

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

Instructor: Timothy Holland

Course Time:

GOVT 2306-001: Mondays and Wednesdays at 9:30AM to 10:15AM

GOVT 2306-002: Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:00AM to 12:15PM

GOVT 2306-003: Mondays and Wednesdays at 1:00PM to 2:15PM

Location: AD 140

Professor's Office: AD 119

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.

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 – 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 – 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”
 - b. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
 - c. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

SPC COVID-19 Policy: It is the policy of South Plains College for the Spring 2021 semester that a condition of on-campus enrollment, all students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in the SPC community. Such behaviors specifically include the requirement that all students properly wear CDC-compliant face coverings while in SPC buildings including classrooms, labs, hallways, and restrooms. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the current class session. If the student refuses to leave the classroom or lab after being dismissed, the student may be referred to the Dean of Students on the Levelland campus or the Dean/Director of external centers for Student Code of Conduct violations.

Class COVID-19 Policy: You are required to follow all SPC rules while attending class. You must wear a CDC-compliant face mask, social distance, sit in the appropriate desk as dictated by the seating schedule, and remain home if you are experiencing symptoms of an illness or if you are

under quarantine. Failure to comply with these rules will result in being dropped from the course.

Office Hours: My office is located in the Administration Building, room 119. Please feel free to attend my regularly scheduled office hours, set up an appointment to meet at another time, or email me if you want or need to contact me.

Office Hours	Time
Monday	By appointment only
Tuesday	11:00am-12:00pm; 2:30pm-4:30pm; or by appointment
Wednesday	By appointment only
Thursday	11:00am-12:00pm; 2:30pm-4:30pm; or by appointment
Friday	9:30am-11:30am or by appointment
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

Textbook: Governing Texas. 4th Edition. By Anthony Champagne, Edward Harpham, and Jason Casellas. W. W. Norton & Company.

ISBN: 9780393680126

GRADE SCALE

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

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Assessment	Percent
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Exam 3	15%
Exam 4 (Final Exam)	15%
Syllabus Quiz	2%
Quiz 1	2%
Quiz 2	2%
Quiz 3	2%
Quiz 4	2%
Quiz 5	2%
Quiz 6	2%
Quiz 7	2%
Quiz 8	2%
Quiz 9	2%

Response Paper 1	10%
Response Paper 2	10%
TOTAL	100%

EXAMS: There will be four exams this semester. Each exam will only cover the material since the previous exam and will be completed through Blackboard.

- Exam 1 will cover the Introduction to Texas Politics, Federalism, and Texas Constitutions
- Exam 2 will cover Texas Legislature and the Plural Executive
- Exam 3 will cover the Texas Judiciary, Local Government, Interest Groups, and Public Opinion
- Exam 4 (Final Exam) will cover Parties, Elections, and Policy

Quizzes: You will complete nine quizzes in blackboard outside of class. Each quiz will cover one of the topics we have discussed in class.

Quiz or Exam Issues: If your exam or quiz closes before you have completed or if the exam or quiz auto-submits before you have completed it then you must contact the instructor immediately.

Response Paper: You will complete two response papers on a topic chosen by the instructor. Information about this assignment will be located within Blackboard.

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: You must complete assignments, quizzes, and exams on time. If you forget to complete an assignment, quiz, or exam by the due date complete it immediately. Your grade will be reduced by 10% every day it is late. Exceptions to this rule will be made if a student is unable to complete an assignment, quiz, or exam because of illness and if the student has contacted the instructor about their illness in a timely manner.

Extra Credit: If extra credit is offered it will be offered to the entire class. There will likely be no extra credit opportunities in this course.

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

Attendance Policy: I will record attendance daily. I will not grade attendance due to the ongoing pandemic but you are expected to attend every class period. However, please stay

home if you are sick and send me an email so that I know you are ill. If you have four or more unexcused absences you may be dropped from the course.

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.

Special Note on this Course: 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. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it is possible we may be forced to temporarily shift online if SPC closes, the instructor becomes ill, or if the instructor is forced to quarantine.

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

Topic 1: Introduction to Texas Politics

Topic 2: Federalism and the States

Topic 3: Texas Constitutions

Topic 4: Texas Legislature

Topic 5: Texas Plural Executive

Topic 6: Texas Judiciary

Topic 7: Texas Local Government

Topic 8: Public Opinion

Topic 9: Interest Groups

Topic 10: Political Parties in Texas

Topic 11: Elections, Campaigns, and Voting

Topic 12: Public Policy

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.