

**South Plains College**  
**GOVT 2306: Texas Government**  
**Spring 2017**

Instructor: Timothy Holland  
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Office Hours: Monday 11:00am-12:00pm; Tuesday 11:00am-12:00pm and 1:00pm-2:00pm;  
Wednesday 11:00am-12:00pm; Thursday 1:00pm-2:00pm; Friday 9:00am-12:00pm; or by  
Appointment

Department of Social Sciences

Discipline: Government

Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2306

Course Title: Texas Government (Texas Constitution and Topics)

Credit: 3 Lecture, 0 Lab

Satisfies a core curriculum requirement? Yes, Social Science and ALL Undergraduate Degrees

Prerequisites: TSI compliance in Reading

Available Formats: Conventional, INET, ITV

Campus: Levelland

Course Time & Location: AD140

GOVT 2306.001 (MW 9:30-10:45)

GOVT 2306.003 (MW 1:00-2:15)

GOVT 2306.004 (TR 9:30-10:45)

GOVT 2306.005 (TR 2:30-3:45)

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Appointment

Textbook: In this class we will use *Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas*. 5<sup>th</sup>  
Edition by Ken Collier, Steven Galatas and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. ISBN: 9781506346298

Course Description: This course is a study of the functions performed in the American system of  
state governments, with special reference to the development of governance in Texas and  
its Constitutions. This course satisfies the Legislative requirements for teacher  
certification.

Course Purpose: Government 2306, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive  
course designed to acquaint the learner with the origin and development of the Texas  
Constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-  
governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the

political culture of Texas. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas.

Approval Number: 45.1002.5125

**Course Requirements:** To maximize a student's potential to complete this course, he/she should attend all class meetings, complete all homework assignments and examinations in a timely manner, and complete all other projects or papers as assigned in the instructor's specific instructions.

**Course Evaluation:** See the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluating student performance.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

Students who have completed this course will:

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas Government
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
6. Analyze state and local elections processes
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

**Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):**

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCA.

1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information by:
  - a. Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information,
  - b. Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question,
  - c. Analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.
2. Communication – to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral or visual communication by:

Developing, interpreting, and expressing ideas through written, oral, or visual communication.
3. Social Responsibility Skills – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities by:
  - a. Demonstrating intercultural competence,
  - b. Identifying civic responsibility,
  - c. Engaging in regional, national, and global communities.

4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, action, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:
  - a. Reading, understanding and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines and requirements set forth in the “Statement of Personal Responsibility of Students” (Attached)
  - b. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
  - c. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

**Office Hours**

If you need to discuss your grade or the course content please feel free to attend any of my scheduled office hours. My office is located in the Administration Building in room 119. If you cannot attend my scheduled office hours please email me at [tholland@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:tholland@southplainscollege.edu) or set up an appointment with me to meet at another time.

<b>Office</b>	<b>AD 119</b>
Monday	11:00am-12:00pm
Tuesday	11:00am-12:00pm and 1:00pm-2:00pm
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Thursday	11:00am-12:00pm and 1:00pm-2:00pm
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**Textbook**

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**Grades**

Grade Assessment	Points	Percent	Grading Scale		
			Grade	Points	Percent
Exam 1	250	25%	A	900 or more	90% or greater
Exam 2	250	25%	B	800 to 899.9	80% to 89.9%
Final Exam	250	25%	C	700 to 799.9	70% to 79.9%
Essay	150	15%	D	600 to 699.9	60% to 69.9 <sup>^</sup>
Attendance and Participation	100	10%	F	599.9 or fewer	59.9% or less
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Exams**

In this class there will be three exams. Each exam will only cover material since the last exam. The Final Exam is not cumulative. Exams will be multiple choice and may include some short answer questions.

If you miss the exam you will be permitted to complete a makeup exam if you have a valid excuse. A valid excuse for missing the exam may include (a) participating in a SPC sponsored event; (b) illness with a doctor’s note; (c) another reasonable circumstance approved by the

instructor. If you do not have a valid excuse, such as waking up late on exam day, you will not be permitted to take the exam.

### **Essay**

You will complete one essay discussing a topic in Texas politics.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating**

Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this course. South Plains College policies allow a wide range of punishment for cheating including failing the assignment, quiz, exam or the course. I will be vigilant against cheating and we will discuss how to avoid plagiarism in class. If you ever have questions about citations, quotations, or anything regarding plagiarism please feel free to ask questions in class or during my office hours.

### **Extra Credit**

There will be no opportunities to earn extra credit in this class.

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to regularly attend classes and I will keep record of your attendance. Attendance will account for 10 percent of your grade. Your attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended class by the number of class days we meet during this semester. I will typically record attendance at the beginning of class, if you arrive after the attendance was recorded then you will not be considered present.

You will not be counted absent if you are attending a South Plains College-sponsored event, if you are sick and have a doctor's note or another reason approved by the instructor. If you miss four or more classes during the semester you may be dropped by the instructor, subject to his discretion.

### **Classroom Discussions**

Although this class is primarily lecture-based, you will be encouraged to contribute to class discussion on the topic of the day or other relevant political topics. Given the nature of this course students may express political views contrary to your own and while you are not required to agree with those views you are required to be respectful. I encourage you to express your own views but you must be respectful in both tone and the delivery of your viewpoint.

### **Diversity Statement**

In this class, I will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

### **Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland Student Health & Wellness Center 806-716-2577, Reese Center (also covers ATC) Building 8: 806-716-4675, Plainview Center Main Office: 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611, or the Health and Wellness main number at 806-716-2529.

URL: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/health/disabilityservices.php>

### **SPC Policy regarding "standard English"**

All written assignments should be presented using the conventions of Standard Written English. South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English that is typically used in academic, professional, and business contexts. While slang, regional idioms, and informal kinds of self-expression are appropriate in some contexts, they are out of place in academic writing. Writing instructors and professors in courses across the campus expect all students to demonstrate proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take-home essays.

### **Electronic Devices**

Use of electronic devices for academic purposes is welcome in this class. You may use your laptop or tablet to take notes during class but for no other activities. Do not use your phone during class. No video or audio recording devices will be allowed in class unless part of a disability accommodation.

### **Email Policy**

All emails should include your name, course and section number. I am teaching multiple courses and most of your other professors are also teaching multiple courses therefore it is imperative that you include this basic information so that I can (and your other professors can) address your question or concern.

Do not use the blackboard email function. If you need to contact me please use my SPC email address [tholland@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:tholland@southplainscollege.edu).

If you do not receive a response within 48 hours please re-send the email.

### **Class Schedule**

Please remember that the class schedule is tentative and subject to changes. This is particularly true for the exam days. Therefore it is very important that you attend class regularly so that you are aware of any changes to the schedule which will be announced in class.

**Monday/Wednesday Class Schedule (GOVT 2306.001 & GOVT 2306.003)**

Week	Dates	Topics
1	August 28 and 30	Introduction to Politics and Syllabus
2	September 4 and 6	Labor Day and Federalism
3	September 11 and 13	Texas Constitution and Development
4	September 18 and 20	Political Parties
5	September 25 and 27	Interest Groups and Public Opinion
6	October 2 and 4	Exam 1 and Elections
7	October 9 and 11	Elections
8	October 16 and 18	Local Government
9	October 23 and 25	Judicial Power
10	October 30 and November 1	Exam 2 and Legislature
11	November 6 and 8	Legislature
12	November 13 and 15	Plural Executive
13	November 20 and 22	Plural Executive and Thanksgiving Break
14	November 27 and 29	Policy
15	December 4 and 6	Policy and Final Exam Review
16	December 11 through 14	Final Exam Week

**Final Exam (GOVT 2306.001) – Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am-10:00am**

**Final Exam (GOVT 2306.003) – Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm-3:00pm**

**Tuesday/Thursday Class Schedule (GOVT 2306.004 & GOVT 2306.005)**

Week	Dates	Topics
1	August 29 and 31	Syllabus and Introduction to Politics
2	September 5 and 7	Federalism and Constitutional Development
3	September 12 and 14	Texas Constitution/Parties
4	September 19 and 21	Parties/Public Opinion and Interest Groups
5	September 26 and 28	Public Opinion and Interest Groups/Exam Review
6	October 3 and 5	Exam 1 and Elections
7	October 10 and 12	Elections/Local Government
8	October 17 and 19	Local Government/Judiciary
9	October 24 and 26	Judiciary/Exam Review
10	October 31 and November 2	Exam 2/Legislature
11	November 7 and 9	Legislature
12	November 14 and 16	Plural Executive
13	November 21 and 23	Plural Executive and Thanksgiving Break
14	November 28 and 30	Policy
15	December 5 and 7	Policy and Final Exam Review
16	December 11 through 14	Final Exam Week

**Final Exam (GOVT 2306.004) – Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am-10:00am**

**Final Exam (GOVT 2306.005) – Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm-3:00pm**