

Fall 2018
GOVT 2306: Texas Government (Internet)
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Timothy Holland
Course Time: Internet Course
Location: Blackboard
Instructor's Office: AD119
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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.

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 reliable internet access 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 assessments.

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 to setup an appointment to meet at another time. Since this is an online course you do not need to physically meet with me and we can discuss your questions or concerns via email. However, please feel free to attend my office hours as well.

<i>Office</i>	<i>AD119</i>
Monday	9:30-10:30 & 2:30-3:30
Tuesday	1:00-3:00
Wednesday	9:30-10:30 & 2:30-3:30
Thursday	None
Friday	10:00am-12:00pm

Textbook: Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas by Ken Collier, Steven Galatas, and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. 5th Edition.
 ISBN: 9781506346298

Grades:

Grade Distribution			Grading Scale		
Assessment	Points	Percent	Letter Grade	Points	Percent
Syllabus Quiz	10	1%	A	900 or greater	90% or greater
Quiz 1	10	1%	B	800 to 899.9	80% to 89.9%
Quiz 2	10	1%	C	700 to 799.9	70% to 79.9%
Quiz 3	10	1%	D	600 to 699.9	60% to 69.9%
Quiz 4	10	1%	F	599.9 or fewer	59.9% or fewer
Quiz 5	10	1%			
Quiz 6	10	1%			
Quiz 7	10	1%			
Quiz 8	10	1%			
Quiz 9	10	1%			
Quiz 10	10	1%			
Quiz 11	10	1%			
Quiz 12	10	1%			
Discussion Post 1	20	2%			
Discussion Post 2	20	2%			
Discussion Post 3	20	2%			
Essay 1	70	7%			
Essay 2	70	7%			
Essay 3	70	7%			
Exam 1	200	20%			
Exam 2	200	20%			
Exam 3	200	20%			
TOTAL	1000	100%			

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.

Exam 1 will cover the material from Week 1 through Week 4

Exam 2 will cover the material from Week 6 through Week 8

Final Exam will cover the material from Week 11 through Week 15

Quizzes: Each week (except exam weeks and Spring Break) you will complete a quiz on the relevant topic. Reading the textbook, lecture slides and other course material on the topic of the week is sufficient to successfully complete each quiz.

Essay

On three occasions you will be asked to write an essay to address a question pertaining to the subject of the week. Your essay will be a written assignment pertaining the topic of the week. You will attach a PDF file to submit this assignment

Discussion Posts

On three occasions you will be asked to participate in a discussion forum. I will assign a topic for discussion and you must (1) submit a discussion post addressing the question posed to the Discussion Forum and (2) you must respond to the discussion post of at least one other student. You will be graded on completion of each task as well as your use of the course material.

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 plagiarism in any form. At a minimum you will receive a zero for the assessment if you cheat or plagiarize.

Late Work: Late work will not be accepted and there will be no opportunities to make up exams, quizzes, or other assignments after their due date. Since this is an online course you have the flexibility to complete assignments at any time throughout the week (or earlier) before the assessment's due date. Please be conscious of due dates so that you can receive credit for every assessment.

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 or some other form if necessary. Extra credit opportunities are not guaranteed and will never be offered to individual students.

Attendance Policy: Since this is an online course I will not take daily attendance. However, you are expected to complete your work on time. If you fail to complete two consecutive weeks of assessments you may be dropped from the course for failure to attend class. If you are sick or have other reasons for a prolonged absence, please email the instructor.

Classroom Discussions: 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.

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.

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.

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.

Week	Begin Date	End Date	Topic	Assessment(s)
1	Tuesday, January 15	Monday, January 21	Introduction to Politics and Syllabus	Syllabus Quiz and Quiz 1
2	Tuesday, January 22	Monday, January 28	Federalism and State Politics	Quiz 2
3	Tuesday, January 29	Monday, February 4	Texas Constitution and Constitutional Development	Quiz 3 and Discussion Post 1
4	Tuesday, February 5	Monday, February 11	Texas Legislature	Quiz 4 and Essay 1
5	Tuesday, February 12	Monday, February 18	Exam 1	Exam 1
6	Tuesday, February 19	Monday, February 25	Plural Executive	Quiz 5 and Essay 2
7	Tuesday, February 26	Monday, March 4	Texas Court System	Quiz 6 and Discussion Post 2
8	Tuesday, March 5	Monday, March 11	Interest Groups and Public Opinion	Quiz 7
9	Tuesday, March 12	Monday, March 18	Spring Break	None
10	Tuesday, March 19	Monday, March 25	Exam 2	Exam 2
11	Tuesday, March 26	Monday, April 1	Parties	Quiz 8 and Essay 3
12	Tuesday, April 2	Monday, April 8	Voting, Campaigns and Elections	Quiz 9
13	Tuesday, April 9	Monday, April 15	Local Government	Quiz 10 and Discussion Post 3

14	Tuesday, April 16	Monday, April 22	Policy	Quiz 11
15	Tuesday, April 23	Monday, April 29	Policy	Quiz 12
16	Tuesday, April 30	Monday, May 6	Final Exam	Final Exam