

**Fall 2021**  
**GOVT 2306: Texas Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

Instructor: Mr. Timothy Holland

Course Time:

GOVT 2306-001: Mondays and Wednesdays (9:30am-10:45am)

GOVT 2306-002: Mondays and Wednesdays (1:00pm-2:30pm)

Location: AD 129

Professor's Office: AD119

Email: [tholland@southplainscollege.edu](mailto: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 119. 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	AD119
Monday	11:00AM-12:00PM & 2:30PM-3:30PM
Tuesday	2:30PM-3:30PM
Wednesday	11:00AM-12:00PM & 2:30PM-3:30PM
Thursday	2:30PM-3:30PM

<b>Friday</b>	10:00AM-12:00PM
<b>Email</b>	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

**Textbook:** Governing Texas by Anthony Champagne, Edward J. Harpham, and Jason Casellas. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (5e). W. W. Norton and Company: New York.

ISBN: 9780393539752

**If you prefer you can purchase the ebook version of this textbook for a lower price. The ebook ISBN is 9780393539745**

**Grading Scale:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>A</b>	90% or greater
<b>B</b>	80% to 89.99%
<b>C</b>	70% to 79.99%
<b>D</b>	60% to 69.99%
<b>F</b>	Less than 60%

**Grade Distribution:**

<b>GRADED ITEM</b>	<b>Percent of Total Grade</b>
<b>Exam 1</b>	15%
<b>Exam 2</b>	15%
<b>Exam 3</b>	15%
<b>Exam 4</b>	15%
<b>Syllabus</b>	4%
<b>Quiz 1</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 2</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 3</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 4</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 5</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 6</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 7</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 8</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 9</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 10</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 11</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 12</b>	2%
<b>Quiz 13</b>	2%
<b>Attendance</b>	10%
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE</b>	100%

**Exams:** There will be four exams in this course. Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions and possibly a few true/false questions. The Final Exam is not cumulative. You will complete each exam in Blackboard outside of class.

- Exam 1 will cover Introduction to Texas Government, Federalism, and the Texas Constitutions
- Exam 2 will cover Texas Legislature and Texas Plural Executive
- Exam 3 will cover the Texas Judiciary, Local Government, Interest Groups, and Public Opinion
- The Final Exam will cover Parties, Elections, and Public Policy

**Quizzes:** There will be 14 quizzes throughout the semester. The Syllabus Quiz will cover the information in this Syllabus and the remaining quizzes (Quiz 1 through Quiz 13) will cover the chapters in our textbook (*Governing Texas*). Each quiz will be composed primarily of multiple-choice questions with some true/false questions. Quizzes will be completed in Blackboard. You can find the quizzes and textbook readings in the Weekly folders in Blackboard under “Course Content”

- Quiz 1 will cover Chapter 1
- Quiz 2 will cover Chapter 2
- Quiz 3 will cover Chapter 3
- Quiz 4 will cover Chapter 7
- Quiz 5 will cover Chapter 8
- Quiz 6 will cover Chapter 9
- Quiz 7 will cover Chapter 10
- Quiz 8 will cover Chapter 6
- Quiz 9 will cover Chapter 4
- Quiz 10 will cover Chapter 5
- Quiz 11 will cover Chapter 11
- Quiz 12 will cover Chapter 12 and 14
- Quiz 13 will cover Chapter 13

**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.

**Extra Credit:** There will likely be no opportunities for extra credit. If extra credit is available it will be available to the entire class. Do not ask for extra credit opportunities.

**Final Grades:** You may view your grade in Blackboard or through MySPC. I will only round up grades that are XX.5 or higher. Do not ask for extra credit and do not ask me to round up your grade.

**Gradebook:** You will be able to view your graded assignments and exams in the “My Grades” link in Blackboard.

**Attendance Policy:** You are required to regularly attend class. I will record and grade attendance. Your attendance will be worth five percent of your total grade. The attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended by the number of class days we have met. You are excused from class if you are attending a SPC-sponsored event but you must inform me of this prior to your absence. If you are sick please stay home. Your absence will be excused if you are ill. If you are absent because of illness you may be required to submit proof from a doctor if your absences are deemed excessive.

**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.

**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.

**Class Schedule:** Please note that this class schedule is subject to changes as necessary.

Topic 1: Introduction to Texas Politics

Topic 2: Federalism

Topic 3: Texas Constitutions

Topic 4: Texas Legislature

Topic 5: The Plural Executive

Topic 6: Texas Judiciary

Topic 7: Local Government

Topic 8: Interest Groups

Topic 9: Public Opinion

Topic 10: Parties

Topic 11: Elections

Topic 12: Policy

**Due Date Calendar:**

Graded Item	Due Date
Syllabus Quiz	September 3
Quiz 1	September 3
Quiz 2	September 10
Quiz 3	September 17
Quiz 4	September 24

Quiz 5	October 1
Quiz 6	October 8
Quiz 7	October 15
Quiz 8	October 22
Quiz 9	October 29
Quiz 10	November 12
Quiz 11	November 19
Quiz 12	November 26
Quiz 13	December 10
Exam 1	TBD
Exam 2	TBD
Exam 3	TBD
Exam 4	TBD

**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.

Important Dates	Fall 2021
Labor Day – Campus Closed	September 6
Fall Break – Campus Closed	October 15
Thanksgiving Break – Campus Closed	November 24, 25, & 26
Last Day to Drop	December 2
Final Exams Week	December 13-16 *Final Exam dates and times will be provided by each instructor. Consult Final Exam schedule for more information.