

Spring 2023
GOVT 2306-006: Texas Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Mr. Timothy Holland
Course Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30AM
Course Number: GOVT 2306-006 (Texas Government)
Location: AD 140
Professor's Office: AD 134
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.

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 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 134. 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	AD134
Monday	1:00PM to 2:00PM
Tuesday	11:00AM to 12:00PM & 1:00PM to 2:00PM
Wednesday	1:00PM to 2:00PM
Thursday	11:00AM to 12:00PM & 1:00PM to 2:00PM
Friday	10:00AM to 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	22%
Exam 2	22%
Exam 3	22%
Exam 4	22%
Attendance and Participation	10%
Syllabus Quiz	2%
TOTAL	100%

EXAMS: There will be four exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 22% 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 before the exam if short answer or essay questions are used in the exam. If a short answer or essay question is used it will compose no more than 50 percent of the exams grade.

Do not click on the exam link 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: Introduction to Texas Politics, Federalism, and the Texas Constitution
- Exam 2 will cover: Interest Groups, Public Opinion, Political Parties, and Elections
- Exam 3 will cover: the Texas Legislature and the Plural Executive
- Exam 4 will cover: the Courts, Local Government, and Public Policy

Attendance Policy: You are required to regularly attend class and I will take roll at the beginning of each class. Attendance will account for 10 percent of your total grade. Your attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended by the number of class days held throughout the semester. Excessive absences may result in being dropped by the instructor so please keep in regular contact with me if you need to miss class. If you are sick or attending an SPC-sponsored event please email me so that I can mark you as excused. This is important so that I am know you are not simply skipping class.

Illness Policy: Please do not come to class if you are sick. Regardless of whether it's a cold, or COVID-19, or any other common illness, I would prefer you did not come to class so that you do not spread your illness to other students or myself.

COVID-19 Statement:

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

If you are positive for COVID-19 please notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or 806-716-2376. You should isolate for 5 days after which you may return to class if your symptoms are improving and you do not have a fever without the assistance of fever-reducing medications.

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. Repeated instances of plagiarism or cheating will result in failure of the course and possibly disciplinary action by the College.

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

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>

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 Health and Wellness Center. 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 the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or emaildburleson@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.

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 793366. Phone Number 806-716-2360.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement: 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 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 and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.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.

Spring 2023 Class and Lecture Schedule

Week	Days	Date	Lecture Subject
1	Tuesday	17-Jan-23	First Class: Syllabus and Introduction Activity
	Thursday	19-Jan-23	Introduction to Texas Government
2	Tuesday	24-Jan-23	Federalism and the States

	Thursday	26-Jan-23	Federalism and the States
3	Tuesday	31-Jan-23	Origins and Development of the Texas Constitution
	Thursday	2-Feb-23	Origins and Development of the Texas Constitution
4	Tuesday	7-Feb-23	Exam 1
	Thursday	9-Feb-23	Interest Groups
5	Tuesday	14-Feb-23	Texas Public Opinion
	Thursday	16-Feb-23	Political Parties in Texas
6	Tuesday	21-Feb-23	Political Parties in Texas
	Thursday	23-Feb-23	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting in Texas
7	Tuesday	28-Feb-23	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting in Texas
	Thursday	2-Mar-23	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting in Texas
8	Tuesday	7-Mar-23	Exam 2
	Thursday	9-Mar-23	Texas Legislature
9	Tuesday	14-Mar-23	Spring Break - No Class
	Thursday	16-Mar-23	Spring Break - No Class
10	Tuesday	21-Mar-23	Texas Legislature
	Thursday	23-Mar-23	Texas Legislature
11	Tuesday	28-Mar-23	Plural Executive in Texas
	Thursday	30-Mar-23	Plural Executive in Texas
12	Tuesday	4-Apr-23	Exam 3
	Thursday	6-Apr-23	Texas Judiciary
13	Tuesday	11-Apr-23	Texas Judiciary
	Thursday	13-Apr-23	Texas Judiciary
14	Tuesday	18-Apr-23	Local Government
	Thursday	20-Apr-23	Local Government
15	Tuesday	25-Apr-23	Public Policy
	Thursday	27-Apr-23	Public Policy
16	Tuesday	2-May-23	Public Policy
	Thursday	4-May-23	Final Exam Review
Final Exam Week		10-May-23	Final Exam

*Schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

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 and announced in class (if the course is face-to-face).