“Exhaustion and exasperation are frequently the handmaidens of legislative decision.”

– Barber B. Conable, Jr.

At any given moment, a myriad of issues clamor to be addressed, redressed, or even readdressed. The only thing any one issue may have in common with another is that none exists in a historical vacuum and none is likely to be permanently settled.

**Assignment**

Choose 4 - 6 issues that Texas faces (like education, the penal system, taxation, water conservation, or oil and gas policies – see your assignment handout for more ideas) to research.

Research the background and current state of each issue, any reforms that have been made, and the trends underway.

Use MLA format for your paper and your citations. Your paper should be at least 8 double-spaced pages, allowing at least 2 pages per topic discussed.

**Meet Your Librarian**

Elaine Patton  
Elaine.M.Patton@lonestar.edu

**Resources for Your Research**

When you find a useful article or book, be sure to note the subject terms associated with it for your own search purposes. Also peruse the works cited pages of the sources you find to lead you to other books and articles.
## Books & Ebooks

The UP library is digital: you can read and check out online **eBooks**. You can also request physical books or resources from other libraries through the **catalog**. If you’re off-campus, log in using the barcode number on the back of your student ID to get access.

## Databases

Library databases contain articles, newspapers, images, documents, papers, media and more. The databases selected for you here are best for critical analysis of literature.

Be sure to use the advanced search features!

- **Academic Search Complete**
  
  *Multi-disciplinary database of journal, magazine, and newspaper articles.*

- **JSTOR**
  
  *Journal articles covering history, statistics, economics, etc.*

- **Westlaw**
  
  *Searches cases and laws as well as business and current events periodicals, company reports, and television broadcast transcripts.*

- **Issues & Controversies**
  
  *Provides articles about current issues as well as searches Reuters news articles*

- **ProQuest Newspapers**
  
  *Full text of newspapers including Washington Post & NY Times*

## Internet Sources

Be careful to evaluate sites for credibility, authority, bias, relevance, and evidence before citing them.

- **Texas Legislature Online**
  
  *The official website of the Texas Legislature*

- (Texas) **Senate Research Center**

- (Texas) **House Research Organization**

- **Guide to Texas Legislative Information**

- **Legislative Reference Library of Texas**

- Try looking at the sites for agencies associated with your topic, e.g.:
  
  - **Texas Education Agency**
  
  - **Texas Dept. of Agriculture**
  
  - **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality**

- **Texas Observer**
Texas-centric news publication focused on government and corporate affairs

- **The Houston Chronicle**
  Texas-based newspaper; consider looking at other Texas-based newspapers for articles, as well, like the **Austin American-Statesman** or the **San Antonio Express-News**

- **Environment Texas**
- **State Impact: Texas**
- Texas Comptroller’s **Window on State Government**
- **Texas Tribune Tribpedia**

### Citing Sources & Getting Help With Your Paper

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