

**Fall 2019**  
**GOVT 2306: Texas Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

Instructor: Timothy Holland  
Course Time: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00PM-2:15PM  
Location: AD140  
Instructor's Office: AD119  
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Office Phone (806) 716-2972

**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 requirement 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 intergovernmental 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 evaluation student performance.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who have complete 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 in 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

**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 office hours please email me at [tholland@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:tholland@southplainscollege.edu) to setup an appointment to meet at another time.

**Textbook:** Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas by Ken Collier, Steven Galatas, and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
ISBN: 9781544316260

Grades			Grading Scale		
Assessment	Points	Percent	Grade	Points	Percent
Exam 1	200	20%	A	900 or greater	90% or greater
Exam 2	200	20%	B	800 to 899.9	80% to 89.9%
Final Exam	200	20%	C	700 to 799.9	70% to 79.9%
Quiz 1	50	5%	D	600 to 699.9	60% to 69.9%
Quiz 2	50	5%	F	599.9 or less	59.9% or less
Quiz 3	50	5%			
Quiz 4	50	5%			
Essay	100	10%			
Attendance and Participation	100	10%			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Exams:** There will be three exams in this course. Exams will consist of multiple choice questions and possibly a few true/false or short answer questions.

**Quizzes:** You will complete four quizzes on blackboard. The quizzes will be cover material addressed in lecture on a particular topic. You will know the topic of the quiz before you complete it

**Essay:** You will complete one essay over a topic assigned by the instructor.

**Late Work:** Late work will not be accepted.

**Makeup Exams:** If you miss Exam 1 or Exam 2 you will be permitted to take a make-up exam on the last class day. The make-up exam may be multiple-choice or in essay format at the instructor's discretion. No student may make-up more than one exam.

**Extra Credit:** There will likely be no extra credit opportunities in this course. At the discretion of the instructor extra credit may be offered on exams. Extra credit opportunities are not guaranteed.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to regularly attend classes and I will keep record of your attendance. Attendance will account for 10 percent of your overall grade. Your attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended class by the number of class days we meet during this semester. I will typically record attendance at the beginning of class, if you arrive after the attendance was recorded then you will not be considered present.

You will not be counted absent if you are attending a South Plains College-sponsored event, if you are sick or if you have another reason approved by the instructor. If you miss four or more classes during the semester you may be dropped by the instructor, subject to his discretion.

**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.

**Classroom Expectations:** The following activities are prohibited during class:

- Text messaging, emailing, meme-ing or other electronic correspondence
- Social media activity
- Answering (or initiating) a phone call
- Watching movies or other videos

**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.  
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 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.

**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 but for no other activities. Do not use your phone during class. No video or audio recording devices will be allowed in class unless part of a disability accommodation.

**Tobacco Use:** The use of tobacco products is prohibited in this class. Electronic cigarettes are also prohibited.

**Emails:** 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](mailto:tholland@southplainscollege.edu).

If you do not receive a response within 48 hours please re-send the email.

**Class Schedule:** Please remember that this class schedule is tentative and subject to changes. Any changes to the schedule will be made known in class.

Week	Date	Day	Topic
<b>1</b>	27-Aug	Tuesday	Syllabus and Introductory Activity
	29-Aug	Thursday	Introduction to Politics
<b>2</b>	3-Sep	Tuesday	Federalism and State Politics
	5-Sep	Thursday	Federalism and State Politics
<b>3</b>	10-Sep	Tuesday	Constitutionalism
	12-Sep	Thursday	Constitutionalism
<b>4</b>	17-Sep	Tuesday	Legislature
	19-Sep	Thursday	Legislature
<b>5</b>	24-Sep	Tuesday	Legislature
	26-Sep	Thursday	Exam 1
<b>6</b>	1-Oct	Tuesday	Plural Executive
	3-Oct	Thursday	Plural Executive
<b>7</b>	8-Oct	Tuesday	Plural Executive
	11-Oct	Thursday	Judiciary
<b>8</b>	15-Oct	Tuesday	Judiciary
	17-Oct	Thursday	Judiciary
<b>9</b>	22-Oct	Tuesday	Local Government
	24-Oct	Thursday	Local Government
<b>10</b>	29-Oct	Tuesday	Exam 2
	31-Oct	Thursday	Public Opinion
<b>11</b>	5-Nov	Tuesday	Interest groups
	7-Nov	Thursday	Parties
<b>12</b>	12-Nov	Tuesday	Parties
	14-Nov	Thursday	Campaigns, Elections and Voting
<b>13</b>	19-Nov	Tuesday	Campaigns, Elections and Voting
	21-Nov	Thursday	Public Policy
<b>14</b>	26-Nov	Tuesday	Public Policy
	28-Nov	Thursday	No Class (Thanksgiving Break)
<b>15</b>	3-Dec	Tuesday	Public Policy
	5-Dec	Thursday	Final Exam Review
<b>16</b>	12 Dec	Thursday	Final Exam

**Final Exam – Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:15AM**