

Fall 2023
GOVT 2306-157: Texas Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Holland
Course Time: N/A Online
Course and Section Number: GOVT 2306-157
Location: Online (Blackboard)
Professor's Office: AD134
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 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 intergovernmental relations, political participation, the electoral process, public policy, and the political structure 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.

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 Calendar

Week	Begin Date	End Date	Subject	Graded Items
1	28-Aug	3-Sep	Introduction to Texas Politics	Syllabus Quiz and Quiz 1
2	4-Sep	10-Sep	Federalism	Quiz 2
3	11-Sep	17-Sep	Texas Constitution	Quiz 3 and Discussion Post 1
4	18-Sep	24-Sep	Exam 1	Exam 1
5	25-Sep	1-Oct	Legislature	Quiz 4 and Discussion Post 2
6	2-Oct	8-Oct	Plural Executive	Quiz 5
7	9-Oct	15-Oct	Exam 2	Exam 2
8	16-Oct	22-Oct	Judiciary	Quiz 6 and Discussion Post 3
9	23-Oct	29-Oct	Local Government	Quiz 7 and Discussion Post 4
10	30-Oct	5-Nov	Interest Groups and Public Opinion	Quiz 8
11	6-Nov	12-Nov	Exam 3	Exam 3
12	13-Nov	19-Nov	Political Parties	Quiz 9
13	20-Nov	26-Nov	Thanksgiving Break	None
14	27-Nov	3-Dec	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting	Quiz 10 and Discussion Post 5
15	4-Dec	10-Dec	Public Policy	Quiz 11
16	11-Dec	14-Dec	Exam 4	Exam 4

Class Schedule: All graded items must be completed **BEFORE NOON (12:00PM)** on their end date. Please note that discussion posts have an extra due date. You must complete your first discussion post responding to the discussion question at least 2 days before the Week's end date.

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 feel free to attend my schedule office hours in person if you prefer.

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

Recommended Textbook: You can successfully complete this course without purchasing or reading the textbook. However, some students have asked for a textbook to supplement the lecture. I have included the following textbook to supplement lecture but you do not need to purchase it or read it to be successful in this course.

Governing Texas by Champagne, Anthony, Edward J. Harpham, and Jason P. Casellas. 5th edition. W. W. Norton.
ISBN: 9780393539226

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percent
A	90% or greater
B	80% to 89.99%
C	70% to 79.99%
D	60% to 69.99%
F	Less than 60%

Grade Distribution:

Graded Item	Percent of Grade
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Exam 3	15%
Exam 4	15%
Quiz 1	1%
Quiz 2	1%
Quiz 3	1%
Quiz 4	1%
Quiz 5	1%
Quiz 6	1%
Quiz 7	1%
Quiz 8	1%
Quiz 9	1%
Quiz 10	1%
Quiz 11	1%
Syllabus Quiz	4%
Discussion Post 1	5%
Discussion Post 2	5%
Discussion Post 3	5%
Discussion Post 4	5%
Discussion Post 5	5%
TOTAL	100%

Exams: There will be four exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 15% of your total grade. Each exam will be composed primarily of multiple-choice questions, but there will likely be true/false questions and fill-in-the-blank questions. You will be informed if short answer or essay questions are used in the exam. If I use short answer or essay questions then that portion of the exam will compose no more than 50 percent of the exam's grade.

Quizzes: You will complete 11 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will cover the content found within the folder where the quiz is located. Make sure that you read and/or watch all materials provided in the folder before beginning your quiz. Each quiz will be worth 2 percentage points each. Each quiz will be composed of 5 to 20 questions. The questions in the quiz will be multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and, or, True/False questions. The Syllabus Quiz will also be graded but you will be permitted to re-take the syllabus quiz until you receive full points.

Discussion Posts: You will complete 4 discussion post assignments throughout this semester. Each discussion post assignment will cover a topic addressed within the weekly folder where the discussion post is located. To complete the discussion post assignment you will need to post a discussion addressing the question I post to you and the class. You will need to respond to that question in roughly 300 to 400 words (a word count function exists on the bottom left corner of Microsoft Word). However, you should write more than 400 words if you need to. It is always better to write more and fully answer the question than to write too little and leave important details out of your discussion.

You will also need to respond to at least 2 discussion posts by other students. You may respond twice to the same student or respond once to two different students. To make a response post hit the "Reply" button at the bottom of their discussion post. Each response post should be roughly 150 words, but once again write more if you need to.

The discussion post assignment will have two due dates. You will be required to submit your first discussion post on one day (which will be assigned in the appropriate folder) and then you will be required to post your two response posts on a different day as assigned in the appropriate weekly folder.

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/>

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

Late Work: I will allow you to complete assignments, quizzes, and exams after their due date for reduced points. Point will be progressively reduced the further away from the due date that you complete the assignment, quiz, or exam. If you know that you will be unable to complete

an assignment, quiz, or exam because of illness or another reasonable circumstance then you must email me and I will allow your assignment, quiz, or exam to be graded for full points, but such accommodation shall be determined at the discretion of the instructor.

Late Work Penalty:

Period After Due Date	Penalty
0 to 1 days	-10% of earned grade
2-3 days	-20% of earned grade
4-5 days	-30% of earned grade
6-7days	-50% of earned grade
More than 7 days	You will receive a grade of 0

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.

Viewing Graded Material: You will be able to view your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in “My Grades”

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. Please email me if you are sick or have another valid reason for failure to complete your assignments.

Classroom Discussions: 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, when 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.

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 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
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
6. Analyze state and local election processes
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues, policies, and the political culture of Texas

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 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 Amendment Statement: The professor reserves the right to make changes to the course and this syllabus as necessary. You will be informed of any changes in the “Announcements” section of this course’s Blackboard page.

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.