

Fall 2020  
GOVT 2305: Federal Government  
Department of Social Sciences  
South Plains College

Instructor: Timothy Holland  
Course Time: ONLINE  
Location: Administrative Building 140  
Professor's Office: AD119  
Email: [tholland@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:tholland@southplainscollege.edu)  
Office Phone: (806) 716-2972

**Course Description:** This course is a survey of fundamental principles of political science, including the American system of government and the origins and development of the constitutions of the United States. This course satisfies the Legislative requirement for teacher certification.

Credit: 3 lecture hours  
Prerequisites: TSI compliance in reading

**Course Purpose:** Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint learners with the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas. Approval Number 45.1002.51.25

**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.

**Internet Access:** This course is an online course and you must have reliable access to a computer and the internet. If you do not own a computer or do not have access to a reliable internet connection then I would recommend using the computer lab, library, or other appropriate alternative. You must have access to a computer and the internet to complete this course. Failure to have access to either a computer or the internet is not a valid excuse for missing assignments, quizzes, exams, or other course content. Please make sure that you have a reliable internet connection when beginning exams and quizzes as you will only have one opportunity to complete those activities.

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

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties
6. Analyze the election process
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

**Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):**

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCAs

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.
  - a. 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, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:
  - a. Reading, understanding, and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines, and requirement 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:** Please email me if you need to discuss your grade or the course content. Since this is an online course most of our communication will likely occur through email but please feel free to attend my schedule office hours in person if you prefer.

**Textbook:** We the People. 12<sup>th</sup> Edition by Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline Tolbert and Andrea Campbell. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.  
ISBN: 978039367957

**Grades:**

**Grading Scale**

Grades	Points	Percent
<b>A</b>	900 and above	90% and above
<b>B</b>	800 to 899.9	80% to 89.9%
<b>C</b>	700 to 799.9	70% to 79.9%
<b>D</b>	600 to 699.9	60% to 69.9%
<b>F</b>	Less than 600	Less than 60%

**Grade Distribution**

Assessment	Points	Percent
<b>Exam 1</b>	200	20%
<b>Exam 2</b>	200	20%
<b>Exam 3</b>	200	20%
<b>Discussion Post 1</b>	50	5%
<b>Discussion Post 2</b>	50	5%
<b>Discussion Post 3</b>	50	5%
<b>Essay 1</b>	80	8%
<b>Essay 2</b>	80	8%
<b>Quiz 1</b>	10	1%
<b>Quiz 2</b>	10	1%
<b>Quiz 3</b>	10	1%
<b>Quiz 4</b>	10	1%
<b>Quiz 5</b>	10	1%
<b>Quiz 6</b>	10	1%
<b>Quiz 7</b>	10	1%
<b>Syllabus Quiz</b>	20	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Exams:** There will be three exams in this course. Exams will consist of multiple choice questions and possibly a few true/false or short answer questions. The Final Exam is not cumulative but only covers the course content discussed after Exam 2. The exam must be completed in one sitting and you will only have one attempt to complete each exam.

**Makeup Exam:** If you are unable to complete an exam because of a technical issue (your internet went out, the exam auto-submitted, etc.) or if you have a valid excuse for missing the exam (as determined by the professor) then you may take the makeup exam located in the

“Makeup Exam” folder. You must receive permission to take the makeup exam BEFORE you take it. The makeup exam will be similar standard exam but in addition to multiple choice questions you will also be required to complete short answer and/or essay responses.

**Essays:** You will complete two essays. The essay topic will be relevant to the week in which the essay is assigned.

**Discussion Posts:** You will complete four discussion post assignments in selected weeks. The content assigned to the appropriate week will be sufficient to allow you to successfully submit your discussion post. In addition to your discussion post you will need to respond to a minimum of 2 other posts by other students.

**Quizzes:** In some weeks you will be asked to complete a quiz over the content covered in that week. The quiz will be multiple choice. You will have one attempt to complete a quiz.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this course. South Plains College provides for a wide range of punishments for cheating including failing the assignment, quiz, exam, or course. I will be vigilant against cheating and you will at a minimum fail the assignment, quiz, or exam in which cheating or plagiarism has occurred.

**Late Work:** Late work will not be accepted. If you are sick and cannot complete your work or if you have another legitimate excuse (as determined by the professor) please email me so that we can make the appropriate arrangements for the completion of your coursework.

**Extra Credit:** There will likely not be opportunities for extra credit. If extra credit is available it will be available to the entire class. Do not ask for extra credit opportunities.

**Final Grades:** Final grades will be posted on Wednesday, December 9, 2020. You may view your grade in Blackboard or through Campus Connect.

**Gradebook:** You will be able to view your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in the Gradebook link.

**Attendance Policy:** Since this is an online course I will not take daily attendance. However, you are expected to complete your work on time in accordance with the course calendar. You may be dropped from the course if you miss two or more consecutive weeks of activities. Please email me if you are sick or have another valid reason for a prolonged absence.

**Classroom Discussions:** Although this class is primarily lecture-based, you will be encouraged to contribute to classroom discussions on the topic of the day or other relevant political topics which may arise. Given the nature of this course students may express political views contrary to your own and while no one is required to agree with another’s political views you are required to be respectful. I encourage you to honestly express your views in this class but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

**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 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 the 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 formal 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.

**SPC COVID-19 Policy:** It is the policy of South Plains College for the Fall 2020 semester that as a condition of on-campus enrollment, all students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID19 in the SPC community. Such behaviors specifically include the requirement that all students properly wear CDC-compliant face coverings while in SPC buildings including classrooms, labs, hallways, and restrooms. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the current class session. If the student refuses to leave the classroom or lab after being dismissed, the student may be referred to the Dean of Students on the Levelland campus or the Dean/Director of external centers for Student Code of Conduct Violations.

**Emails:** Every email must include your name, course, day and time the class meets. I am teaching multiple courses and sections and most of your other professors are as well. Therefore, it is imperative that you always include this information so we know which class you are in so that we know where you are coming from and can quickly respond to your concerns.

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

**Class Schedule:** All assessments must be completed before 11:59PM on their due date.

Course Calendar for Federal Government: GOVT 2305 – Fall 2020

Week	Begin Date	End Date	Topic	Assessment
1	24-Aug	1-Sep	Introduction to American Politics	Syllabus Quiz and Quiz 1
2	31-Aug	8-Sep	Federalism	Quiz 2
3	7-Sep	15-Sep	Constitutionalism	Quiz 3
4	14-Sep	22-Sep	Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	Discussion Post 1
5	21-Sep	29-Sep	Exam 1	Exam 1
6	28-Sep	6-Oct	Congress	Essay 1
7	5-Oct	13-Oct	Presidency	Quiz 4
8	12-Oct	20-Oct	Bureaucracy	Quiz 5
9	19-Oct	27-Oct	Judicial branch	Discussion Post 3
10	26-Oct	3-Nov	Exam 2	Exam 2
11	2-Nov	10-Nov	Interest Groups and Public Opinion	Quiz 6
12	9-Nov	17-Nov	Parties	Discussion Post 4
13	16-Nov	24-Nov	Elections	Essay 2
14	23-Nov	1-Dec	Domestic and Foreign Policy	Quiz 8
15	30-Nov	8-Dec	Final Exam	Final Exam

**Syllabus Agreement:** By continuing to complete the course you agree to the terms of this Syllabus. If you do not agree to the terms of the Syllabus you must drop the course.

The professor reserves the right to change the terms of the syllabus as circumstances require.