politics is influenced by a **political culture** that consists of the values, attitudes, traditions, habits, and general behavioral patterns that develop over time and shape the politics and public policy of a particular region. Political culture is the result of both remote and recent political experiences. According to political scientist Daniel Elazar (1934–1999), “Culture patterns give each state its particular character and help determine the tone of its fundamental relationship, as a state, to the nation.”² Elazar identified three distinct cultures that exist in the United States: moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic.

In the **moralistic culture** that originated in Puritan New England, people view government as a public service. The role of government is to improve conditions for the people and to create a just society. The people expect government to provide goods and services that advance the public good. Citizens see it as their duty to become active in governmental decision making through participation in politics and government, and they hold the government accountable to their high expectations.

The **individualistic culture** grew out of westward expansion throughout the 19th century. Frontier areas to which settlers moved had no government to provide goods and services for them. They became more self-reliant, and the notion of the “rugged individualist” emerged. The business community also advanced the individualistic culture, often viewing government as an adversary that taxed and regulated them; therefore, they wanted to limit its size and scope. Individualistic culture does not consider government a vehicle for creating a just society and believes government intervention in private life should be limited. Today, the individualistic culture is dominant in a majority of the midwestern and western states.

The **traditionalistic culture** grew out of the Old South and is rooted in feudal-like notions of society and government that developed in the context of the agrarian plantation economy. In the slave states, property and income were unequally dispersed. Governmental policymaking fell to a few powerful

families or influential social groups who designed policies to preserve the social order, and a one-party system developed. The poor and minorities were often disenfranchised. In the traditionalistic culture, government is a vehicle for maintaining the status quo and its hierarchy. Today the traditionalistic culture remains dominant throughout the South.

Texas Political Culture

Texas exudes pride in its own uniqueness. The state's distinctive historical, geographical, and cultural identity has created a political culture that influences the Lone Star State's style of government, politics, and policy. As with all states, this culture is a mix of moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic subcultures. Although elements of each subculture exist in Texas, individualists and traditionalists have historically dominated the state and controlled the direction of the political system.

Texas Moralism The moralistic subculture in Texas has historically been the domain of those who lack power, yet moralists have helped shape Texas as well. Throughout its history, Texas has seen movements to use government for the betterment of society. The Radical Republicans of the post-Civil War era sought to use government to end a white supremacist political system and achieve racial equality. Radical Republican Governor E. J. Davis's aggressive use of state government power in an effort to protect African American political participation made him many enemies in the white power structure that regained control of the government when Reconstruction ended. Reaction to his administration resulted in the decentralized, weak government established by the 1876 Texas Constitution, which is still in operation today.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, **progressive** groups like the Farmers' Alliance, the Populist Party, and even the Socialist Party surged in popularity in Texas as they challenged government to control the damaging effects of rising corporate capitalism.³ Throughout the 1800s and into the early 1900s, a powerful Temperance movement in Texas sought to use government to end the sale and consumption of alcohol. From the earliest days of the civil rights struggle, **African Americans** and **Latinos** in Texas engaged in organized political activism to change the traditionalistic political structure of the state.

For most of its history Texas has been a one-party-dominant state. Whether the dominant party was Democratic or Republican, conservative majorities faced opposition from liberals who support the use of government to improve the lives of middle- and low-income Americans, one of the key identifiers of a moralistic political subculture.

Texas Individualism Daniel Elazar asserted that the political culture of Texas is strongly individualistic, in that those in positions of power have tended to believe that government should maintain a stable society but intervene as little as possible in the lives of the people.

progressive

Favoring and working for progress in conditions facing the majority of society or in government.

African American

A racial classification applied to Americans of African ancestry. The term is commonly applied on the basis of skin color, omitting white Americans whose ancestors immigrated from Africa and including black Americans whose ancestors immigrated from the Caribbean, Latin America, and Europe.

Latino

An ethnic classification of Mexican Americans and others of Latin American origin. When applied to females, the term is Latina. We will use this term throughout the book in addition to the term "Hispanic," which refers to people who trace their ancestry to Spanish-speaking countries.

An important source of Texas's individualism is the Anglo settlers' frontier experience. In the early 19th century, a growing number of colonists from the United States entered Texas individually or because they were recruited by *empresarios*, such as Stephen F. Austin. These settlers, without significant government backing, established farms and communities and persevered through extreme hardships.⁴ With this objective, settlers displaced Native Americans from a large region. Resistance by Native Americans led to thousands of Native Americans as well as settlers—men, women, and children—slain on the Texas frontier from the 1820s to the mid-1870s. This period of frontier warfare lasted longer in Texas than in most other states.

After the Texas frontier was secured, the task of establishing law and order remained. In some areas, range wars, cattle rustling, and other forms of violence continued into the 20th century. Without an extensive government structure for imposing order, many Texans grew accustomed to struggling for survival and using force to settle disputes. In 1995, when the legislature legalized the licensed carrying of concealed handguns, some interpreted the action as another influence of frontier days, when many Texans carried concealed weapons or wore pistols openly in holsters. Two assumptions, often advanced by gun rights groups, underlie the concealed weapons law: first, that Texans do not need to rely on law enforcement for protection; second, that citizens of the Lone Star State have an individual right to possess and carry weapons.

The power of Texas individualists is reflected in the government structure they helped create and continue to dominate. Compared with other heavily populated states, Texas has a limited government with restricted powers: a legislature that meets biennially, with low salaries that can be increased only after approval by Texas voters; a governor who has limited budgetary, appointment, and removal powers; and an elected judiciary. Government spending for social services and public education on a per capita basis is consistently among the lowest in the nation. Including independent school districts, Texas has more than 3,000 special districts that perform services not provided by city or county governments.

The public perception of government and elected officials remains negative, although this viewpoint appears more directed to the federal government. Recent Texas governors have been elected to multiple terms in office. In 1998, George W. Bush became the first Texas governor elected to a second four-year consecutive term (although he resigned two years into his second term, following his election as U.S. president in 2000). In 2010, Rick Perry was elected to an unprecedented third four-year term, making him the longest serving governor in Texas history.

Texas Traditionalism The dominance of traditionalistic culture in Texas also can be traced to the early 19th century. The plantation system thrived in East Texas, and cotton was king. Before Texas's entry into the Confederacy, much of its wealth was concentrated in a few families. Although slave owners represented only a quarter of the state's population and one-third of its farmers, these slave owners held 60 to 70 percent of the wealth and

controlled state politics.⁵ After the Civil War (1861–1865), “Jim Crow” laws limited African Americans’ access to public services. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, poll taxes and all-white primaries further restricted voting rights.

Today, many Texans are the descendants of migrants from traditionalistic states of the Old South, where conservatism, elitism (upper-class rule), and one-party politics were entrenched. Although urbanization and industrialization, together with an influx of people from other states and countries, are changing Texas, Elazar insisted that the traditionalistic influence of the Old South lingers. Participation in politics and voter turnout remain low. Turnout is less than 50 percent for presidential elections and is consistently less than 30 percent for gubernatorial elections. Elazar noted that many Texans have inherited southern racist attitudes, which for a century after the Civil War were reflected in state laws that discriminated against African Americans and other minority groups. It was not until 2000 that two Confederate-themed Civil War plaques were removed from the Texas Supreme Court building, as demanded by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Similar symbols of Texas’s role in the Confederacy remain in public places throughout the state and continue to cause controversy.

The traditionalistic influence of Mexico is also discernible among Texans of Mexican ancestry, who were affected by a political culture featuring the elitist *patrón* (protective political boss) system that dominates certain areas of South Texas. For more than four decades, however, the old political order of that region has been challenged—and, in many instances, defeated—by new generations of Mexican Americans.⁶ Compared with other areas of the state, however, voter turnout remains much lower in counties along the Mexican border.

The traditionalistic culture can also be seen in the state’s economic conservatism and deference to the power of wealthy individuals and corporations. Texas has a climate favorable to business owners. It remains one of the few states without a personal or corporate income tax and has adopted “right to work” laws, which make it difficult to form and operate labor unions. City councils have drawn criticism for publicly financing corporate ventures or providing certain businesses with property tax abatements. The City of Arlington drew attention for its use of local tax dollars and eminent domain to remove people from their homes to make way for Jerry Jones’s new Dallas Cowboys stadium.⁷ Other powerful individuals and families continue to play an important role in local and state politics and influence public policies.

A Changing Culture?

Since the mid-1970s, Texas has experienced massive population influx from other areas of the nation and from other countries. Many of these new Texans come from places with more heavily moralistic political cultures. This in-migration raises an important question: How long will the historical

Jim Crow laws

Ethnically discriminatory laws that segregated African Americans and denied them access to public services for many decades after the Civil War.

patrón system

A type of boss rule that has dominated areas of South Texas and Mexico.

right to work laws

Laws that limit the power of workers to bargain collectively and form and operate labor unions, increasing the power of employers relative to their employees.

eminent domain

The power of the government to take private property for public uses, so long as just compensation is paid.

Texas State Capitol Building

Courtesy of the Texas House of Representatives



CRITICAL THINKING

In what ways is Texas's political culture (moralism, individualism, and traditionalism) reflected in politics, policies, and the people's attitudes about, and expectations of, government today?

✓ 1.1 Learning Check

1. True or False: The goal of public policy is to influence people's behavior.
2. Which two types of political culture have traditionally been dominant in Texas?

Answers on p. 39.

dominance of individualism and traditionalism continue to be the primary influences on Texas's style of politics and government? Will population changes shift the state toward the moralistic culture? Texas's political-cultural identities, inherited largely from the 19th century, face the transformative power of widespread urbanization, industrialization, education, communication, and population change. Change is inevitable, but the direction, scope, and impact of the change remain to be seen.

The Land

LO1.2 Explain the differences among the geographic regions of Texas.

Texas's politics and public policy have always been shaped by the state's size. Its large area and diverse physical geography create strong regional interests and distinct subcultures. The state is bounded by New Mexico to the west; Oklahoma to the north; Arkansas, Louisiana, and the Gulf of Mexico to the east, and borders Mexico to its south. This international boundary follows the Rio Grande (known as Rio Bravo del Norte in Mexico) in its southeastern course from El Paso to Brownsville and the Gulf of Mexico.

Size

With more than 267,000 square miles of territory, Texas is second only to Alaska (570,640 square miles) in area and is as large as the combined areas of Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Connecting the more than 1,200 incorporated cities in Texas requires approximately 222,000 miles of roadways, including more than 80,000 miles of major highways constructed and maintained under the supervision of the Texas Department of Transportation. The state's massive size has an impact on political campaigns as well. Running for statewide, and in some instances district-level, office requires a significant investment of financial resources.



Despite the rise of **social media** as an inexpensive and effective campaigning and organizing tool, traveling the state for rallies and fundraisers while targeting 20 media markets with advertisements is an expensive undertaking that requires extensive fundraising.

Regions

Because of the state's vast size and geographic diversity, Texas developed a concept of five areas—North, South, East, West, and Central Texas—as five potentially separate states. In fact, the United States congressional resolution by which Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845 specifies that up to four states “in addition to said state of Texas” may be formed out of its territory and that each “shall be entitled to admission to the Union.” Over the years, various plans for carving Texas into five states have been proposed to the Texas legislature. Few Texans have taken those plans seriously. Physical geographers have identified four distinct regions: the Texas Great Plains (a part of the Great Plains originating at the Canadian border), the Gulf Coastal Plains (extending along the Gulf of Mexico to Florida), the Interior Lowlands, and the Basin and Range Province (extending to California). The Texas Comptroller's office identifies 13 separate economic regions in Texas. For simplicity, we condense these 13 regions down to six (Figure 1.1).

The West Texas Plains Agriculture is the economic bedrock of the West Texas Plains, from the sheep, goat, and cattle production in its southern portions to the cotton, grain sorghum, and feedlot cattle in the north. The area depends heavily on the continually depleting and environmentally sensitive Ogallala Aquifer. The careful management of this underground water-bearing rock formation will be crucial to the region's future. Below the Cap Rock Escarpment, oil production forms the economic base of cities like Odessa and Midland.

From the Panhandle down to Odessa, West Texas is known for its social, economic, and political conservatism. Dominated by white **Protestant fundamentalism**, agriculture, and oil, West Texas is fertile soil for the Republican Party. Democrats have little electoral success here even in the larger cities of Lubbock and Amarillo.

The Border South and Southwest Texas border Mexico. The region produces citrus fruits and vegetables, but increasingly it is international trade that is

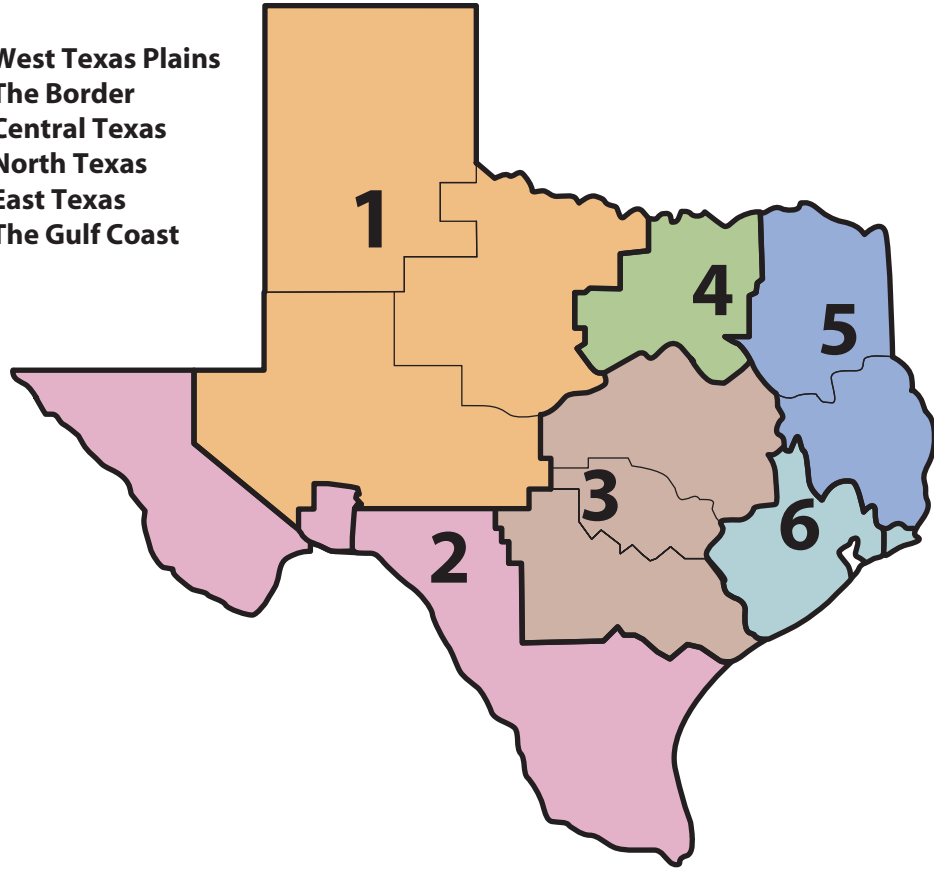
social media

Websites and computer applications that allow users to engage in social networking and create online communities. Social media provide platforms for sharing information and ideas through discussion forums, videos, photos, documents, audio clips, and the like.

Protestant fundamentalism

A socially and politically conservative form of Protestant Christianity that arose in the late 1800s as a reaction against modernism. Protestant fundamentalists insist that the Christian Bible is literally true in both religious and historical terms.

1. West Texas Plains
2. The Border
3. Central Texas
4. North Texas
5. East Texas
6. The Gulf Coast



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Figure 1.1 The 6 Regions of Texas

CRITICAL THINKING

How does Texas's large geographic size affect its politics and governance? How do the state's regions differ in culture, politics, and economy?

vital to its economy, which can thus be sensitive to swings in the Mexican economy. In 1994, the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)** lowered trade barriers among Mexico, the United States, and Canada. The resulting rise of *maquiladoras*, or American factories on the Mexican side of the border, meant that U.S. companies could take advantage of Mexico's inexpensive labor pool and lax regulation there. Much cross-border investment resulted.

From El Paso to Brownsville, many Texans near the border have deep ties with Mexico and are strongly linked to it through family, friends, media, and trade. Spanish is the primary language in many cities, and the Catholic Church is a major part of everyday life. With a large Latino population, the Democratic Party has substantial electoral success here.

Central Texas Waco, Austin, and San Antonio are all in Central Texas. The region is dominated by universities and colleges, the high-tech sector,

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

An agreement among Mexico, the United States, and Canada designed to expand trade by eliminating tariffs among the three nations.

the state government, tourism, and major military bases. It is also home to the German Hill Country, an agricultural region that holds onto its Central European cultural identity and its social and political conservatism.

Despite being the capital of a conservative state, Austin is politically and socially liberal and self-avowedly “weird.” With a boom in the high-tech industry, a major university, and a thriving art and music scene, Austin has experienced rapid growth and in-migration from all over the country and the world, but particularly from highly educated former residents of the Northeast and West Coast. Austin also has the highest concentration of millennials in the nation.⁸ As a result, the Democratic Party does well in Austin, and also in San Antonio, though surrounding areas tend toward Republican conservatism.

North Texas This region is home to the Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex dividing East and West Texas. This metropolitan area has seen decades of explosive growth and economic development as national and international corporations continue to move their headquarters here. Although Fort Worth still embraces its cowboy past, Dallas seems to prefer diving headlong into the future. Both cities have become modern centers for high-tech industries, financial services, defense contractors, and food production.

Fort Worth is home to Wendy Davis, who was the Democratic Party’s candidate for governor in 2014. Democrats sometimes find electoral success in the urban centers of the metroplex, but the suburban and rural parts of the region are conservative Republican strongholds.

East Texas Cotton production, a constant in East Texas for nearly all of its history, continues in the region but has declined along with oil as the backbone of a struggling economy. Timber production in the Piney Woods, cattle and poultry farming, and some manufacturing have helped fill the gap while other economic diversification continues.

The westernmost extension of the Deep South, East Texas can seem a world apart, as references to life “behind the Pine Curtain” suggest. The area remains racially segregated and dominated by Protestant fundamentalism and powerful families with deep historical roots in the area. It is firmly a part of the Republican “Solid South.”

The Gulf Coast The coast of the Gulf of Mexico stretches from the Louisiana border to the Rio Grande. Shipping and fishing are naturally important to the economy, but so are manufacturing and the presence of major corporate headquarters. The Spindletop oil well at Beaumont launched the oil age in Texas, and petrochemicals remain fundamental to the region’s economy. It has thus been sensitive to oil booms and busts, including the 2001 collapse of Enron, which had been deeply integrated into the life of the region before the deep corruption of its executives led to its downfall.

Anchored by Houston, the state’s largest and most diverse city, the area also has the highest concentrations of unions in Texas. As a result, Democrats have some electoral wins in the urban areas. Rural parts of the Gulf Coast remain reliably Republican, however.

1.2 Learning Check

1. What is the impact of the Lone Star State’s size on Texas’s politics?
2. True or False: All the regions of Texas depend economically on the same industries, and thus are nearly identical in culture and politics.

Answers on p. 39.

The People

★ **LO1.3** Analyze the relationship between the social history of Texas and the political characteristics of the state's diverse population.

I am forced to conclude that God made Texas on his day off, for pure entertainment, just to prove that all that diversity could be crammed into one section of earth by a really top hand.

—Mary Lasswell

In every decade since 1850, Texas's population has grown more rapidly than the overall population of the United States. According to the federal census estimate of 2013, Texas's population totaled 26,448,193—a stunning increase of 27 percent from 2000. (At the national level, the total population estimate in 2013 was 316,128,839—an increase of approximately 11 percent from 2000.) Texas also had five of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the nation between 2000 and 2010. By 2014, seven of the 15 fastest growing cities with populations of at least 50,000 were in Texas.

Population Distribution

Just as Texas's physical geography makes the state a land of great contrasts, so does the distribution of its inhabitants. At one extreme is Harris County in the southeastern part of the state, with approximately 4 million inhabitants. At the other extreme is Loving County, on the New Mexico border, where the 2010 census counted only 82 people. Today, Texas's four most populous counties (Harris, Dallas, Bexar, and Tarrant) have a combined population of more than 10 million people. These four urban counties (along



How Do We Compare...in Population?

2013 Population Estimates as Reported by the U.S. Bureau of the Census

Most Populous U.S. States	Population	U.S. States Bordering Texas	Population
California	38,332,521	Arkansas	2,959,373
New York	19,651,127	Louisiana	4,629,470
Florida	19,552,860	New Mexico	2,085,287
Texas	26,448,193	Oklahoma	3,850,568

CRITICAL THINKING

How does a large and rapidly growing population create both opportunities and challenges for Texas?

with Travis County) are located within the Texas Triangle, roughly outlined by segments of interstate highways 35, 45, and 10.

Texas has seen large demographic movements from rural to urban areas and from large cities to the suburbs and back. Although the shift from rural to urban areas and the growth of exurbs (extra-urban areas beyond suburbs) has continued into the 21st century, a repopulation of inner cities has revitalized downtowns and attracted new residents. Some rural areas in the Lone Star State have recently experienced rapid population growth as a result of a resurgence in oil and natural gas production.⁹

Urbanization Migration from rural regions to cities results in urbanization. Texas was 80 percent rural at the beginning of the 20th century, but today more than 85 percent of the state's population is urban. Urban areas are composed of one or more large cities and their surrounding suburban communities. A suburb is a relatively small town or city, usually outside the boundary limits of a central city. The early history of suburbanization was marked by racial segregation, with Anglos in more affluent suburbs and historical minority groups in the inner city and less affluent suburbs. Federal government policies of “**redlining**,” interstate highway designs, and “**urban renewal**,” along with state and local policies like **exclusionary zoning** and **racial covenants**, were used purposefully to ensure residential segregation. Even when laws and court decisions moved official policies away from racially discriminatory practices, economic inequality, the phenomenon of “white flight,” and the practice of some realtors and lenders “steering” their clients into segregated neighborhoods kept integration from fully happening. Today, de facto racial segregation (segregation by fact) remains, especially with regard to suburban areas, though to a lesser extent than in the past.¹⁰ Between 1980 and 2010, Texas suburbs experienced explosive growth and spread into rural areas.

Metropolitanization Suburbanization on a large scale creates a metropolitan area, or a core city surrounded by a sprawl of smaller cities and towns. **Metropolitanization** concentrates large numbers of people in urban centers that become linked with suburbs in a single geographic entity. Although socially and economically integrated, a metropolitan area is composed of separate units of local government, which include counties, cities, and special districts. Since 1910, federal agencies have defined metropolitan areas for census purposes. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget establishes statistical areas, currently dividing them into Micropolitan Statistical Areas (mSA), with a population of 10,000–50,000 and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA), with a population of 50,000 plus.

By 2010, Texas had 42 mSAs and 44 MSAs. Cities are eager to obtain the highest possible statistical designation because many congressional appropriations are made accordingly. For example, to qualify for mass transit funds, an area must be a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Texas's rate of population growth is consistently greater in the MSAs than throughout the state as a whole. Most of these population concentrations are

redlining

A discriminatory rating system used by federal agencies to evaluate the risks associated with loans made to borrowers in specific urban neighborhoods.

urban renewal

The relocation of businesses and people, the demolition of structures, and the use of eminent domain to take private property for government development projects.

exclusionary zoning

The use of local government zoning ordinances to exclude certain groups of people from a given community.

racial covenants

Agreements by a group of property owners, subdivision developers, or real estate operators in a given neighborhood, binding them not to sell, lease, or rent property to specified groups because of race, creed, or color for a definite period unless all agree to the transaction.

metropolitanization

The development of a residential pattern centered in a core area containing a large population nucleus together with adjacent communities economically and socially integrated with that core.

within the Texas Triangle. The Lone Star State's MSAs contain more than 80 percent of the state's population but fewer than 20 percent of the state's 254 counties. It is politically significant that these 48 counties potentially account for about four of every five votes cast in statewide elections. Thus, governmental decision makers are answerable primarily to people living in one-fifth of the state's counties. Urban voters, however, are rarely of one mind at the polls; they do not tend to overwhelm rural voters by taking opposing positions on all policy issues.

Demographics Is Destiny

Like the population of the nation, Texas's population is aging as the baby-boom generation (born between 1946 and 1964) enters retirement age. The Census Bureau estimates that the population of Texans older than 64 will exceed 5 million by 2030. The elderly are the most powerful and most conservative voting bloc, voting and participating in other ways at higher rates than any other age group and represented by the nation's largest interest group—the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Texas is also diverse in racial, ethnic, and cultural terms. More than one-half of all Texans are either African American or Latino. The remainder are predominantly **Anglos** (non-Hispanic whites), with a small but rapidly growing **Asian American** population and approximately 170,000 **Native Americans**. More than one-third of all Texans speak a language other than English at home.¹¹ In 2012, the Houston metropolitan area replaced New York City as the most ethnically diverse city in the country.¹²

Anglo

As commonly used in Texas, the term is not restricted to persons of Anglo-Saxon lineage but includes those of European ancestry more generally. Traditionally, the term applies to all whites except Latinos.

Asian American

An ethnic classification for persons whose ancestry originates in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.

Native American

A term commonly used for those whose ancestors were living in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans and Africans. Another commonly used term in the United States is "American Indian" or in Canada "First Nations."

Texans Throughout History: From Conflict Toward Cooperation

The politics of democracy is about forging a path for diverse groups with sometimes opposing interests to live together peaceably. One of the remarkable facets of Texas is that, though racial and ethnic tensions still exist, its diverse population lives together peacefully. Historically, peaceful coexistence was difficult. Texans have a reputation for toughness, and that reputation was formed over hundreds of years of surviving an often unforgiving terrain, made harsher by a social atmosphere that historian and political scientist Cal Jillson has called "breathtakingly violent."¹³

The First Texans Few specifics are known about the people who inhabited what would become the Lone Star State for more than 10,000 years before Spanish explorers planted the first of Texas's six flags here in the 1500s. When the Spaniards arrived, the land was inhabited by more than 50 Native American tribes and nations. Population estimates vary widely, ranging from 50,000 to perhaps a million people. In East Texas, the Caddo lived in organized villages with a complex political system. The state's name comes from the word *tejas*, meaning "friendly," which was the tribal name for a group of Indians within the Caddo Confederacy. The Comanches were arguably the most important tribe in shaping Texas history. Excellent horsemen

and valiant warriors, they maintained a successful resistance to the northward expansion of Spaniards and Mexicans and the westward expansion of Anglos. Native American tribes were not unified. For example, the Tonkawa of Central Texas often allied with Anglos in fights against the Comanches and the Wichitas, another important South Plains tribe.

European Colonization Accurate estimates of the Native American population may not be available, but whatever the true size, their numbers declined rapidly after European contact in the 16th century. With Spanish explorers and their African slaves came diseases like cholera that spread through native communities. Though Spain and France claimed Texas, neither country actively ruled the territory. Their activities were mostly exploring, surveying, and fighting. The area remained sparsely populated through the Mexican Revolution against Spain in 1810. In 1824, three years after Mexico overthrew Spanish rule, the area that is now Texas became part of a federal republic for the first time.

Mexican Texas Around the time of Mexican independence, Anglo American settlers began coming to the Mexican province of Tejas in greater numbers. Although the first non-Spanish-speaking immigrants to Texas were largely of English ancestry, some were Scottish, Irish, or Welsh descendants. Others were French, Scandinavian, and Eastern European, with a few Italians, Greeks, and other European nationalities. The arrival of Anglo settlers sped the decline of the Native American population, which had already been reduced to 20,000–30,000 people. Violence between the native population and immigrant whites was constant and pervasive. Despite the Mexican government's authorization of Stephen F. Austin to offer free land to settlers willing to work it, government officials were concerned about the immigrants. Many Anglo newcomers resisted the constitution and laws of Mexico that established Catholicism as the state religion and abolished slavery. (See chapter 2, "Federalism and the Texas Constitution" for more discussion of the historical context).

When General Antonio López de Santa Anna was elected president of Mexico in 1834, most Texans did not expect that he would repudiate the principles of the federal democratic republic he was elected to serve. When he did, a result was the Texas Revolution, with its famous battles at Goliad, the Alamo, and San Jacinto. A great deal of blood was shed to establish the independent Republic of Texas in 1836 that received diplomatic recognition by the governments of the United States, England, France, Holland, and Belgium.

The Republic of Texas The elected presidents of the Republic, Sam Houston (twice) and Mirabeau B. Lamar, and the Texas Congress struggled to establish Texas as an independent nation, even as many in the government sought to join the United States. The demands of establishing and maintaining an army and navy, operating a postal system, printing paper money, administering justice, and providing other governmental services were made difficult by conflicts within and without the Republic's borders.

Anglo-Indian warfare continued because of increased immigration from the United States, and because some Texan Anglo leaders pursued policies

of removal and extermination. The fighting was so fierce that two decades after independence, one observer in 1856 estimated the state's Native American population at about 12,000, with most having been killed or driven from the state.¹⁴ And while many Tejanos had fought for Texas's independence, Cal Jillson notes that "some Texas leaders sought to equate Indians and Mexicans and urge the expulsion or extermination of both."¹⁵ From the time of Texas independence until 1900, immigration from Mexico all but ceased. Latinos remained concentrated in settlements such as San Antonio that were founded during the 18th century, and within Central and South Texas. Conflicts, in some cases violence, among Anglo Texans, Native Americans, and Tejanos continued into Texas's statehood, which came about in 1845, less than a decade after its independence.

The Lone Star State In South Texas, Latinos comprised a majority of the population despite the increased number of Anglo arrivals after the Mexican War of 1846–1848 (which followed admission of Texas into the Union). Anglo immigration, by contrast, dominated much of the rest of the state. Before the Civil War, more than one-half of the state's Anglo residents had migrated from Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.¹⁶ It was no surprise, then, that the Republic of Texas legalized slavery and entered the union as a slave state. By 1847, African Americans accounted for one-fourth of the state's population, and most were slaves.

Yet slavery was not universally accepted in Texas. Some estimates suggest that as many as 24,000 German immigrants and descendants settled in the Hill Country of Central Texas by 1860. Most opposed slavery on principle, whereas others simply had no need for slaves. As a result, 14 counties in the Texas Hill Country voted 40 percent or greater against secession in 1861. Despite Sam Houston's opposition, the secessionists won and Texas joined the Confederate States of America in February of that year. In the ordinance of secession and in an official explanation of the causes of secession issued the following day, Texas leaders repeatedly cited northern attacks on the institution of slavery, along with the failure of the federal government to protect Anglo Texans against Mexican and Indian banditry and other grievances.¹⁷

The Civil War and Reconstruction

Though Texas saw less fighting than other southern states in the Civil War, it nonetheless felt the ravages of combat. In addition to battle with Union troops, Central Texas was scarred by what has been called "a civil war within a Civil War,"¹⁸ as hundreds of opposing Union and Confederate sympathizers died in armed confrontations. The Confederacy lost the war and Texas was brought back into the Union, but not fully until the end of Reconstruction, a period in which the United States government sought to remake the political and economic structures of southern states.

Governor Edmund J. Davis's heavy-handed tactics used to enfranchise freed slaves during Radical Reconstruction temporarily made political

participation safe for freed slaves and disenfranchised many leading Anglo citizens who supported the Confederacy. This even led to a small wave of freedmen migration into Texas.

The Great State of Texas

Texas was fully readmitted to the United States in 1870, but civil strife continued. Although Anglo migration into the state declined during the Civil War and Reconstruction, it resumed by the 1870s. Westward settlement further displaced Native Americans and converted the prairies into cattle and sheep ranches. A combination of Anglo in-migration and African American out-migration reduced the percentage of African Americans in the population from 31 percent in 1870 to 13 percent by 1950.

Those African Americans who remained in Texas faced great difficulty. Slavery was replaced for many by a different form of servitude in the form of sharecropping, in which they farmed land as tenants for a portion of the crops grown. De jure segregation, or segregation by law, resulted in denial of adequate education and economic opportunities. Texas saw almost 340 lynchings of African Americans between the end of Reconstruction and World War II.¹⁹

Early in the 20th century, waves of immigrants escaping the Mexican Revolution and its aftermath fed the American need for seasonal laborers. Many Latinos worked as farm and ranch laborers. The Great Depression and the resulting competition for work greatly increased anti-immigrant sentiment and policy in Texas, and violence sometimes erupted as a result.²⁰

After World War II, many Latinos left agriculture and sought manufacturing work in cities. Most of them experienced improvements in wages and working conditions in unskilled or semiskilled positions. A growing number of Latinos entered managerial, sales, and clerical professions.²¹ In the 1960s, the federal government began to enforce the desegregation decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, and Texan President Lyndon Johnson signed a series of new antidiscrimination civil rights laws. Public schools, workplaces, and some neighborhoods, especially in urban areas, were integrated.

Integration has reduced, but not eliminated, intergroup tension in Texas. Dramatic incidents such as the dragging death of James Byrd²² and statistics demonstrating continued discrimination in housing, employment, and criminal justice illustrate that conflict and inequality still exist in the Lone Star State. Yet historical minority groups have made major strides in education, employment, and political representation in recent decades. In increasing numbers, Texans of varied backgrounds work, live, socialize, date, and marry across racial, ethnic, and religious differences. Evidence suggests that young people use more social media than other groups and that people who use social media websites like Facebook or Twitter have more racially and ethnically diverse social networks.²³ Polling data indicate that today's young people are more likely than their elders to reject racism and celebrate diversity.²⁴ This viewpoint is developing as Texas moves from a majority-minority state, with no racial or ethnic majority, to a majority Latino state.



The U.S. Census Bureau projected racial categories in Texas for 2013 at the following percentages:

White/Anglo	44.0
Hispanic/Latino	38.4
Black/African American	12.4
Asian	4.3
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1
Two or more races	1.8

Texans Today

Texas ranks among the most racially and ethnically diverse states in the nation. There really is no such thing as a “typical Texan.” Five groups comprise the major racial or ethnic groups in the state: Native American, Asian American, African American, Latino, and Anglo.

Native Americans Although some counties (Cherokee, Comanche, Nacogdoches), cities and towns (Caddo Mills, Lipan, Waxahachie), and other places have Native American names, by 2010, Texas Native Americans numbered only around 170,000. Most live and work in towns and cities, with only a few on reservations. Approximately 1,100 members of the Alabama-Coushatta tribe reside on a 4,351-acre East Texas reservation. On the U.S.-Mexican border near Eagle Pass, a few hundred members of the Kickapoo tribe are allowed by the governments of Mexico and the United States to move freely between Texas and the Mexican state of Coahuila. At the far western boundary of the state, the 1,700-member Tigua tribe inhabits a reservation near El Paso.

Asian Americans The Lone Star State is home to one of the largest Asian American populations (nearly 1 million) in the nation. Most of Texas’s Asian American families immigrated from Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam in particular), but a growing percentage are U.S. born. Vietnamese-born Hubert Vo (D-Houston) became the first Vietnamese American elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 2004 and has been reelected five times.

Most Asian Americans live in the state’s largest urban centers—Houston and the Dallas–Fort Worth metroplex. Fort Bend County near Houston has the greatest percentage of Asian Americans in the state at 17 percent. Approximately one-half of Texas’s first-generation Asian Americans entered this country with college degrees or completed their degrees after arrival. The intensity with which the state’s young Asian Americans focus on education is revealed by enrollment data for the University of Texas at Austin. Although Asian Americans account for less than 4 percent of the total population of the state, they comprised 15.4 percent of the undergraduate enrollment at the University of Texas at Austin and 19 percent of the enrollment at the University of Texas at Dallas in the fall 2013 semester.

African Americans By 2014, Texas had approximately 3 million African Americans, more than 11 percent of the state's population.²⁵ The African American population has continued to grow, but more slowly than other ethnic groups. Today, Texas has the third-largest number of African Americans in the nation, after New York and California. Most reside in southeast, north central, and northeast Texas, concentrated in large cities. In recent years, a significant number of Africans seeking employment and a higher standard of living have immigrated to the United States and settled in Texas. More than one-half of the state's African Americans reside in and around major urban areas. Although African Americans do not constitute a majority in any Texas county, according to the 2010 census, Jefferson County (Beaumont) had the greatest percentage of African Americans at 33.5 percent.

In recent decades, the political influence of African American Texans has increased in local, state, and national government. From the years following Reconstruction until 1958 (when Hattie White was elected to the Houston School Board), no African American held elective office in the state. In 1972, Barbara Jordan became the first African American since Reconstruction to represent Texas in Congress; and in 1992, Morris Overstreet became the first African American to win a statewide office when he was elected to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. In 2009, Ron Kirk was appointed by President Obama to be the U.S. Trade Representative.

Latinos In the 1980s, Texas saw an increase in immigrants from Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. Still, more than 84 percent of Texas Latinos are of Mexican origin. By 2014, Texas Latinos numbered almost 10 million, approximately 39 percent of the state's population.²⁶ Latino births now account for more than one-half of all newborns in the state. Based on current population trends, some demographers suggest that by 2040 Latinos will comprise 58 percent of the state's population.²⁷ Texas ranks second in the nation behind California in the number of Latino residents. The majority of the population in 50 Texas counties is Latino. In seven counties in the Rio Grande Valley and along the border, more than 90 percent of the population is Latino. Though poverty rates are significantly higher for Latinos than Anglos, Texas's Spanish-surnamed citizens are gaining economic strength.

As Latinos continue to be the fastest-growing ethnic group in Texas (in terms of numbers), their political influence is also increasing. Between 1846 and 1961, only 19 Latino politicians were elected to seats in the Texas legislature. Since 1961, however, Latinos have won election to many local, state, and national positions. In 1984, with the election of Raul Gonzalez to the Texas Supreme Court, the first Latino won a statewide office. By 2010, Texas had more than 2,300 Latino elected officials, the largest number of any state. This figure represents more than 40 percent of all Latino elected officials in the country. Organizations such as the League of United Latin American Citizens and the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project have worked to increase voter registration and turnout among Latinos in recent years.



An estimated crowd of 25,000 march through downtown Dallas to City Hall in support of immigration reform, summer 2010.

Rodger Mallison/MCT/Landov

CRITICAL THINKING

What challenges and opportunities does racial and ethnic diversity present the Texas government? How can government best respond to the challenges and seize the opportunities?

Anglos According to the 2000 census, more than 52 percent of Texas's population was composed of "non-Hispanic whites." However, that percentage dropped to less than 50 percent in 2004, when Texas joined Hawaii, New Mexico, and California as majority-minority states. By 2014, the Anglo population of Texas reached almost 11.5 million, or about 44 percent of the state's population.²⁸ Projections indicate that the percentage of Anglos in the state will continue to decrease and the percentage of other racial/ethnic groups will continue to increase.

Despite a decreasing numerical majority, poverty rates among Texas Anglos remain dramatically lower than other groups, and incomes remain significantly higher. The poverty rate for Texas Anglos was 12 percent in 2013, compared to 29 percent for African Americans and 19 percent for Latinos.²⁹ In 2013, African American and Latino households had median annual incomes in the \$35,000 range, whereas Anglo and Asian households averaged \$59,000 to \$64,000.³⁰ Anglos own almost two-thirds of all businesses in Texas. Anglos also continue to hold most local, state, and national political offices in the Lone Star State.

Implications of Increasing Diversity The changing demographics of Texas led many to speculate that the partisan makeup of Texas will soon be changing. "Demographics is Destiny," as the saying goes. With Hispanics as the largest minority in Texas, many point to Democratic President Barack Obama's winning 70 percent of the Latino vote to Republican Mitt Romney's 29 percent in 2012 as evidence that Texas will soon become a Democratic state. Some commentators have observed that if Latino voter turnout suddenly rose to the same level as that of non-Hispanic whites, Texas would instantly become a battleground state, in which Democrats would be competitive. Because of the size of its population, a Democratic Texas could assure presidential victories and increased Senate

majorities for the Democrats. The Democratic Party is so encouraged by the prospect that they have launched "Battleground Texas", an organizing effort to register and turn out Democratic supporters. In 2014, Battleground Texas had more than 12,300 followers on Twitter and 43,600 likes on Facebook.³¹

Yet the ascendance of Democrats over Republicans in Texas is not a foregone conclusion. Latino voting rates remain consistently low. In

addition, Republican candidates have averaged nearly 40 percent of the Latino vote in statewide races since 2000 and are making efforts to improve those numbers. Even if those efforts fail, a Democratic Texas may still be a decade in the future. Analyzing demographic trends and voting results, political observers argue that voter turnout rates suggest Texas Democrats will not reach parity with Republicans until 2024.³²

Steve Murdock, a former state demographer and former director of the U.S. Census Bureau, has identified several negative economic implications of the current population trends. Latinos and African Americans account for the largest population growth in numbers and have the highest poverty and school dropout rates. The challenge for Texas will be to improve opportunities for these groups or face widespread poverty, lower education levels, and a declining economy.³³

1.3 Learning Check

1. True or False: The rate of population growth in Texas's Metropolitan Statistical Areas is greater than throughout the state as a whole.
2. How has the size and political power of Texas's Latino population changed in recent decades?

Answers on p. 40.

The Economy

LO1.4 Describe both the four land-based industries that formed the historic basis for the Texas economy and the diversification of the modern Texas economy.

The Lone Star State's economic success has relied heavily on land-based industries. These days, the Texas economy is vastly more diverse and includes 21st century industries like high technology and international trade.

The Texas Economy Through History

Much of Texas's early history was dominated by cattle, cotton, timber, and minerals (oil and gas). These four industries remain important sectors of the Texas economy and culture.

Cattle Cattle ranching began with the Spanish conquest, with later settlers continuing to bring livestock into Texas. Plentiful land and minimal government interference encouraged huge cattle empires, established by entrepreneurs such as Richard King and Miffli Kenedy. Today, King Ranch covers more than 825,000 acres in South Texas.³⁴

In 1865, an estimated 5 million cattle ranged over Texas's nearly 168 million acres of land. During the 25 years after the Civil War, approximately 35,000 men drove nearly 10 million cattle and 1 million horses north along the Chisholm and Goodnight-Loving Trails to Kansas railheads. By the late 1880s, when the railroads were built closer to Texas ranches, the cattle drives ended. In time, the economic impact of the beef business leveled off in the wake of newly emerging industries. Although the severe drought in 2011 and its after-effects forced a reduction in the number of cattle in the state, Texas still leads the nation in cattle production. The inventory of approximately 11 million cattle is more than twice as many as the next largest producer. Cattle production accounts for more than 70 percent of livestock cash receipts and approximately one-half the total for all agricultural products in the state. Texas also leads the nation in the production of sheep, goats, wool, and mohair.³⁵

Cotton Although popular culture romanticizes the 19th-century cowboys and cattle drives, cotton formed the backbone of the state's economy in that era. Before Spaniards brought cattle into Texas, cotton already grew wild in the region. Rich, fertile soil led to the crop's easy cultivation, begun by Spanish missionaries. In the 1820s, Colonel Jared Groce and other settlers began growing cotton, including a new hybrid variety, in East and Central Texas. Here soil and weather conditions most closely resembled those in the Old South. Before the Civil War, when slaves performed much of the field labor, cotton production spread. During that war, revenue from the sale of Texas cotton to European buyers aided the Confederacy. As more frontier land was settled, cotton production moved westward and increased in volume.

The Lone Star State leads the country in exported cotton, much of which is shipped to South Korea and Taiwan. Darren Hudson, director of the Cotton Economics Research Institute at Texas Tech University, estimates that Texas produces about 50 percent of U.S. cotton and approximately 10 percent of the world's cotton. In fact, Texas produces so much cotton that if you lined up all the cotton bales produced in the past 10 years end-to-end, they would circle the earth two-and-a-half times! Although cotton is grown throughout the state, the High Plains region of West Texas accounts for approximately 60 percent (more than 3 million bales) of the state's annual cotton yield. During the 2011 drought, estimates projected that cotton production in West Texas fell from a 10-year average of about 4.5 million bales per year to fewer than 1.5 million bales. This reduction represents a financial loss of more than one-third of the U.S. cotton crop (\$2.2 billion).³⁶ Continuing drought, along with hail and blowing sand, destroyed millions of acres of cotton in 2013. By 2014, the Texas cotton yield had dropped by 50 percent, and the Great Plains was forecast to experience a 12 percent drop in production from 2012.³⁷

Timber East Texas includes the Piney Woods and the Big Thicket, a densely wooded area that was largely uninhabited until the 1800s.³⁸ Following Texas's independence in 1836, immigrants built new communities, creating a construction industry that needed timber. By the mid-1800s, more than 200 sawmills were in operation from East to Central Texas.³⁹ As the population grew, creation of new towns and railroad lines increased demand for timber. This "bonanza era" for the timber industry continued well into the 20th century. By the early 1900s, the timber industry was the state's largest employer, manufacturer, and revenue generator. Estimates indicate that from the 1880s until the 1930s about 18 million acres of pine timber were logged in Texas, producing more than 59 billion board feet of lumber.⁴⁰

The impact of timber on the state and national economies declined by the 1920s, as clear-cutting by some logging companies depleted the availability of timber in many parts of East Texas. Thousands of acres of woodlands were also cleared for exploration following the discovery of oil in this region. In 1933, the Texas legislature authorized the federal government to purchase more than 600,000 acres for four national forests (Angelina, Davy Crockett, Sabine, and Sam Houston). In addition, the timber industry began to implement reseedling and sustainable logging practices. At the end of the

20th century, Texas was the nation's tenth largest timber producer, generating more than \$12.9 billion annually.⁴¹

The effects of the 2011 drought resulted in the loss of between 100 and 500 million trees throughout the state. Texas Forest Service officials estimated that more than 166,000 acres of trees in East Texas need to be replanted, at a cost of \$57 million.⁴² An additional 1.5 million trees on more than 16,200 acres were destroyed in a catastrophic wildfire in Bastrop County in late 2011, leading one Texas Parks and Wildlife Department official to predict that it would take more than half a century to fully recover from the loss.⁴³

Oil and Gas Long before Europeans arrived, Native Americans used oil seeping from the Texas soil for medicinal purposes. Early Spanish explorers used it to caulk their boats. In the late 19th century, thousands of barrels were produced from crudely dug wells across the state. But it was not until 1901, when the Spindletop Field was developed, that petroleum ushered in the industry that dominated the state's economy for nearly a century. During the next 50 years, more wells were drilled, bringing industrial employment on a grand scale to rural Texas and offering tens of thousands of Texans an immediate and attractive alternative to life “down on the farm.” Many of the major oil companies, such as Humble (now ExxonMobil Corporation), Magnolia Petroleum Company, Sun Oil Company, Gulf Oil Corporation, and the Texas Company, were created. (Gulf Oil Corporation and the Texas Company [Texaco] now are a part of Chevron.) In 1919, the Texas legislature gave the Railroad Commission of Texas limited regulatory jurisdiction over the state's oil and natural gas industry.⁴⁴

At its peak in the early 1980s, the Texas oil and gas industry employed half a million workers, who earned more than \$11 billion annually. Oil and natural gas production and related industries accounted for almost one-third of the state's economy. Over the next two decades, fluctuating prices reduced revenue. The discovery of major natural gas deposits in South, Central, and North Texas in the early 21st century, along with the advent of new recovery methods such as hydraulic fracturing, has launched an oil boom that helped insulate the state's economy from the global recession that began in 2008. Texas now accounts for more than 30 percent of total U.S. oil production, and if it were its own country would be the 11th largest producer in the world.⁴⁵ Revenues from taxes on oil and gas are helping Texas fill its Rainy Day Fund, complete highway construction and maintenance, invest in education through the Permanent University Fund, and fund the State Water Plan.⁴⁶ About 250,000 Texans worked in this industry in 2012, and even more Texans depended on energy-related industries for their employment. Most oil and gas jobs (including those in refineries and other petrochemical plants) pay relatively high wages and salaries.

Still, with increased economic diversification and oil prices under \$100 per barrel in 2014, the oil and gas industry accounts for less than 6 percent of the state's economy and is not expected to regain its former level of influence. Meanwhile, awareness is growing that fossil fuels (including oil, gas, and coal) burned for industrial purposes and in automobiles, trucks, buses,

and airplanes are the world's principal source of air pollution, contributing to significant human health problems.⁴⁷

New Economic Directions

The devastation of plunging oil prices in the 1980s made the dangers of reliance on a single industry clear to Texas's business and government leaders, who subsequently pursued a restructuring and diversification of the state's economy. Texans have launched new industries that have quickly spread across the state, bolstering the Texas economy and playing an important role in the national economy. In 2006, for the first time, more *Fortune* 500 companies were headquartered in Texas than in any other state. In 2014 California ranked first with 54 and Texas was second with 52.⁴⁸ Texans today are employed in a variety of enterprises. A continuing struggle to provide jobs and market goods and services, however, requires effective public policies, an educated and productive labor force, an adequate supply of capital, and sound management practices.

Energy Four of the five largest corporations headquartered in Texas in 2014 were energy and energy related.⁴⁹ Using recent advancements in hydraulic fracturing (or "fracking"), energy producers have ushered in a second energy boom. Environmental and health concerns have accompanied this recovery method. (See Point/CounterPoint on p. 33: Should Oil and Gas Drillers Use Hydraulic "Fracking?").

Environmental concerns and fuel costs cause many people to resort to alternative fuels. In recent years, growth of renewable energy sources has outpaced the growth of coal, natural gas, and other energy sources. Renewables made up only 1 percent of Texas's energy supply in 2001, but that rose to more than 10 percent in 2013, with the overwhelming share being wind power.⁵⁰ Most of Texas's wind farms are located in West Texas. Although the Texas legislature twice refused to create financial incentives to encourage the solar industry in Texas, this action has not deterred the industry's development. One of the nation's largest solar photovoltaic generation farms began operations in December 2011 near Webberville to generate power for Austin Energy, the nation's ninth largest community-owned electric utility.⁵¹ In 2014, two out-of-state companies announced plans to build large solar energy farms in Texas.⁵²

Anticipating the need for workers in alternative energy technologies, several institutions of higher education in the state (including Texas Tech, Texas A&M, West Texas A&M, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Houston, and Texas State Technical College in Sweetwater) offer renewable energy programs and classes in wind and solar power. In 2013, the U.S. Department of Energy and Vestas Wind Systems joined with Sandia National Laboratories to break ground on a new state-of-the-art wind turbine test facility at Texas Tech.⁵³

High Technology The term *high technology* applies to research, development, manufacturing, and marketing of a seemingly endless line of electronic

products like computers, smartphones, drones, and medical equipment. Although high-technology businesses employ less than 6 percent of Texas's labor force, these enterprises contribute about 10 percent of all wages paid to private sector employees. Most "high-tech" jobs are in manufacturing firms like Motorola, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Texas Instruments, and Applied Materials. Approximately 85 percent of all high-tech employment in Texas is centered in the state's major cities.

More than one-third of all high-tech jobs are in professional, technical, and managerial positions, and wages and salaries are nearly twice as much as the average for other private sector positions. The Texas Emerging Technology Fund, administered by the state, provides funding for research and development activities and the relocation of companies from other states (especially California) in emerging technology industries. During the first decade of the 21st century, however, in cities such as Houston, Dallas, and Austin, jobs in semiconductor, computer, and circuit board manufacturing actually declined. Several high-tech companies relocated to other states and countries in pursuit of lower labor costs; predictable regulations; and access to markets, incentives, and a skilled workforce.⁵⁴ Despite this trend, by 2014, approximately 485,000 Texans held high-tech jobs, and Texas continues to rank second only to California in the size of its high-tech workforce.⁵⁵

Additionally, **biotechnology** is a multibillion-dollar industry producing new medicines and vaccines, chemicals, and other products designed to benefit medical science, human health, and agricultural production. In the past two decades, biotech-related jobs have increased four times faster than the overall increase in employment in Texas. Home to more than 4,500 biotechnology firms, manufacturing companies, industry consortia, and research university facilities, Texas employs more than 100,000 workers in the biotech sector at an average annual salary of more than \$74,800.

Supported by big biotech companies, scientists at Texas A&M University have aided in research leading to the production of genetically modified organism (GMO) crops, such as corn, soybeans, and cotton. Environmental and consumer protection groups, however, have opposed GMOs and called for labeling all foods containing them.⁵⁶ Security is a concern for this industry. The Texas A&M Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing, established in 2012 to lead the nation's biosecurity research efforts, is a public-private partnership likely worth \$1.5 to \$2 billion. The initial federal



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CRITICAL THINKING

What industries are essential to sustain and continue to develop the Texas economy in the 21st century?

biotechnology

Also known as "biotech," this is the use and/or manipulation of biological processes and microorganisms to perform industrial or manufacturing processes or create consumer goods.

grant of more than \$175 million is the largest sum of federal money awarded to Texas since NASA.

Services Employing one-fourth of all Texas workers, service industries continue to provide new jobs more rapidly than all other sectors. Service businesses include health care providers (hospitals and nursing homes); personal services (hotels, restaurants, and recreational enterprises such as water parks and video arcades); and commercial services (printers, advertising agencies, data processing companies, equipment rental companies, and consultants). Other service providers include education, investment brokers, insurance and real estate agencies, banks and credit unions, and merchandising enterprises. Many high school and college students work in the service sector as restaurant and bar wait staff, retail store sales associates, and the like.

Influenced by an aging population and the availability of new medical procedures, health services employment has steadily increased. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, as of 2012 private and public health care services employed about 1.1 million workers (including 624,000 in ambulatory health care services, 297,000 in hospitals, and about 174,000 in nursing and residential care).⁵⁷ The Texas Workforce Commission projects that these positions will be among the fastest growing occupations over the next several years.⁵⁸

Most service jobs come with few or no benefits and pay lower wages and salaries than manufacturing firms that produce goods. Thus, the late journalist Molly Ivins warned that “the dream that we can transform ourselves into a service economy and let all the widget-makers go to hell or Taiwan is bullstuff. The service sector creates jobs all right, but they’re the lowest paying jobs in the system. You can’t afford a house frying burgers at McDonald’s, even if you’re a two-fryer family.”⁵⁹

Agriculture Texas ranks second in the nation in agricultural production (behind California). It leads the country in total acreage of agricultural land and numbers of farms and ranches, as well as in production of beef, grain sorghum, cotton, wool, and mohair. Other important cash crops include corn, hay, rice, cottonseed, peanuts, soybeans, pecans, and fresh market vegetables and citrus.

Gross income from the products of Texas agriculture amounts to about \$22 billion annually, making agriculture the second largest industry in Texas. Mexico is the largest purchaser of Texas’s farm and ranch products, and Japan is a major consumer of Texas-grown wheat and corn. Beef is the state’s most important meat export. Despite these impressive statistics, however, farming and ranching provide less than 2 percent of the state’s jobs and total income. Furthermore, most agricultural commodities are shipped abroad or to other parts of the United States without being processed in Texas. Consequently, Texas needs industrial development for the processing of food and fiber to derive maximum economic benefit from its agricultural products.

Over the past eight decades, the number of farms and ranches in Texas has decreased from more than 500,000 to fewer than 250,000, and the average acreage has increased from 300 acres to approximately 527 acres.⁶⁰

These developments largely reflect the availability of labor-saving farm machinery and chemicals. Small family farms are also being rapidly replaced by large agribusinesses or sold for development. When farm commodity prices are low (because of overproduction and weak market demand) or when crops are poor (as a result of drought), many farmers end the year deeply in debt. Some must sell their land—usually to larger farm operators and sometimes to corporations. But some wealthy individuals purchase agricultural property (especially ranchland) as a status symbol—even though their land generates little or no income. Some use their agricultural property ownership to qualify for various exemptions and reductions in local, state, and federal taxes. In addition, much farm and ranchland near expanding cities is lost to urban sprawl. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, every minute, a half-acre of Texas farmland is converted into part of a road, shopping mall, or subdivision.

The Texas drought in late 2011 was the worst single-year Texas drought since recordkeeping began. It may also prove to be one of most devastating economic events in the history of the Lone Star State. Texas AgriLife Extension Service reported a record \$7.62 billion in agricultural losses in 2011 as a result of the drought. In November 2013, the drought officially became the second longest drought in Texas history.⁶¹

Trade By reducing and ultimately eliminating tariffs during the 15-year period from 1993–2008, the North American Free Trade Agreement stimulated U.S. trade with both Canada and Mexico. Because more than 60 percent of U.S. exports to Mexico are produced in or transported through Texas from other states, expanding foreign trade produces jobs for Texans, profits for the state's businesses, and revenue for state and local governments. It also means that Texas benefits from peace and prosperity across its southern border, and suffers when those conditions are absent.

Maquiladoras (partner plants) on the Mexican side of the border typically use cheap labor to assemble imported parts for a wide range of consumer goods and then export these goods back to the United States. Under NAFTA, these exports are not taxed. Consequently, Texas border cities (especially Brownsville, McAllen, Laredo, and El Paso) attract many manufacturers who set up supply and distribution facilities in Texas that serve the maquiladoras in Mexico.⁶² A United Nations report revealed that labor policies at maquiladora assembly plants endanger women in Ciudad Juárez, a Mexican city across the border from El Paso, where hundreds of women and girls have disappeared or have been raped and murdered in recent years.⁶³

NAFTA has both benefited and harmed the state's and the nation's economy. The nation exports more services than it imports from Canada and Mexico. Conversely, the nation imports more goods than it exports to its partner nations.⁶⁴ Texas's garment industry has been adversely affected by NAFTA, especially in border counties. Likewise, some Texas fruit and vegetable producers have been hurt by Mexican competition. In addition, increased trucking on highways between Mexico and Canada contributes to air pollution and causes traffic problems that make road travel slower and more dangerous.

maquiladora

"Partner plant" on the Mexican side of the border that uses cheap labor to assemble goods and then exports these goods back to the United States.

Since 1995, a succession of political and economic crises in Mexico has raised serious questions concerning NAFTA's future. Mexico has seen assassinations of public figures, kidnappings of wealthy businesspeople, drug-related corruption of government officials, attacks on tourists, widespread unemployment and hunger in both urban and rural areas, and acts of armed rebellion.⁶⁵ A more prosperous and stable Mexico usually means fewer jobless workers migrating to the United States and more trade between the two countries.⁶⁶ In 2006, Mexico's voters selected Felipe Calderón as president. He began a military assault on criminal drug cartels soon after taking office, and violence over the next few years reached record levels.⁶⁷ In January 2012, the Mexican government reported that 47,515 people had been killed in drug-related violence since President Calderón's election, with others estimating as many as 80,000 dead.⁶⁸ In July 2012, Enrique Peña Nieto was elected to serve as president until November 30, 2018. President Peña Nieto has made some changes in violence prevention programs and security reorganization, but his approach to organized crime strongly resembles that of Calderón. The Peña Nieto administration's claims of reduced violence are hard to corroborate, as reporting on crime has been limited both by his government and by drug cartels seeking to silence reporters. Most statistics suggest a decrease in homicide and an increase in extortion and kidnapping.⁶⁹

Important as it is, Mexico is far from Texas's only trading partner, as Texas does business with countries all over the globe, even some that are controversial. Several Texas politicians, including former Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples and U.S. Senator John Cornyn, have advocated for increasing trade with Cuba. Although Cuba has been designated as a sponsor of terrorism, Texas agriculture exports to the island continue to grow.⁷⁰

1.4 Learning Check

1. What are the four land-based industries that were important to the Texas economy in the past?
2. Which economic sector is currently creating the most jobs for Texans?

Answers on p. 40.

Meeting New Challenges

LO1.5 Identify five major policy challenges Texas faces in the 21st century.

Clearly, Texas has experienced rapid and dramatic change in recent decades, and though change provides opportunities, it also brings challenges. Texans are greatly affected by public policy decisions concerning immigration and Texas's workforce, protection of the ecological system, job-creating economic development, technological changes in communications and industry, and restructuring and financing of the state's public schools and institutions of higher education.⁷¹

Immigration: Federal and State Problems

Since Texas became part of the United States, immigration has been the source of many controversies that affect state, national, and international politics: how to control the flow of immigrants, the length of time a nonresident may remain within U.S. territory, the type of labor nonresidents may perform, and other issues. Some immigrants are undocumented and come across the border

in violation of federal immigration law or overstay legal visas. Although Texas employers attract immigrants as a source of cheap labor, this system can depress wages for all workers and provide often unwanted competition for jobs. Because Texas relies largely on consumption and property taxes to fund state and local government services, even **undocumented immigrants** pay state taxes when they buy goods and services or rent or buy property. Yet many Texas citizens wonder if they pay enough to cover the social services they sometimes use. (For a discussion about immigration's impact on Texas's economy, see this chapter's Selected Reading, "Immigrants' Economic Strength Increases." on p. 36.) As with each wave of immigration in American history, prejudices along with economics produce heated controversy in politics.

In 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Immigration Reform and Control Act that granted amnesty to any immigrant who entered the country illegally before 1982. The law also included measures to restrain the flow of new illegal immigrants into the United States. Penalties were provided for employers who knowingly hired undocumented immigrants; and it authorized more enforcement personnel for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the agency then in charge of controlling immigration. Despite this act, thousands of undocumented immigrants continued to enter Texas each year, and those who employed illegal immigrants rarely faced serious consequences. Today, many undocumented people are arrested, detained, and expelled from the country; and families are often separated in the process. Others have voluntarily returned home after earning money to support their families. Thousands remain in Texas and often arrange for family members to join them. Some of these workers are exploited by employers, merchants, and landlords. Others receive fair wages and humane treatment. All live and work in fear of arrest and deportation.

Despite increasing anti-immigrant sentiments nationally in the 1990s, in June 2001 a substantial bipartisan majority in the Texas legislature passed and Governor Perry signed the Texas DREAM Act, which allows undocumented immigrants who were brought to Texas as children by their parents to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities if they graduated from high school or received a GED in the state. Available to those who have at least three years of residency and are seeking legal residency, this provision has benefited thousands of Texas students.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Congress passed the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002, which President George W. Bush signed into law. In addition to provisions regarding terrorist organizations, this act also concerns the tracking of international students at U.S. educational institutions, the issuance of visas, and other details regarding foreign nationals. In 2006, President Bush signed the Secure Fence Act authorizing, among other barriers, more than 700 miles of fencing along the almost 2,000-mile-long U.S.–Mexico border from California to Texas to combat illegal immigration.

The Republican majority in the Texas legislative and executive branches have issued repeated calls for getting tough on undocumented immigrants. Yet they have failed to repeal the Texas DREAM Act. In fact, Governor Perry

undocumented immigrant

A person who enters the United States in violation of federal immigration law and thus lacks proper documentation and identification.

defended the act repeatedly during his unsuccessful run for the Republican presidential nomination in 2012.

Texas politicians often face the difficult task of balancing constituents' demands for increased border security against the demands of a growing Latino constituency and a politically active business community pushing for immigration reforms. More than 30 bills addressing immigration were filed in the Texas legislature in 2011, most of them labeled as anti-immigrant by civil rights groups. Although these bills received considerable support from Texas Tea Party activists, after months of intense debate, none passed.⁷² With Republicans increasingly concerned about the growth of a pro-Democratic Latino vote, the tone changed in the 2013 session of the legislature, with fewer than 10 immigration bills being filed, and Governor Perry's avoiding the word "immigration" in his State of the State speech altogether.⁷³ Still, in the 2014 elections many Republican candidates jockeyed for recognition as "tough on immigration" and called for reform or repeal of the Texas DREAM Act. Within days of winning the Republican nomination some of these same candidates moved away from their more divisive language. Meanwhile, Democratic candidates sought to attract and mobilize Latino voters.⁷⁴

Students



in Action

From Tehran to Texas

"Civic engagement is a fulfilling experience; it's an opportunity to make a difference and contribute to society. It also builds character and is a valuable learning experience."

—Shirin Tavakoli

Shirin's Journey to Texas

Shirin Tavakoli was born and raised in Iran, where she saw the government violate the rights of the people around her. From an early age, she aspired to involve herself in politics and advocate for human rights. Yet, the strict laws of Iran's Islamic Republic presented what seemed an impassable roadblock to her dream. The opportunity to move to what she'd come to know as the "Dream Land" of America came in 2008 when the U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi contacted her for an interview. Her father had initiated Shirin's long, difficult, and expensive

immigration process in 2003 by applying for her to become a permanent U.S. resident. She was disappointed when she was denied a visa; but, inspired by her dream of becoming a successful human rights advocate, she refused to lose hope. She persevered through another interview and a small mountain of paperwork, and was eventually granted a visa. Shirin moved to Texas in 2008, leaving her family and friends behind for the opportunities she would never have in her country.

Becoming an Asset to Her New Home

Moving to Texas was harder than Shirin anticipated. Without her support network of family and friends, she struggled to adapt to a new culture and learn a new language. Determined to integrate into her new home, it was ultimately her passion for civic engagement that sustained

her during the difficult transition. She excelled in her classes and threw herself fully into campus life. In 2009, her peers at Collin College elected her president of the Student Government Association (SGA), and she became their advocate. Her experience in SGA motivated her to get involved in politics on a broader level; and in the summer of 2009, she began an internship in the office of State Representative Allen Vaught (D-Dallas).

A year later, Shirin's hard work and determination landed her a full tuition scholarship at Southern Methodist University, where she served as president of the campus chapter of Amnesty International, editor-in-chief of the human rights publication *Human Writes*, and founder and president of The Innocence Project of Texas at SMU. After obtaining degrees in political science, international studies, and human rights, she took a job serving the people of Texas as a constituent services liaison for U.S. Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas), working to resolve citizens' issues with federal agencies. In August 2014, Shirin started law school to fulfill her dream of becoming a human rights attorney.

Shirin uses the example of those around the world fighting and dying for a chance to be involved in political life to inspire other young

people to get civically engaged. She believes that she never could have come so far without the countless opportunities for civic engagement in this country. She hopes people her age will not take such opportunities for granted. Reflecting on her journey, Shirin is proud to be part of a nation founded and built by immigrants. She understands their struggles and their role in building our society. Her hope is that her fellow Texans will see immigrants not as a threat but as people who have overcome great challenges to contribute to American life.



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Water

After a devastating drought in the 1950s, the Texas legislature created the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in 1957 and mandated statewide water planning. Since then, the TWDB and the Texas Board of Water Engineers have prepared and adopted nine state water plans, including *Water for Texas—2012*. This plan makes several recommendations for the development, management, and conservation of water resources and for better preparation for and response to drought conditions so that sufficient water will be available for the foreseeable future.⁷⁵

With the state's population expected to double by the middle of the 21st century, assuring all Texans adequate water will be a formidable challenge.⁷⁶ In 2012, the Office of the Comptroller issued a report, "The Impact of the 2011 Drought and Beyond," which projected that demand for water will rise by 22 percent by 2060, while the state's current dependable water supply will meet only about 65 percent of that projected demand. Susan Combs, then comptroller of public accounts, declared that "planning

for and managing our water use is perhaps the most important task facing Texas policymakers in the 21st century.”⁷⁷

As urbanization continues, cities will increasingly compete with small towns, agricultural interests, and the oil and gas industry for the same water. These problems are especially visible along the I-35 corridor and around fast-growing cities like Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio.⁷⁸ In 2011, nearly 26.5 billion gallons of water were used for fracking in Texas. That amount is likely to reach 41 billion gallons by 2020.⁷⁹ Texas’s water supply was severely depleted by the 2011 drought, when the 30 aquifers that supply about 60 percent of the state’s water declined to levels predating the levels of the 1950s drought. Scientists project that it could take years to recover from this low level.⁸⁰ TWDB chair Edward Vaughn explained that the message of *Water for Texas—2012* is simple: “During serious drought conditions, Texas does not and will not have enough water to meet the needs of its people, its businesses, and its agricultural enterprises.”⁸¹

In November 2011, voters ratified a constitutional amendment authorizing up to \$6 billion in bonds to make loans to local governments for water, wastewater, and flood control projects and in that same election defeated a proposal to provide tax incentives for water conservation on agricultural land.⁸² Then in 2012, Spicewood Beach became the first Texas town to have its wells run dry, followed by the town of Robert Lee.⁸³ In 2013 the city of Barnhart ran dry, and the list maintained by the Texas Council on Environmental Quality of communities that may soon have no water reached 46.⁸⁴ That year, the state announced that it would fully fund the State Water Plan for the first time. The 83rd Texas Legislature proposed, and 73 percent of Texas voters ratified, a constitutional amendment to use \$2 billion of the “rainy day” fund, the state’s savings account, to finance priority projects under the state water plan.

Environmental Protection

Poor air quality and impure water cause serious health problems for many Texans. The Lone Star State leads the nation in hazardous waste generated, carbon dioxide emissions, volatile organic compounds that are recognized carcinogens, and toxic chemicals released into the air and into the groundwater.⁸⁵ Coal-fired power plants and oil refineries in Texas annually generate approximately 294 million tons of carbon dioxide and heat-trapping gases, more than the next two states (Pennsylvania and Florida) combined.

The government of Texas routinely clashes with the federal government as the state fights for reduced federal regulation. Between 2009 and 2014, Texas filed 28 lawsuits against the federal government, including 14 against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In 2011, the EPA ruled that coal-fired power plants in Texas and 26 other states must be upgraded with equipment to reduce toxic emissions. Texas led several states in a legal challenge to those regulations. Governor Rick Perry frequently criticized EPA mandates as “overreaching regulation,” stating that they have led to a loss of more than 500 jobs in the Lone Star State. In 2014, the U.S. Supreme

Point/Counterpoint

THE ISSUE The process of hydraulic fracturing of underground rock formations to release the flow of natural gas and oil is also known as “fracking.” Recent technological developments have increased the use of this practice, creating both opportunities and dangers.

Should Oil and Gas Drillers Use Hydraulic “Fracking”?

Arguments For Fracking

1. The oil and gas industry in the Lone Star State is experiencing large profits at a time when other sectors have not performed as well. This production has created an economic boom in many parts of Texas, contributing to a state economy that is stronger than the national economy. Unemployment is low, and taxes are generated from increased revenue as a result of fracking.
2. As conventional supplies of oil and gas have dwindled in Texas, the process of fracking has allowed industry to unlock large reserves of gas found in shale and other rock formations. Releasing gas through fracking provides another valuable energy resource, reducing Texas’s (and the country’s) dependence on oil.
3. There is no conclusive proof that fracking causes earthquakes. A report released by the National Research Council in mid-2012 revealed that fracking does not pose a high risk for triggering earthquakes large enough to feel.

Arguments Against Fracking

1. Fracking poses higher environmental risks than does conventional drilling. The equipment used in fracking emits pollutants into the air. Fracking fluid contains hazardous chemicals that will ultimately return to the surface. Pipes may leak, causing groundwater contamination. Texas already leads the nation in recognized carcinogens released into the air and toxic chemicals released into its groundwater. Fracking adds to these pollutants.
2. Fracking requires between 50,000 gallons and 4 million gallons of water to fracture a single well. This resource is too valuable to use in such quantities at this time. The agriculture and timber industries have been gravely affected by record drought conditions and need available water.
3. Fracturing rock may cause geological instability, leading to earthquakes. Geologists made direct links between fracking and earthquakes in Ohio and Oklahoma in 2011 and 2013. As the petroleum industry continues to expand the process of fracking, more earthquakes may be expected.

This “Point/Counterpoint” is based on Debra Black, “Fracking Fracas: Pros and Cons of Controversial Gas Extraction Process,” *The Toronto Star*, February 5, 2012; and *Induced Seismicity Potential in Energy Technologies*, Report of the National Research Council, June 15, 2012.

For peer-reviewed scientific studies establishing the link between fracking and earthquakes, see W.-Y. Kim, “Induced Seismicity Associated with Fluid Injection into a Deep Well in Youngstown, Ohio,” *Journal of Geophysical Research Solid Earth* 118 (2013), 3506–3518, doi:10.1002/jgrb.50247. See also K. Keranen, H. Savage, G. Abers, and E. Cochran, “Potentially Induced Earthquakes in Oklahoma, USA: Links Between Wastewater Injection and the 2011 Mw 5.7 Earthquake Sequence,” *Geology*, March 26, 2013.

Court ruled in favor of the EPA, bolstering its authority to regulate carbon pollution and use the Clean Air Act to fight global climate change.⁸⁶ Environmental organizations like the Sierra Club argue the state does too

little to protect the environment and have filed several citizen lawsuits against companies accused of violating antipollution laws.

Pollution also hurts fish and wildlife populations. Texas leads all states in the number of endangered fish and wildlife species. Industries in Texas, other gulf states, and Mexico release toxic chemicals directly into the Gulf of Mexico or rivers that flow into it. Also contributing greatly to the gulf's environmental problems is the flow of rivers drawing water from the chemically fertilized farms of rural areas and the lawns and gardens of cities large and small. Catches of fish, shrimp, and oysters from gulf waters are declining. Texans must either do with less seafood, import it from abroad at high prices, or enact environmental protection measures to clean up the Gulf of Mexico and restore its productivity.⁸⁷

Education

Of the 50 states, Texas ranked 44th in high school graduation rate, 47th in average SAT scores, and last in the percentage of the population over 25 with a high school diploma in 2013.⁸⁸ Economic performance depends on a well-educated Texas workforce. College educators complain of students poorly prepared for higher education, and employers are particularly concerned that one of every three Texans cannot read and write well enough to fill out a simple job application. Moreover, the state loses many billions of dollars annually because most illiterate Texans are doomed to unemployment or low-paying jobs and thus generate little or no tax revenue.

Teachers are the key element in any educational system, but from year to year, the Lone Star State confronts shortages of certified personnel to instruct its 4 million elementary and secondary school students, a half million of whom have limited English proficiency. Although estimates of the teacher shortage vary, the Texas Education Agency reports that approximately one-fifth of the state's 250,000 teachers quit teaching each year. Some retire, but most of them leave their profession for reasons that include inadequate pay and benefits (Texas ranks 31st in public school teacher pay), low prestige, conflicts with parents, and increasing time-consuming chores that often must be done at night and on weekends. Contributing to their decision to seek other careers is stress over classroom problems affected by the poverty and troubled home lives of many students and burdensome government-mandated assessment and accountability measures.

Early in 2010, Governor Perry announced that Texas would not compete for a federal education grant that could have provided as much as \$700 million for the state. Criticizing a goal of the Race to the Top grant in establishing national curriculum standards for math and English as a "federal takeover of public schools," Perry rejected the program. Texas was one of only two states in the nation (the other was Alaska) not to participate in the common standards effort.⁸⁹ The governor and legislature reduced funding for higher education, student financial aid, and public schools in 2011 to balance the state budget. The cuts to public education resulted in the elimination of more than 10,000 teaching positions and almost 1,000 support

staff jobs.⁹⁰ Texas courts have repeatedly intervened to require the state to increase funding as well as provide more equitable financing for public schools. (For a discussion of this issue, see Chapter 13, “Finance and Fiscal Policy.”) As of 2014, Texas ranked 43rd among the 50 states in spending per student.⁹¹

Poverty and Social Problems

The Lone Star State has alarming numbers of children living in poverty and in single parent homes. Births to unwed teenagers, juvenile arrests, and violent acts committed by teenagers and preadolescents also signal some of the social dysfunctionality associated with poverty. Child poverty in Texas increased 47 percent from 2000 to 2011, and by 2014 more than one of every four children here was living in poverty.⁹² Many children at all levels of society suffer from abuse and neglect. Estimates of the number of homeless people (including many children) vary widely, but at least 100,000—and perhaps more than 200,000—Texans cannot provide themselves with shelter in a house or apartment. At the same time, 18.5 percent of Texans earn less than \$22,113 a year, well below the federal poverty level.⁹³

With almost one-fifth of its population below the poverty line, health care is a major issue for Texas. Of the 50 states, Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured residents. In 2013, approximately 6.2 million people were without health insurance, almost a quarter of the state’s population.⁹⁴ After implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act (also known as “Obamacare”) that year, the uninsured rate in Texas dipped slightly from 24.8 percent to 23.5 percent in 2014. Texas, however, is one of 21 states refusing federal funds to expand Medicaid coverage for adults under Obamacare.⁹⁵ Some Texans argue that any public assistance for the poor is too much and encourages dependence instead of self-reliance. Other Texans advocate for increased government spending for social service programs, noting that government support increases spending in impoverished communities, keeping local businesses open. Between these extremes are Texans who support a limited role for government in meeting human needs but who call for nongovernmental organizations to play a more active role in dealing with social problems. Texas voters, however, tend to support candidates for public office who promise lower taxes, less government spending, fewer public employees, and a reduction or elimination of social services. As a result, the Lone Star State continues to rank near the bottom of the 50 states in governmental responses to poverty and social problems.

1.5 Learning Check

1. True or False: If current trends persist, demand for water will rise by 10 percent by 2060, and the state’s current dependable water supply will meet that projected demand.
2. True or False: More than one-third of Texas workers are earning wages below the federal poverty level.

Answers on p. 40.