

Summer 1 2020
GOVT 2306: Texas Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Timothy Holland
Course Time: N/A Online
Course: GOVT 2306.151
Location: Online
Professor's Office: AD119
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.

Internet Access: 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 recommend using the computer lab, library, or other appropriate alternative. You must have access to a computer and the internet to complete this course. Failure to have access to either a computer or the internet is not a valid excuse for missing assignments, quizzes, exams, or other course content. Please make sure that you have a reliable internet connection when beginning exams and quizzes as you will only have one opportunity to complete those activities.

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 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

Office Hours: Please email me if you need to discuss your grade or the course content. Since this is an online course most of our communication will likely occur through email but please feel free to attend my schedule office hours in person if you prefer.

Textbook: Governing Texas by Anthony Champagne, Edward J. Harpham, and Jason Casellas. 4th Edition. New York and London. W. W. Norton & Company.
ISBN: 97803938680126

Grades:

GRADE DISTRIBUTION			GRADE SCALE		
Assessment	PTS	PCT	Grade	PTS	PCT
Exam 1	150	15%	A	900 and above	90% or greater
Exam 2	150	15%	B	800 to 899.99	80% to 89.99%
Exam 3	150	15%	C	700 to 799.99	70% to 79.99%
Exam 4	150	15%	D	600 to 699.99	60% to 69.99%
Exam 5	150	15%	F	599.99 and below	59.99% and below
Discussion Post 1	60	6%			
Discussion Post 2	60	6%			
Discussion Post 3	60	6%			
Discussion Post 4	60	6%			
Syllabus Quiz	10	1%			
	100	100%			

Exams: You will complete five exams in this course.

Exam 1: covers material from Week 1

Exam 2: covers material from Week 2

Exam 3: covers material from Week 3

Exam 4: covers material from Week 4

Final Exam (Exam 5): covers all material from Weeks 1 through 4

Discussion Posts: You will complete one discussion post each week on a topic assigned by the instructor and you will respond to at least 2 discussions posts by other students in the course.

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: late work will not be accepted.

Extra Credit: There will likely not be opportunities for extra credit. If extra credit is available it will be available to the entire class. Do not ask for extra credit opportunities.

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

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.

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.

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: All assessments must be completed before 11:59PM on their due date.

Course Calendar:

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Week	Begin	End	Topics	Activities to Complete
1	1-Jun-20	8-Jun-20	Syllabus Introduction to Texas Government Federalism and the States Texas Constitution	Syllabus Quiz Discussion Post 1 Exam 1
2	9-Jun-20	15-Jun-20	Texas Legislature Texas Plural Executive	Discussion Post 2 Exam 2
3	16-Jun-20	22-Jun-20	Texas Courts Local Government	Discussion Post 3 Exam 3
4	23-Jun-20	29-Jun-20	Parties Elections Public Policy	Discussion Post 4 Exam 4
5	30-Jun-20	6-Jul-20	Final Exam	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.

The professor reserves the right to change the terms of the syllabus as circumstances require and all changes will be announced in class, over email, and/or in the announcements folder.