

South Plains College
GOVT 2306: Texas Government
Summer I 2017

Instructor: Timothy Holland
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Department of Social Sciences
Discipline: Government
Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2306
Course Title: Texas Government (Texas 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: Online
Course Time & Location: Online

Email: tholland@southplainscollege.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Textbook: In this class we will use *Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas*. 4th Edition by Ken Collier, Steven Galatas and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. ISBN: 9781483352770

Course Description: This course is a study of the functions performed in the American system of state governments, with special reference to the development of governance in Texas and its Constitutions. This course satisfies the Legislative requirements for teacher certification.

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 inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture 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 Evaluation: See the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluating student performance.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Students who have completed this course will:

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 Government
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
6. Analyze state and local elections processes
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

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 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, 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

Class Schedule

Week	Begin Date	Topics	Assessments	Assessments	Exams
1	June 5-11	Introduction to Texas Politics	Quiz 1	Sunday, June 11 th	Midterm Exam (Complete by 11:59PM June 25 th)
		Federalism			
		Texas Constitutions			
2	June 12-18	Political Parties	Quiz 2	Sunday, June 18 th	
		Interest Groups			
		Campaigns and Elections	Discussion Post 1		
3	June 19-25	Judiciary	Quiz 3	Friday, June 23 rd	
4	June 26- July 2	Legislature	Discussion Post 2		Final Exam (Complete by 11:59PM July 11 th)
		Governor	Quiz 4	Sunday, July 2 nd	
		Plural Executive			
5	July 3-10	Local Governments	Discussion Post 3	Sunday, July 9 th	
		Fiscal Policy	Quiz 5	Monday, July 10 th	
		Education and Social Policy			
		Energy, Environmental and Immigration Policy			

*A note on summer courses: summer courses are condensed and this course will be over in less than six weeks. Please make sure that you are paying attention to due dates and completing quizzes, discussion posts, and exams on time.

Grade Distribution	Points	Grade Scale	Points
Midterm Exam	300	A	900 to 1000
Final Exam	300	B	800 to 899
Discussion Post 1	50	C	700 to 799
Discussion Post 2	50	D	600 to 699
Discussion Post 3	50	F	599 or fewer
Quizzes	250 (in total)		

Exams

There will be two exams a midterm and final exam. Each exam will be multiple choice.

Discussion Posts

On three occasions you will be asked to write a short essay to address a question pertaining to the subject of the week. Your discussion post will be on a thread with your classmates and you will be required to read and respond to at least one other student's discussion post. A full explanation of the requirements will be provided on blackboard. Each discussion post will be worth 10% of your final grade.

Quizzes

There will be one quiz every week which will cover the topics discussed in that week. Each quiz will contain a few multiple choice questions. Reading the textbook, lecture slides and other course material on the topics of the week is sufficient to complete each quiz.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this course. South Plains College policies allow a wide range of punishment for cheating including failing the assignment, quiz, exam or the course. I will be vigilant against cheating and we will discuss how to avoid plagiarism in class.

Extra Credit

There will be no extra credit opportunities in this course.

Office Hours

If you need to discuss your grade or the course content please feel free to attend any of my scheduled office hours. My office is located in the Administration Building in room 119. If you cannot attend my scheduled office hours please email me at tholland@southplainscollege.edu or set up an appointment with me to meet at another time.

Textbook

Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas. 4th Edition by Ken Collier, Steven Galatas and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. ISBN: 9781483352770

Attendance Policy

Since this is an online course we won't be taking attendance. However, there is material that must be read and assessments that must be completed every week in this course. If you fail to complete the assessments from two weeks you will be dropped from the course.

A NOTE ON SUMMER COURSES: Summer Courses are incredibly short and unfortunately that means we must cover a lot of information in a short period of time.

Internet

You must have reliable internet access to complete this course. If you do not have access to a reliable internet connection, you will not be able to complete this course.

Classroom Discussions

Although this class is primarily lecture-based, you will be encouraged to contribute to class discussion on the topic of the day or other relevant political topics. Given the nature of this course students may express political views contrary to your own and while you are not required to agree with those views you are required to be respectful. I encourage you to express your own views but you must be respectful in both tone and the delivery of your viewpoint.

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 should and 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 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.

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 informal 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.

Email Policy

All emails should include your name, course and section number. I am teaching multiple courses and most of your other professors are also teaching multiple courses therefore it is imperative that you include this basic information so that I can (and your other professors can) address your question or concern.

Do not use the blackboard email function. If you need to contact me please use my SPC email address tholland@southplainscollege.edu.