

Common Course Syllabus
GOVT 2305: Federal Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Department: Social Sciences

Discipline: Government

Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2305

Course Title: Federal Government (Federal 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, Lubbock Downtown Center, ATC, Plainview

Textbook: Varies according to instructor

Course Specific Instructions: Each instructor will attach his/her course with specific instructions.

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 requirements for teacher certification.

Course Purpose: Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint the learner with the origin and development of the US Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. 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: Since this is an online course, I will not take daily attendance. However, you are expected to complete your work on time in accordance with the course calendar. You may be dropped from the course if you miss two or more consecutive weeks of activities. Please email me if you are sick or have another valid reason for a prolonged absence.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Students who have completed this course will:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of our 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 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

Spring 2024
GOVT 2305-157: Federal Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor Information

Dr. Jonathan Martin

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Office Phone: 806-716-2198

Office Hours:

- Monday: 8:15-9:15am and 10:45-11:45am
- Tuesday: 8:15-9:15am
- Wednesday: 8:15-9:15am and 1:00-2:00pm
- Thursday: 8:15-9:15am
- Friday: 9:00-11:00am

Textbook

We are using an OER (Open Educational Resource) from OpenStax. The textbook is FREE and available online through this link:

American Government 3e by Glen Kurtz and Sylvie Waskiewicz

ISBN: 978-1-951693-38-1

<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

OpenStax allows you to read the textbook online at the URL I have provided, or you can download it to your computer as a PDF file. In addition to the textbook, I may assign other reading material in Blackboard throughout the semester.

Participation Statement

For online courses, students MUST actively participate by completing an academic assignment by the official census date **January 31**. Students who do not do so, will be dropped from the course.

Blackboard Information

We will be using Blackboard for this course. Blackboard is used for announcements, completing assignments, emails, discussion boards and the gradebook. You will also find additional resource materials to help you this semester, such as lecture notes, power point presentations, video clips, audio clips, and more.

Blackboard can be accessed by logging into the MySPC portal or going directly to <https://southplainscollege.blackboard.com>.

Troubleshooting

If you experience technical difficulties with Blackboard, please submit at Blackboard help ticket on this webpage: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/instructional-technology/Help.php>

Grading Scale

A: 89.5-100%
B: 79.5-89.4%
C: 69.5-79.4%
D: 59.5-69.4%
F: Below 59.5%

Overall Grade Formula

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Quizzes | (20%) |
| Discussions | (20%) |
| Short Answer Assignments | (30%) |
| Essay | (10%) |
| Exams | (20%) |

Assignments

Quizzes (20%)

Most weeks that cover a textbook chapter will include a quiz. Generally, a quiz will have at least 10 questions (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, or free response) based on the assigned reading and videos for that particular week. Your *two lowest quiz grades* will be dropped. Also, the syllabus quiz will count as a regular quiz. While I do accept late submissions, there will be a late penalty.

Discussions (20%)

There are five discussion assignments in this course. Some discussion threads might focus on a current event in American politics, while other discussions will examine the structure of the federal government. The purpose of the discussions is for students to demonstrate their knowledge of course material and engage with other students on important topics in American politics.

For each discussion, you will be required to make an initial post in which you answer the question(s) posed in the prompt. After you make your initial post, you must read the posts from your fellow classmates and make two additional posts in response to posts from other students. While I do accept late discussion assignments, there is a late penalty. Each discussion assignment will have detailed instructions.

Short Answer Assignments (30%)

There are four short answer assignments in this course. Each assignment will ask you to answer a series of questions covering important material from the textbook and lectures. It is important that you accurately answer all parts of the questions and cite the textbook (or another reputable source) to support your answers. All short answer assignments will be submitted through Blackboard. Late short answer assignments will be accepted, but there is a late penalty.

Essay (10%)

There is one essay in this course with a required word count of at least 500 words. Detailed instructions will be provided in Blackboard.

Exams (20%)

There are two exams (midterm and final) in this course. Both exams will have a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, and free response questions.

Policies and Procedures

Syllabus Statements

For information regarding Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Non-Discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please use the following link:

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Course Withdrawals

The last day to withdraw/drop with a grade of “W” is **April 25**. It is the student’s responsibility to withdraw from this course. Otherwise, students will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Course averages will be updated twice each week, and guidance will be provided throughout the term to help students decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php>.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. At the bare minimum, a student who cheats or plagiarizes will receive a zero for the assignment. In addition, I reserve the right to seek additional penalties, such as a zero for the entire course and filing an Academic Dishonesty Report.

Student Grievance Procedure

A student grievance is a College related issue or condition that a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, or a hindrance to the educational process. A grievance also includes discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. You can find more information about the student grievance procedure here:

http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/fm.php

Course Schedule*

| Week | Assignments | Due Date |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1: Introduction | Syllabus Quiz | January 17 |
| 2: The Constitution | Quiz, Discussion | January 24 |
| 3: Federalism | Quiz, Discussion | January 31 |
| 4: Civil Liberties | Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #1 | February 7 |
| 5: Public Opinion | Quiz | February 14 |
| 6: Congress | Quiz, Discussion | February 21 |
| 7: Presidency | Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #2 | February 28 |
| 8: Midterm | Midterm Exam | March 6 |
| 9: The Federal Courts | Quiz, Discussion | March 20 |
| 10: Essay | Letter to the Editor | April 3 |
| 11: Parties and Interest Groups | Quiz, Short Answer Assignment #3 | April 10 |
| 12: Voting and Elections | Quiz, Discussion | April 17 |
| 13: Civil Rights | Quiz | April 24 |
| 14: The Media | Short Answer Assignment #4 | May 1 |
| 15: Final Exam | Final Exam | May 8 |