

South Plains College
GOVT 2306
Section 156
Spring 2020
Federal Government

Traditional Course

Name: Professor Britt Bearden

Biography: BA Texas Tech University; MA Texas Tech University; Additional Courses: South Plains College and George Mason University. Congressional Intern: Office of Congressman Pete Gallego, Summer 2013; Field Representative: Texas Democratic Party, 2014.

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Office: Reese Center, Building 3, Room 316E

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 1:00pm – 2:30pm / Friday: 8:00am – 10:00am

Common Course

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, 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:

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 SYLLABUS

Required Textbook:

- Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore Lowi, Caroline Tolbert, Margaret Weir. 2018. *We the People: Twelfth Edition*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- ISBN-13: 978-0393679595

Required Technology:

- Reliable access to computer or laptop.
- Reliable internet connection
- Note: make use of SPC computer labs if needed.

Grading Scale:

1000 – 900 points = A

899 – 800 points = B

799 – 700 points = C

699 – 600 points = D

599 and below = F

Coursework:

- (1) Essay (1) = **100 points**
- (2) Discussions (3) = **300 points / 100 points each**
- (3) Quizzes (14) = **560 points / 40 points each**
- (4) Syllabus Agreement (1) = **20 points**
- (5) Syllabus Quiz (1) = **20 points**

(1) **Essay:** This assignment is a research essay with three options for you to choose from. These topic choices are posted on Blackboard in the folder labeled “Essay Options” as well as the left

side bar. Instructions for this assignment as well as a rubric are included at the end of the syllabus. These will be turned in via Turnitin on Blackboard in the Essay folder.

If you are having trouble writing, I have provided links to websites that will help you with citations as well as academic English. You can find these both in the syllabus as well as “Helpful Links” on Blackboard.

(2) **Discussion Postings:** Three times throughout the semester you will write a discussion post which will be your reaction to an article related to U.S. government and reply to a classmate’s discussion. These can be found on the left side bar labeled “Discussion Board” as well as within each section folder.

- These original posts must be at least 400 words in length.
- Additionally, you must also reply (150 words) to one of your fellow classmates’ posts.
- A full rubric and instructions can be found at the end of this syllabus.

(3) **Quizzes:** You will have a total of fourteen quizzes. Chapter quizzes are cover individual chapters assigned from your textbook. These can be found in each section folder in their respective “Quizzes” folder. Additionally, you will have two quizzes over videos that you need to watch in order to complete the assignment. These can be found in the “Video Assignment” folder located in each section folder.

- Chapter Quizzes (12): 16 multiple choice questions / 16 minutes to complete
- Video Quizzes (2): 10 multiple choice questions / 10 minutes to complete
- For Quizzes, the questions on quizzes will be delivered one at a time and student will be allowed to revisit the questions. It is important to remember to click “Save Answer” before moving to the next question. Once you begin the quiz you must complete the quiz in its entirety. Questions not completed during the allotted time will be counted wrong.

(4) **Syllabus Agreement:** This assignment is due January 24th by 5:00pm. Failure to complete this will mean you being dropped from the course. This can be found in folder “Course Syllabus: Start Here.”

- This is a short answer assignment. You will be asked to reply "I Agree" to the following statement:

"All content within this syllabus is subject to change at any time and is completely up to the discretion of the professor. Students will be notified of such change(s) with appropriate time to adapt. By enrolling in this course you agree to follow all guidelines in this syllabus and be fully responsible for the grade you earn."

By replying "I Agree" below, you acknowledge that you have read the syllabus, agree to the guidelines within, and take responsibility for whatever grade you may earn. Failure to do so will drop you from the course.

(5) **Syllabus Quiz:** This assignment is due January 24th by 5:00pm. You will have an unlimited amount of attempts to achieve full credit. This assignment can be found in folder "Course Syllabus: Start Here."

Note: Expect written assignments to be graded within one business week of the due date.

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Policies

Late Work/Extra Credit: You will NOT have the opportunity to earn extra credit points during the course, so do not ask. No late work will be accepted since you have ample time to complete assignments. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Drop Policy: If you have not completed an assignment before January 1st, you will be dropped. There are no exceptions to this policy. Besides that, it is your responsibility to drop the course.

Disruption of Classroom Environment: Your professor will not tolerate any disruption of the classroom environment. This includes any problems your facilitator encounters with you AND hateful/disrespectful remarks made in the classroom, on discussion postings, email, or chat. I will drop you with an F for violation of this policy.

Emailing Your Professor: I require students to send a professional email when contacting me. If you send an unprofessional email to me, I will not respond. In addition, do not attempt to

argue with me over a grade you receive, if you do I will either lower your grade further, or drop you with an F. Please include what course you are enrolled in (Example: GOVT 2305.156).

DO NOT attempt to communicate with me through Blackboard. I only communicate through email, preferably your SPC email.

Unless there are unforeseen circumstances, you can expect me to reply to emails within 24 hours. If I do not, don't be afraid to email me again or forward your message to me.

Technology Problems: If you have an unreliable server or computer, please go to a public computer to do your work. If for some reason the professor or the Blackboard server has made a mistake, you will not be penalized.

Be aware that when something only happens to you, it is your problem not mine. I will not reopen a quiz if an issue on your side has occurred. Please always start early on assignments and finish early to avoid problems.

I will be of no help with computer problems, mechanical failures, ISP problems, etc. You can contact **Blackboard and Tech Support** (blackboard@southplainscollege.edu) for any Blackboard related issues. If you are having trouble logging in to Blackboard or seeing your courses, please contact Blackboard Support. You can call the office Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at 806-716-2180

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is the taking of credit for something that is not the work of the owner. It is cheating and will not be tolerated. See the General Catalog for more information on plagiarism. Cheating or dishonesty of any type in this course will result in the student being dropped from this course with an "F."

The best way to avoid this situation is using your own original work and citing sources. Links to help you cite sources are provided on Blackboard in “Helpful Links” as well as below rubrics in the syllabus.

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.

For help, there is a link in “Helpful Hints” that describes writing for research purposes on Blackboard.

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

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, Reese Center (Building 8) & Lubbock Center 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

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, 806-894-9611

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 Director of Health and Wellness. 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 Crystal Gilster, Director of Health and Wellness at 806-716-2362 or email cgilster@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.

Campus Concealed Carry

Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the SPC policy at:

(http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/hhc.php)

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

Syllabus Contract/Amendments: All content within this syllabus is subject to change at any time and is completely up to the discretion of the professor. Students will be notified of such

change(s) with appropriate time to adapt. By enrolling in this course you agree to follow all guidelines in this syllabus and be fully responsible for the grade you earn.

Course Schedule and Readings: Here is an overview of the course. Complete readings and assignments in the order presented below.

Section 1: Due February 28th by 5:00pm.

Texas History and Constitution / Institutions

- Chapter 2
- Chapter 7
- Chapter 8
- Chapter 9

Assignments:

- Chapter 2 Quiz
- Chapter 7 Quiz
- Chapter 8 Quiz
- Chapter 9 Quiz
- Discussion 1: Texas Amendment Procedure
- Video Assignment: Filibuster Quiz

Section 2: Due April 3rd by 5:00pm.

Federalism / Texas Political Culture / Campaigns and Elections / Political Parties

- Chapter 3
- Chapter 1
- Chapter 4
- Chapter 5

Assignments:

- Chapter 3 Quiz
- Chapter 1 Quiz
- Chapter 4 Quiz
- Chapter 5 Quiz
- Discussion 2: Texas and Federalism
- Video Assignment: Gerrymandering Quiz

Section 3: Due May 1st by 5:00pm.**Interest Groups and Lobbying / Local Government / Public Finance / Public Policy**

- Chapter 6
- Chapter 10
- Chapter 11
- Chapter 12

Assignments:

- Chapter 6 Quiz
- Chapter 10 Quiz
- Chapter 11 Quiz
- Chapter 12 Quiz
- Discussion 3: County Governments
- Video Assignment: Interest Groups and Lobbyists

Due Dates

- Syllabus Agreement and Syllabus Quiz: Due January 24th by 5:00PM.
- Section 1: Due February 28th by 5:00PM.
- Section 2: Due April 3rd by 5:00PM
- Section 3: Due May 1st by 5:00PM
- Essay: Due April 24th by 5:00PM.

Rubric and Instructions for Written Work:

Discussions:

Rubric Grading	59 points or less	60 – 69 points	70 to 79 points	80 to 89 points	90 or more points
	<p>No reply</p> <p>Student does not: - answer questions in prompt - Explain important concepts - appear to have read article</p> <p>Contains considerable grammar mistakes</p> <p>Does not meet word count</p> <p>No citations</p> <p>Poor sentence structure and organization</p>	<p>No reply</p> <p>Student does not: - answer questions in prompt - Explain important concepts - appear to have read article</p> <p>Some grammar mistakes</p> <p>Word count met</p> <p>No citations</p> <p>Poor sentence structure and organization</p>	<p>Reply</p> <p>Student: - answers most questions in prompt - Explains some important concepts</p> <p>Some grammar mistakes</p> <p>Word count met</p> <p>No citations</p> <p>Good sentence structure and organization</p> <p>Does not mention article</p>	<p>Reply</p> <p>Student: - answers most questions in prompt - Explains some important concepts - mentions article</p> <p>Few grammar mistakes</p> <p>Word count met</p> <p>Has citations</p> <p>Good sentence structure and organization</p>	<p>Reply</p> <p>Student: - answers all questions in prompt - Explains all important concepts - mentions article</p> <p>Few grammar mistakes</p> <p>Word count met</p> <p>Has citations</p> <p>Great sentence structure and organization</p>

Instructions:

- These original posts must be at least 400 words in length.
- Additionally, you must also reply (150 words) to one of your fellow classmates' posts to receive full credit.

- Make sure to cite reliable sources when writing your discussions. This includes using the article to answer the prompt.
- You must post your DISCUSSION POST BEFORE viewing classmates' discussions. Failure to do so will drop your grade 20 points. If you post a blank, I will assume you are attempting to plagiarize.

Essay:

Rubric Grading	59 or less points	60 - 69 points	70 to 79 points	80 to 89 points	90 or more points
	<p>Student does not answer important concepts found in prompt</p> <p>Contains considerable grammar mistakes</p> <p>Poor sentence structure and organization</p> <p>Does not follow instructions on length</p> <p>No citations</p>	<p>Student does not answer important concepts found in prompt</p> <p>Contains considerable grammar mistakes</p> <p>Poor sentence structure and organization</p> <p>Follows instructions on length</p> <p>No citations</p>	<p>Student does not answer important concepts found in prompt</p> <p>Contains considerable grammar mistakes</p> <p>Good sentence structure and organization</p> <p>Follows instructions on length</p> <p>Has citations</p>	<p>Student answers some important concepts found in prompt</p> <p>Contains few grammar mistakes</p> <p>Good sentence structure and organization</p> <p>Follows instructions on length</p> <p>Has citations</p>	<p>Student answers most important concepts found in prompt</p> <p>Contains few grammar mistakes</p> <p>Good sentence structure and organization</p> <p>Follows instructions on length</p> <p>Has citations</p>

Instructions:

- Double spaced
- 12 point font
- Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins
- at least 2 pages in length (that is NOT including headers, footers, citations, etc.)
- These will be turned in using Turnitin on Blackboard.

Writing Tips:

- Write in third person, as you would a research paper.
- I do not care to read your personal political opinions. Remain as objective as possible in answering the prompt.
- Use academic English and remain formal

<https://awc.ashford.edu/tocw-first-person-vs-third-person.html>

- For help on in-text citations:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations_the_basics.html

- For help on your works cited:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_author_authors.html

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_electronic_sources.html