

South Plains College

GOVT 2305

FALL 2022

## **Federal Government**

Online Course

Professor Drew Landry

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Levelland Campus, Student Services rm 116

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Office Hours: MW: 1:00 – 3:30pm; Friday: 9am – 12pm (noon); or by appointment

### **Common Course**

Department: Social Sciences

Discipline: Government

Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2305

Course Title: Federal Government (Federal 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, Lubbock Downtown

Center, Lubbock Center, Reese, Plainview

Textbook: Varies according to instructor, Refer to each instructor's instructions for textbook requirements.

Course Specific Instructions: Each instructor will attach his/her course with specific instructions.

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 requirements for teacher certification.

Course Purpose: Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint the learner with the origin and development of the US

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.

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

Attendance Policy: Whenever absences become excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course. Each instructor will have additional information about attendance on his/her course information sheet.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Students who have completed this course will:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of our 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 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

### **Course Description**

This course is a survey of the organizational principles of political science, including, and more emphasis of, the American system of government and the origins and development of the Constitution of the United States. Its emphasis is placed on constitutional backgrounds and the organization and functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial segments of the national government, civil liberties and civil rights, public opinion, media, bureaucracies, and domestic policies. This course satisfies the Legislative requirements for teacher certification.

### **Course Requirements/Expectations**

This is an online distance learning course. It takes a great deal of discipline, self-motivation, and effective time management to successfully complete an online course. Many students find it helpful to set aside specific times each week to work on the course.

While this course requires no prior knowledge of American politics, there is considerable reading related to a wide range of topics. It is essential that students complete the weekly readings before attempting to complete the assignments. We cover a great deal of material so it is critical that you take careful notes and keep abreast of the readings and assignments. If you feel you need extra help in managing the course materials, contact me and I will help you.

### **Required Textbook**

Bardes, B.A., Shelley, M.C., & Schmidt, S.W. (2021). *American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials* Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning. (loose leaf)

\*MindTap will not be utilized during the semester but those who wish to use it will be accommodated.

## Syllabus Agreement

Every student has four (4) days to examine the syllabus. By remaining in this course beyond that point, the student indicates his/her acceptance of the syllabus. Any student who remains in the class beyond the first week, agrees to comply with the rules expressed or implied in this syllabus.

## Grading Policy

All quizzes, exams, and class sessions have specific due dates and are given in every assignment. The last assignment is due Friday, December 9, 2022, at 5pm.

### Quizzes

This course will be fairly straightforward. You will read one chapter a week and then take its corresponding quiz. Quizzes will consist of multiple-choice questions, true/false statements, or matching exercises worth one point apiece and cover various subjects throughout the chapter. Because every quiz is part of a chapter and has a different number of questions, the final tally of points per quiz varies.

Students may work ahead but not backwards on the quizzes. Every unit has a specific due date and they are made known to students; however, only a doctor's note will allow students to work on an essay or quiz once the due date expires. Once students complete all of the assignments, they have successfully finished the course.

You have two opportunities to complete each quiz but your *last attempt* will be recorded, **not** your highest grade. This is done to measure your judgment on how well you know the content.

### Exams

There are three exams in this course. Two are worth 110 points and one is worth 100 points. They cover the institutions and will appear towards the end of the semester.

### Essays

At the end of every unit, students will answer cumulative questions pertaining to the chapters that were studied. The purpose of this is to test students' ability to analyze information, make connections to the chapters, and write proficiently at the collegiate level.

If, *unless directed otherwise in the assignment*, a student embeds, copies and pastes, or cites an outside source (including your textbook) into his/her answer, that student will receive a zero (0) on the essay. If the offense happens a second time, the student will be reported to the Department Chair and I will recommend the student be removed from the course due to plagiarism.

These are not research papers but think of them as in-class essays instead.

### Discussions

There will be a few discussions during the semester. The links to the available discussion board will be located in the appropriate "Course Content" folder.

The discussion may be over a topic in your reading or an outside article that coincides with the chapter topic. Your participation in the discussion board is essential as each one is worth 50 points. Since this is a summer course with shortened time, not every discussion will be assigned.

Students need to make an original post and respond to two different original posts made by their classmates before the deadline. Students may respond more times than the required amount.

Discussing politics can bring about an emotional side of people and that is why a “Netiquette” is found in the “Welcome – Start Here” page. Be sure to read and understand it because your acceptance of its use will be implied when you participate in the first discussion.

#### Grading Discussions

If a student only makes one post throughout the week, the grade for such a post has the potential of making 25 points. If a student makes two posts throughout the week, the grade has the potential of making 33 points. In order to reach the maximum amount of points, three posts – consisting of one original post and two responses to two different original posts – must be made.

This part of the grade is meant to engage in a dialogue about issues, not to complement one another on her/his original post. Any response to an original post that does not add to the given discussion (such as “good post,” “good job,” “you did really well,” etc.) will count against that student’s discussion grade.

Finally, there will be no extra credit or bonus available for students.

### Grades

#### Grade Calculation

In calculating grades, I keep it very simple. I take the total points a student accumulated and divide that number into the total points possible and multiply by one hundred (100). The result from this basic math is your class percentage. A scale of what percentage constitutes a letter grade is below.

#### Rounding

Students are ingrained to think a percentage ending in “.5” will be rounded to the nearest whole number. I only round to the nearest whole number if a student has at least a “.9.” This is my practice and I have done this for numerous years. I have no intention of changing it. If you desire a better grade, you will have to earn it.

#### Grading Scale

100 – 90% A  
89 – 80% B  
79 – 70% C  
69 – 60% D  
59% and below F

#### Grade Breakdown

4 Discussions (each worth 50 points) = 200 points  
15 Quizzes (all varying in points) = 102 points  
3 Exams (two worth 110 points, one worth 100 points) = 320 points  
2 Essays (each worth 120 points) = 240

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Total Points Possible: 862

At the end of the semester, I will not respond to any student who wishes to plead for a grade change. Students need to keep track of their grades throughout the semester.

### **Communications**

There are many methods to contact me. The top of the syllabus has my email if a quick explanation will suffice your question; and my office number if you need an over the phone conversation. I am dedicated to a two (2) business day response to any correspondence from you. Odds are in favor of me getting back to you sooner than that. If there is an emergency – which is defined as a test failing on you via a Blackboard failure – then you should email me – at my SPC email – immediately.

Do NOT send me any messages through Blackboard as that medium will not be checked.

**When sending me an email, please put the class you are enrolled in the subject line. That will immediately help me find your information and help you.**

### **Attendance Policy**

Regulating attendance in an online course is tricky. With that being stated, students will be considered “no longer attending” after two (2) consecutive incomplete essay assignments *and* not informing me the reason for such inaction. This is the fairest action for all students. The point of this is twofold: do not miss any assignments and notify me immediately if you will miss.

For more information concerning the attendance policy, please see the South Plains College General Catalog.

### **Academic Integrity**

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

**Cheating:** Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating.

Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.

**Plagiarism:** Offering the work of another as one’s own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

### *Punishment for Plagiarism*

Any student who commits plagiarism and is caught in doing so will be punished on the first offense with a zero (0) for the grade. If a student commits and is caught on a second offense of plagiarism, the professor will seek the removal of the student from the course with an F for the grade, report the student to the Dean of Students, and may suggest the student's expulsion from the college.

**Intellectual Property:** All material on the course's Blackboard page, including quizzes, are the intellectual property of the professor and at no time may a student screenshot a question or post any exam or quiz material online. If a student does this, he/she will be warned on the first offense. If the instance repeats, the student will be disciplined accordingly. This is a form of stealing from me and it will not be tolerated.

### **Academic English**

South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English 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. Professors expect all students to demonstrate proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in all their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take-home essays.

### **Diversity Statement**

In this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group difference 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.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities (choices of sports team, however, are fair game – ha). The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

### **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 Office) 806-716-2577, Lubbock Centers (located at the Lubbock Downtown Center) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

## **Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement**

If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, Under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Health and Wellness Center. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or email [dburleson@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dburleson@southplainscollege.edu) for assistance.

## **Computer Issues**

Having access to a properly functioning and updated computer is absolutely necessary for this course. Students may arrange to visit the SPC computer lab, library, your local library, or someone else's computer, but using the excuse of a crashed computer will not be accepted for failing to complete tests or assignments. If a student does not have access to a functional computer, then do not take this course. Computer problems of any kind will not be excused. That is the nature of this computer course. If any student finds that unacceptable, then do not take the course.

## **Technical Support**

Email [blackboard@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:blackboard@southplainscollege.edu) or call 806-716-2180 for any and all technical problems with the Blackboard software (they are much better than me at solving computer problems).

## **South Plains College Libraries and Computer Labs**

South Plains College has many library and computer lab locations. Feel free to find them and their hours of operation by clicking on the link below.

<http://www.southplainscollege.edu/information-for/current-spc-students/library.php>

## **Student Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure all tests have been completed by their due date. Any test not completed by the due date automatically receives a zero (0). Computer problems or mechanical failures are not considered acceptable excuses for late tests or assignments. You are highly encouraged not to wait until the last minute to complete tests. Technical and personal problems are not considered acceptable excuses for late tests.

## **Financial Aid and Advising Assistance**

If you need assistance with financial aid or your course schedule you can contact the following:

Financial Aid:  
806-894-9611 Ext. 3800  
[finaid@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:finaid@southplainscollege.edu)

Advising:  
806-716-2368 or 806-716-2366

## **Amendments**

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time. Students will be notified of such change(s) with appropriate time to adapt.

## **COVID-19**

### *Tests and Assignments*

If you are unable to access the class for an extended period of time due to personal illness or COVID-19 related quarantine, we can plan for you to make up any missed work.

### *Makeup of assignment(s) and exam(s)*

If a student misses an assignment(s) and/or exam(s) due to COVID-19 or any other illness, a doctor's note will be required in order to make up the assignment and/or exam. The note must cover the dates you missed, which must coincide with your missing assignment(s) and/or exam(s).

## **Confirmation**

Upon completion of reading the syllabus, please email me at [dlandry@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dlandry@southplainscollege.edu) with the subject heading "Read the Syllabus" and state one thing you learned from the Grading Policy section. Please complete this task no later than 5pm Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>.