

Spring 2021
GOVT 2306: Texas Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Timothy Holland
Course Time: Internet N/A
Location: Internet N/A
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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 Requirement: 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 strongly recommend that you use the computer lab, library or another appropriate alternative. You must have access to a computer and internet to complete this course. Failure to have access to a computer or the internet is not a valid excuse for missing assignments, quizzes, exams, and other course content. Please make sure that you check the weather before beginning exams and quizzes, or other content which may only be completed once.

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 – 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 – 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”
 - b. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
 - c. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

SPC COVID-19 Policy: It is the policy of South Plains College for the Spring 2021 semester that a condition of on-campus enrollment, all students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in the SPC community. Such behaviors specifically include the requirement that all students properly wear CDC-compliant face coverings while in SPC buildings including classrooms, labs, hallways, and restrooms. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the current class session. If the student refuses to leave the classroom or lab after being dismissed, the student may be referred to the Dean of Students on

the Levelland campus or the Dean/Director of external centers for Student Code of Conduct violations.

COVID-19 Class and Office Policy: You must wear a mask and practice social distancing if you meet with me in person. You are not allowed to meet with me in person if you are feeling ill or if you are quarantining. I thank you for your cooperation

Office Hours: My office is located in the Administration Building, room 119. Please feel free to attend my regularly scheduled office hours, set up an appointment to meet at another time, or email me if you want or need to contact me. Since this is an online course you will likely only email me however, you are free to attend my physical office hours if you wish.

Office: AD 119	Time
Monday	By appointment only
Tuesday	11:00am-12:00pm; 2:30pm-4:30pm; or by appointment
Wednesday	By appointment only
Thursday	11:00am-12:00pm; 2:30pm-4:30pm; or by appointment
Friday	9:30am-11:30am or by appointment
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

Textbook: Governing Texas. 4th Edition. By Anthony Champagne, Edward Harpham, and Jason Casellas. W. W. Norton & Company.

ISBN: 9780393680126

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:

Assessment	Percent
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Final Exam	15%
Syllabus Quiz	1%
Quiz 1	2%
Quiz 2	2%
Quiz 3	2%
Quiz 4	2%

Quiz 5	2%
Quiz 6	2%
Quiz 7	2%
Quiz 8	2%
Quiz 9	2%
Quiz 10	2%
Quiz 11	2%
Quiz 12	2%
Discussion Post 1	5%
Discussion Post 2	5%
Discussion Post 3	5%
Discussion Post 4	5%
Essay	10%
TOTAL	100%

Gradebook: You will be able to view your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in the Gradebook link.

Exams: There will be three exams in this course. Each exam will consist of multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and possibly a few short answer questions. The final exam is not cumulative. You will have one attempt to complete each exam.

- Exam 1: Introduction to Texas Politics, Federalism, Texas Constitutions
- Exam 2: Texas Legislature, Texas Plural Executive, Texas Judiciary, and Local Government
- Exam 3 (Final Exam): Interest Groups, Public Opinion, Parties, Elections, and Policy

Quizzes: You will complete one quiz every week over the topic of the week. You will have one attempt to complete each quiz.

Exam and Quiz Issues: If you experience a technical issue with the exam or quiz, the power goes out, you lose internet, the exam or quiz auto-submitted, then you may re-take the quiz or exam. You must email me immediately when this happens to be eligible to complete the quiz or exam.

Discussion Posts: You will complete four discussion post assignments this semester. The discussion post assignment will cover the topic of a particular week where you will publicly discuss the topic and interact with other students by responding to their posts about the topic. You will be required to submit one discussion post and respond to at least two other discussion posts. More information about this assignment may be found in Blackboard.

Essay: You will complete one essay in a selected week to discuss a topic chosen by the instructor. More information about this assignment may be found in Blackboard.

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.

Late Work: You must complete all assessments before their due date. Late work will not be accepted unless you have missed the quiz, exam, or other assignment for a valid reason. A valid reason will be determined under the sole discretion of the instructor.

Attendance Policy: Since this is an online course I will not record attendance. However, if you have not completed coursework for two or more consecutive weeks I may drop you. Please keep me informed if you are unable to complete work because you are ill.

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 but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery. You will have several opportunities to interact with your fellow students and I expect everyone to be respectful in all discourse.

Diversity Statement: In this class I 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 can be.

Students with Disabilities: 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 the Levelland Student Health & Wellness Center 806-716-2577, Reese Center (also covers ATC) Building 8: 806-716-4675, Plainview Center Main Office: 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611, or the Health and Wellness main number at 806-716-2529. URL:

<http://www.southplainscollege.edu/health/disabilityservices.php>

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. I am teaching multiple courses and sections and most of your other professors are as well. Therefore, it is imperative that you always include this information so we know which class you are in so that we know where you are coming from and can quickly respond to your concerns.

If you do not receive a response to an email within 48 hours please re-send your email.

Course Calendar: All assessments must be completed before 11:59AM on their due date.

Week	Begin Date	End Date	Topic	Assessments
1	January 19	January 26	Introduction to Texas Politics	Syllabus Quiz and Quiz 1
2	January 27	February 2	Federalism and the States	Quiz 2 and Discussion Post 1
3	February 3	February 9	Texas Constitutions	Quiz 3
4	February 10	February 16	Exam 1	Exam 1
5	February 17	February 23	Texas Legislature	Quiz 4 and Discussion Post 2
6	February 24	March 2	Texas Plural Executive	Quiz 5
7	March 3	March 9	Texas Judiciary	Quiz 6 and Discussion Post 3
8	March 10	March 23	Texas Local Government	Quiz 7 and Discussion Post 4
9	March 24	March 30	Exam 2	Exam 2
10	March 31	April 6	Interest Groups and Public Opinion	Quiz 8
11	April 7	April 13	Parties	Quiz 9
12	April 14	April 20	Elections	Quiz 10 and Essay
13	April 21	April 27	Policy	Quiz 11
14	April 28	May 4	Policy	Quiz 12
15	May 5	May 11	Final Exam	Final Exam

Syllabus Agreement: By continuing to complete this 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.

The professor reserves the right to change the terms of the syllabus as circumstance require. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in Blackboard.