

**Fall 2023**  
**GOVT 2305-005: Federal Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Holland  
Course Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00AM  
Course Number: GOVT 2305 (Federal Government)  
Location: AD 140  
Professor's Office: AD 134  
Email: 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.

**Course Calendar**

Week	Day	Date	Lecture Topic
<b>Week 1</b>	Tuesday	29-Aug	Syllabus and First Class Activity
	Thursday	31-Aug	Introduction to American Politics
<b>Week 2</b>	Tuesday	5-Sep	Federalism in the United States
	Thursday	7-Sep	Federalism in the United States
<b>Week 3</b>	Tuesday	12-Sep	Origin and Development of the U.S. Constitution
	Thursday	15-Sep	Origin and Development of the U.S. Constitution
<b>Week 4</b>	Tuesday	19-Sep	Origin and Development of the U.S. Constitution
	Thursday	21-Sep	Civil Liberties
<b>Week 5</b>	Tuesday	26-Sep	Civil Liberties

	Thursday	28-Sep	Civil Rights and Civic Duties
<b>Week 6</b>	Tuesday	3-Oct	Exam 1
	Thursday	5-Oct	Public Opinion
<b>Week 7</b>	Tuesday	10-Oct	Interest Groups
	Thursday	12-Oct	Political Parties
<b>Week 8</b>	Tuesday	17-Oct	Political Parties
	Thursday	19-Oct	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
<b>Week 9</b>	Tuesday	24-Oct	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
	Thursday	26-Oct	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
<b>Week 10</b>	Tuesday	31-Oct	Exam 2
	Thursday	2-Nov	Congress
<b>Week 11</b>	Tuesday	7-Nov	Congress
	Thursday	9-Nov	Congress
<b>Week 12</b>	Tuesday	14-Nov	Presidency
	Thursday	16-Nov	Presidency
<b>Week 13</b>	Tuesday	21-Nov	Bureaucracy
	Thursday	23-Nov	No Class - Thanksgiving Break
<b>Week 14</b>	Tuesday	28-Nov	Judiciary
	Thursday	30-Nov	Judiciary
<b>Week 15</b>	Tuesday	5-Dec	Policy
	Thursday	7-Dec	Policy
<b>Final Exam: Tuesday, December 12 at 10:15 AM</b>			

\*Consider this schedule a rough guide for when we will discuss particular topics and especially when we will complete particular exams. However, the final exam will take place on the day and time listed in this calendar.

**Office Hours:** Please attend my regularly scheduled office hours listed below if you have any questions or concerns. My office is located in the Administration Building, room 134. If you cannot attend my office hours you may email me to set up an alternative time or we can discuss your question or concern via email.

Office Hours	AD134
<b>Monday</b>	By appointment only
<b>Tuesday</b>	9:45AM to 10:45AM
<b>Wednesday</b>	1:00PM to 3:00PM
<b>Thursday</b>	9:45AM to 10:45PM & 1:00PM to 3:00PM
<b>Friday</b>	10:00AM to 12:00PM
<b>Email</b>	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

**Textbook:** We are using a free online textbook through OpenStax. You can access this textbook for free at the URL below.

American Government 2e by Glen Kurtz and Sylvie Waskiewicz

ISBN: 978-1-951693-38-1

<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

Openstax allows you to read the textbook online at the URL I have provided, or you can download it to your computer as a PDF file.

**Grading Scale:**

Grade	Percent
A	90% or greater
B	80% to 89.999%
C	70% to 79.999%
D	60% to 69.999%
F	Less than 60%

**Grade Distribution:**

GRADED ITEM	PERCENT OF TOTAL GRADE
Exam 1	30%
Exam 2	30%
Exam 3 (Final Exam)	30%
Attendance	10%
TOTAL	100%

**EXAMS:** There will be three exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 30% of your total grade. Each exam will be composed primarily of multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank questions, but there will likely be true/false questions. You will be informed if short answer or essay questions are used in the exam. If a short answer or essay question is included in your exam it will be worth no more than half of your exam grade.

**Attendance Policy:** You are required to regularly attend class and I will take roll at the beginning of each class. Attendance will account for 10 percent of your total grade. Your attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended by the number of class days held throughout the semester. If you are sick or attending an SPC-sponsored event please email me so that I can mark you as excused. This is important so that I am know you are not simply skipping class and your grade is not penalized.

**Illness Policy:** Please do not come to class if you are sick. Regardless of whether it's a cold, COVID-19, or any other common illness, I would prefer you did not come to class so that you do not spread your illness to other students or myself.

**COVID-19 Statement:**

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

If you are positive for COVID-19 please notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at [dedens@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dedens@southplainscollege.edu) or 806-716-2376. You should isolate for 5 days after which you may return to class if your symptoms are improving and you do not have a fever without the assistance of fever-reducing medications.

**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.

**A.I. Technology:** A.I. Technology is prohibited in this course. Any use of A.I. technology to complete or supplement written work is cheating. I will drop you with a failing grade if you use any A.I. technology in this course.

**Extra Credit:** I do not intend to provide any extra credit opportunities in this course. If I provide extra credit it will be announced to the entire class so do not ask me for extra credit.

**Final Grades:** Do not ask me to round up your grade. I will always round to the nearest whole number. My policy for rounding is that any grade that is XX.5 or higher will be rounded up to the next whole number. Therefore, if you have an 85.5 your grade will be rounded up to an 86. However, if your grade was 85.4, then your grade would remain an 85.

**Gradebook:** You will be able to view all graded exams and assignments in the “My Grades” link.

**Syllabus Statements:** For Information regarding Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Non-Discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation) Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please use the following link:

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

**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 whenever it is appropriate and relevant but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

**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.

**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. Abuse of electronic devices for non-academic purposes will result in the banning of electronic devices. Do not use your phone during class. No video or audio recording devices may be used without the consent of the instructor or unless part of an accommodation.

**Classroom Expectations:** The following activities are prohibited in class. Please note that list is not meant to be exhaustive of all prohibited behaviors.

1. Texting, emailing or other correspondence
2. Social media activity or other web browsing
3. Answering or initiating phone calls
4. Watching movies or other videos
5. Smoking, vaping, or chewing tobacco or other illicit substances

**Emails:** Every email must include your name, course and section number so that I can promptly address your question or concern. I will respond to your email within 24 hours. However, I will not respond to emails sent on Saturday or Sunday until the following Monday. Emails sent after normal business hours will not receive a response until the following workday. If Monday, or any other day is a public holiday for which SPC is closed, then I will not respond to the email until the following workday.

**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

**Course Amendment Statement:** The professor reserves the right to change the terms of the syllabus as circumstances require. Any changes to the syllabus will be posted in Blackboard and announced in class (if the course is face-to-face).

**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.