

**Spring 2022**  
**GOVT 2306: Texas Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

Instructor: Mr. Timothy Holland

Course Time:

GOVT 2306-006: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30AM

GOVT 2306-007: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:30AM

GOVT 2306-008: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:00PM

Location: AD 140

Professor's Office: AD 119

Email: [tholland@southplainscollege.edu](mailto: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.

**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

**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 119. 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	AD119
Monday	11:00AM-12:00PM & 2:30PM-3:30PM
Tuesday	2:30PM-3:30PM
Wednesday	11:00AM-12:00PM & 2:30PM-3:30PM
Thursday	2:30PM-3:30PM

Friday	10:00AM-12:00PM
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

**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 Items	Percentage of Grade
Exam 1	30%
Exam 2	30%
Exam 3	30%
Attendance and Participation	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, but there will likely be true/false questions. You will be informed if short answer or essay questions are used in the exam.

Do not click on the exam until you are ready to begin it. The exam will begin once you have clicked on its link and you must complete the exam at that time. You will have one attempt to complete each exam. The exam will only present one question at a time. You must answer the questions in the order in which they are presented to you. You cannot return to a question once you have answered it or skipped it. Do not click on another browser, window, or tab while you are completing the quiz. Clicking on another browser, window, or tab while completing the exam may cause Blackboard to auto-submit the exam before you have completed it.

If the exam contains essay questions you will complete the question(s) in a document and you will attach it to the appropriate link. Further details will be provided in the case that an essay exam is used.

- Exam 1 will cover the lectures and readings over Introduction to Texas Politics, Federalism, the Texas Constitution, Public Opinion, and Interest Groups.
- Exam 2 will cover the lectures and readings over Parties, Elections, and the Judiciary
- Exam 3 (the final exam): will cover the lectures and readings over the Texas Legislature, the Plural Executive, and Public Policy

**Attendance Policy:** You are required to regularly attend class. I will record and grade attendance. Your attendance will be worth ten percent of your total grade. The attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended by the number of class days we have met. You are excused from class if you are attending a SPC-sponsored event but you must inform me of this prior to your absence. If you are sick please stay home. Your absence will be excused if you are ill. If you are absent because of illness you may be required to submit proof from a doctor if your absences are deemed excessive.

**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.

**Extra Credit:** If extra credit is offered it will be offered to the entire class. There will likely be no extra credit opportunities in this course.

**Final Grades:** Do not ask me to round up your grade. My policy for rounding up 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 your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in the “My Grades” link.

**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 but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

**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.

**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 a disability accommodation.

**Classroom Expectations:** The following activities are prohibited in class. This 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, day and time the class meets. 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.

**Class Schedule:**

- Topic 1: Introduction to Texas Politics
- Topic 2: Federalism and the States
- Topic 3: the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
- Topic 4: Public Opinion
- Topic 5: Interest Groups
- Exam 1
- Topic 6: Parties

- Topic 7: Elections
- Topic 8: The Judiciary
- Exam 2
- Topic 9: Legislature
- Topic 10: Plural Executive
- Topic 11: Public Policy
- Exam 3 (the final exam)

**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.

**Special Note:** 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.