

**Statement of the SPC Social Science Department's
Government/Political Science Division for
GOVT 2306 Common Course Syllabus**

*(As required by the Texas Legislature and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
and approved by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and SPC)*

Department: Social Sciences

Discipline: Government

Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2306

Course Title: Texas Government (Texas Constitution and Topics)

Credit: 3 Lecture, 0 Lab

Foundational Component Area of Core Curriculum: Social Science and ALL Undergraduate Degrees

Prerequisites: TSI compliance in Reading

Available Formats: Conventional, INET, ITV

Campus: Levelland, Reese, ATC, Plainview, Lubbock Downtown Center

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 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: 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excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course.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:

Students who have completed this course will be expected to:

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

GOVT 2306-603

Instructor: Greg Ramzinski (gramzinski@southplainscollege.edu)

Office Hours are found on Blackboard and posted outside each office.

Office locations are:

Downtown campus in 1015C & Levelland campus in AD125

Grading

Grading will be based on the following breakdown:

- Exams – 50%
- Quizzes – 30%
- Assignments – 20%
- Assignments include preparing for each class, class participation, and online discussions.

There will be three (3) exams during the semester. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Exam questions will be taken from the lecture materials, textbook, supplemental videos, and articles provided during the semester. All materials can be found in the course folder on Blackboard.

Assignments and quizzes will be given during the semester and will be found in the weekly folders on Blackboard. All assignments must be submitted on Blackboard or Perusall. Assignments e-mailed to the instructor, unless otherwise directed by the instructor, will not be accepted. If there is an issue uploading the assignment, please contact the instructor immediately. Late assignments will not be accepted.

The grading scale will be:

- A = 90 – 100
- B = 80 – 89
- C = 70 – 79
- D = 60 – 69
- F = 0 – 60
- If a student receives a final grade ending in .5 or higher, the grade will be rounded up to the next whole number (e.g.: 89.5 would be rounded up to 90).
- If a student received a final grade ending in .4 or lower, the grade will be rounded down to the previous whole number (e.g.: 89.4 would be rounded down to 89).

Late Assignments & Extra Credit

- There is no extra credit available for this course.
- No late work will be accepted without an approved excuse. Medical excuses must be submitted to the instructor in no more than 7 days from the absence. Please see the SPC General Catalog under "[Class Attendance](#)"
- This will also apply to the missing of quizzes or exams which are open for a limited period of time. If you are unable to access a quiz or exam during the time it is open,

it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor **immediately** to rectify the situation.

Course Materials

- The materials for this course are all open source. The student will need access to a computer and the internet to be able to view the referenced materials and videos used during the course. The material and video links will be posted on Blackboard and Perusall.

Drops and Withdrawals

- If you wish to drop a course, please go to the SPC website, and complete the online form. [Click here to access the website.](#)

For information regarding official South Plains College statements about intellectual exchange, disabilities, non-discrimination, Title V Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>.

Academic Honesty & Integrity

- Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor) or the attempt to commit such an act. This includes the submission of work completed by another individual or the purchase and submission of materials completed by another individual as your own work.
 - **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resources:** There are now websites that will generate semi-unique material that resembles original material. Since technology is available to create this content, technology is also available to detect this content. Make no mistake, this is plagiarism. If you submit work that is not your own, original material, it will be considered plagiarism and receive a grade of zero. The incident will also be detailed to the Dean of Students for disciplinary actions. If material is marked as AI generated material, it is the student's responsibility to prove the material generated is their own work and not the work of AI or from another source.
 - Certain assignments will require the student to share comments about course material. If comments are pasted into the comment section of the assignment, the assignment will be given a grade of zero.
 - *Any student found to be in violation of the academic honesty policy could immediately be dropped from the course.*

Student Code of Conduct

- The SPC Student Code of Conduct can be found here <http://catalog.southplainscollege.edu/content.php?catoid=59&navoid=2027>

Blackboard Accessibility Standards

- Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). A third-party conducts audits of our software releases to ensure the accessibility of the products. For Blackboard Learn 9.1's conformance with the accessibility standards under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act using the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template® (VPAT®) tool, see the VPAT for Blackboard Learn Release 9.1. For Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP11 conformance statement for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, Level AA see Learn Accessibility Conformance Statement. To learn more about Blackboard's commitment to accessibility, see <http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility>. (These resources are available in English only.)
- All technological questions should be directed to the [SPC technology center](#). The instructor does not solve technological/computer issues.

Student Privacy

- South Plains College is bound by the Texas Open Records Law and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Information regarding these topics can be found in the South Plains College Catalog. As far as this class is concerned, the instructor will NOT release or discuss the student's class performance, grades, averages, or attendance with anyone but the student. This means that your parents, class counselors, principals, or any other interested party will not obtain this information from the instructor – if they need this sort of information, they must ask the student for it. This provision does not apply to student athletes or those for whom a grade check is part of their scholarship support.

Contact Information

- If you have questions during the semester, please contact the instructor sooner rather than later. The sooner we resolve the situation and get your questions answered, the sooner you can proceed in the course. If the presentation of the material is not clear, please ask. Contact information can be found at the top of this syllabus, in the section below and on Blackboard.
- **The best way to contact the instructor is by e-mail.**

The instructor is available to answer questions in the following manners:

- For face-to-face and hybrid classes, before and after class to answer questions.
- Feel free to stop by during posted office hours, no appointment is necessary to meet during scheduled office hours.
- The instructor is also able to meet virtually. Please send an e-mail to set up an online meeting via Zoom or a face-to-face meeting if you prefer a live conversation. The instructor will send you a link for the Zoom meeting or schedule the time to meet.
- The best way to contact the instructor is e-mail at gramzinski@southplainscollege.edu

Class Schedule

All material for the week will open at 12:00 AM on the Sunday of the week. Please note materials for the week are due no later than 11:59 PM (End of day) the Sunday following their opening, unless otherwise noted. Please check your calendar on Blackboard for specific dates. For example – if an assignment opens on Sunday, January 28, it will be due no later than the end of day on Sunday, February 4, unless otherwise noted.

- Week 1 – Week of August 25
- Week 2 – Week of September 1
- Week 3 – Week of September 8
- Week 4 – Week of September 15
- Week 5 – Week of September 22
- Week 6 – Week of September 29
- Week 7 – Week of October 6
- Week 8 – Week of October 13
- Week 9 – Week of October 20
- Week 10 – Week of October 27
- Week 11 – Week of November 3
- Week 12 – Week of November 10
- Week 13 – Week of November 17
- Week 14 – Week of November 24
- Week 15 – Week of December 1
- Week 16 – Week of December 8 (Finals week)

Topic Schedule

- Week 1 – Preparing to study government
- Week 2 – History and development of the government of Texas, the State Constitution and its relationship to the US Constitution
- Week 3 – The State Constitution and local government
- Week 4 – The development of federalism
- Week 5 – Review & Exam #1
- Week 6 – Demographics of Texas
- Week 7 – Industries that shaped Texas politics
- Week 8 – State political culture (political parties)
- Week 9 – The state legislature structure and function
- Week 10 - Review & Exam #2
- Week 11 – The Governor and relationship with legislature
- Week 12 – The Texas court system and the criminal justice system
- Week 13 – Third-party movements, interest groups, and lobbying
- Week 14 – State finances and budgeting
- Week 15 – Public policy, the media, and individual responsibilities to the state
- Week 16 – Review & Exam #3