

Fall 2022
GOVT 2306-157 and 451: Texas Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Department: 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, Reese, ATC, Plainview

Textbook: Varies according to instructor.

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

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: 45.1002.51 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: 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.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who have completed this course will:

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution.
2. Demonstrate and 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 the state and local election process.
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 I 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

Instructor Information

Dr. Jonathan Martin

Office: AD 121

E-mail: jmartin@southplainscollege.edu

Office Phone: 806-716-2198

Office Hours:

- Monday: 8:20-9:20am, 10:50-11:30am, and 1-3pm
- Tuesday: 10:50-11:30am and 2:20-3:20pm
- Wednesday: 8:20-9:20am, 10:50-11:30am, and 1-3pm
- Thursday: 10:50-11:30am and 2:20-3:20pm
- Friday: 8:30-11am

Textbook and Course Readings

This course utilizes the Texas Government panOpen OER (Open Educational Resource) from LibreTexts. The textbook is FREE and available online through this link:

[https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Political_Science_and_Civics/Texas_Government_\(panOpen\)](https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Political_Science_and_Civics/Texas_Government_(panOpen))

In addition to the textbook, I will assign other reading material in Blackboard throughout the semester.

Participation Statement

For online courses, students MUST actively participate by completing an academic assignment by the official census date **September 14**. Students who do not do so, will be dropped from the course.

Blackboard Information

We will be using Blackboard for this course. Blackboard is used for announcements, completing assignments, emails, discussion boards and the gradebook. You will also find additional resource materials to help you this semester, such as lecture notes, power point presentations, video clips, audio clips, and more.

Blackboard can be accessed by logging into the MySPC portal or going directly to <https://southplainscollege.blackboard.com>.

Troubleshooting

If you experience technical difficulties with Blackboard, please submit at Blackboard help ticket on this webpage: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/instructional-technology/Help.php>

Grading Scale

A: 89.5-100%

B: 79.5-89.4%

C: 69.5-79.4%
D: 59.5-69.4%
F: Below 59.5%

Overall Grade Formula

Quizzes	(15%)
Discussions	(20%)
Short Answer Assignments	(25%)
Letter to the Editor	(10%)
Exams	(30%)

Assignments

Quizzes (15%)

Weeks that cover a textbook chapter will include a quiz. A typical quiz will have 10 questions (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, free response) based on the assigned reading and videos for that particular week. I will not accept late work for quizzes, but your two lowest quiz grades will be dropped. Also, the syllabus quiz will count as a regular quiz.

Discussions (20%)

There are five discussion assignments in this course. Some discussion threads will be based on a current event in Texas politics, while other discussions will examine the structure of Texas government. The purpose of the discussions is for students to demonstrate their knowledge of course material and engage with other students on important topics in Texas politics.

For each discussion, you will be required to make an initial post in which you answer the question(s) posed in the prompt. After you make your initial post, you must read the posts from your fellow classmates and make an additional post in response to another student's post. I will accept late discussion assignments, but there will be a 10-point deduction for every day that it is late.

Finally, all students are required to maintain professional language in online discussions. If you offer criticism, do it in a polite and constructive manner. For example, avoid name-calling, curse words, and slurs. Any text that a reasonable person would find offensive will likely result in a loss of credit for the assignment. If you need further clarification, please contact the instructor.

Short Answer Assignments (25%)

There are four short answer assignments in this course. Each assignment will ask you a series of questions covering important topics in the readings. It is important that you accurately answer all parts of the questions and cite the textbook (or another reputable source) to support your answers. All short answer assignments will be submitted through Blackboard. Late short answer assignments will be accepted, but there is a 10-point deduction for every day that it is late.

Letter to the Editor (10%)

This assignment requires you to critically read and assess a newspaper article or editorial. Then, you will write a letter to the editor in which you develop a persuasive argument and a call to action. More information on this assignment will be provided to you later in the semester.

Exams (30%)

There are two exams (midterm and final) in this course. Both exams will have a combination of 50 multiple-choice, true/false, and free response questions.

Policies and Procedures

Diversity Statement

In this class, the teacher 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.

SPC Standard Disability Statement

Any students who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make and necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from the SPC Disability Service Office during the instructor's office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations until appropriate verification from the SPC Disability Service Office has been provided. For more information, you may contact the Disability Services Office (located in the Health & Wellness Center) at 806-716-2529 or visit <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/health/disabilityservices.php>.

Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Non-Discrimination Statement

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. 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. South Plains College is dedicated to providing a safe and equitable learning environment for all students. Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the college. The Health and Wellness Center offers confidential support (806-716-2529) and Voice of Hope has a 24-hour hotline: 806-763-7273. You are encouraged to report any incidents online at <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/about/campusafety/complaints.php>.

Title IX Pregnancy Accommodation Statement

If you are pregnant, or have given birth been within six months, under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. Students who wish to request accommodations must contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 to initiate the process.

Covid-19 Statement

The following statement should be included in all course syllabi for face-to-face and hybrid instruction options:

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

Please also notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or 806-716-2376. Proof of a positive test is required. A home test is sufficient but students must submit a photo of the positive result. The date of test must be written on the test result and an ID included in the photo. If tested elsewhere (clinic, pharmacy, etc.), please submit a copy of the doctor's note or email notification. Results may be emailed to DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN at dedens@southplainscollege.edu.

A student is clear to return to class without further assessment from DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN if they have completed the 5-day isolation period, symptoms have improved, and they are without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Students must communicate with DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN prior to their return date if still symptomatic at the end of the 5-day isolation.

Course Withdrawals

The last day to withdraw from this class with a grade of 'W' is **December 1**. Students are expected to do the required reading and turn in assignments by the due dates. As stated, if you get behind in your assignments, it is likely you will not finish the course and/or fail.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. At the bare minimum, a student who cheats or plagiarizes will receive a zero for the assignment. In addition, I reserve the right to seek additional penalties, such as a zero for the entire course and filing an Academic Dishonesty Report.

Student Grievance Procedure

A student grievance is a College related issue or condition that a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, or a hindrance to the educational process. A grievance also includes discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. You can find more information about the student grievance procedure here:

http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/fm.php

Course Schedule

Week	Assignments	Due Date
1: Introduction	Syllabus Quiz	Sept 1
2: Texas Constitution	Quiz, Discussion	Sept 8
3: Texas in the Federal System	Quiz, Discussion	Sept 15
4: Legislative Branch	Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #1	Sept 22
5: Executive Branch	Quiz, Discussion	Sept 29
6: The Judiciary	Quiz	Oct 6
7: Local Government	Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #2	Oct 13
8: Midterm	Midterm Exam	Oct 20
9: Political Parties	Quiz	Oct 27
10: Campaigns and Elections	Quiz, Discussion	Nov 3
11: Interest Groups	Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #3	Nov 10
12: Public Finance	Quiz, Discussion	Nov 17
13: Public Policy	Quiz	Nov 22
14: Crime, Corrections, and Public Safety	Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #4	Dec 1
15: Essay	Letter to the Editor	Dec 8
16: Final Exam	Final Exam	Dec 14