

Statement of the SPC Social Science Department's
Government/Political Science Division for
GOVT 2306 Common Course Syllabus

(As required by the Texas Legislature and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and approved by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and SPC)

Department: Social Sciences

Discipline: Government

Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2306

Course Title: Texas Government (Federal 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: Levelland, Reese, ATC, Plainview

Textbook: Varies according to instructor Refer to each instructor's instructions for textbook requirements.

Course Specific Instructions: Each instructor will attach his/her course with specific instructions.

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: 45.1002.51 25

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.

Attendance Policy: Whenever absences become excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course. Each instructor will have additional information about attendance on his/her course information sheet.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who have completed this course will be expected to:

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution.
2. Demonstrate and 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 the state and local election process.
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:
 1. Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information,
 2. Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question,
 3. 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 I regional, national, and global communities by:
 1. Demonstrating intercultural competence,
 2. Identifying civic responsibility,
 3. 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:
 1. Reading, understanding and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines and requirements set forth in the "Statement of Personal Responsibility of Students" (Attached)
 2. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
 3. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken.

Government 2306 Instructor Syllabus

Course Description

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.

Instructor Information

Name: Professor: Britt Bearden

Email: bbearden@southplainscollege.edu

Office: Lubbock Downtown Center 1016B

Office Hours: T/Th: 11:00PM – 2:30PM | F: 10:00AM – 11:00AM

Recommended Textbook: Governing Texas 6th Edition | Authors: Champagne and Harpham | Publisher: Norton | ISBN: 99780393871630

If you are having issues financially with purchasing this book, the 5th edition is acceptable.

Technology:

Reliable access to computer or laptop.

Reliable internet connection

Course Grade and Assignments

Exams = 40%

Discussions = 30%

Preliminary Essay Assignment = 5%

Essay = 15%

Attendance and Participation = 10%

Exams

You will have a total of 2 exams: a midterm and a final exam. Exams will consist of 50 multiple choice questions.

Discussions Postings

Three times throughout the semester you will write a discussion post which will be your reaction to an article/podcast related to Texas government and reply to a classmate's discussion.

Instructions:

- These original posts must be at least 400 words in length.
- Use citations.
- Make sure to cite reliable sources when writing your discussions.

No Wikipedia

- You are expected to use the article and slides/book. You can find these in Course Content in their respective weekly folder and in the "Assignments" folder. This includes using the article to answer the prompt.
- Write in academic English, paragraph style prose, as you would a research essay

- You must post your DISCUSSION POST BEFORE viewing classmates' discussions. Failure to do so will drop your grade 20 points. If you post a blank, I will assume you are attempting to plagiarize.

- **A full rubric and instructions can be found at the end of this syllabus.**

Essay

This essay is designed to be an academic essay about a topic of your choosing relating to TEXAS government. You can either choose to write an expository or argumentative essay.

It is important to write in third person and try NOT to editorialize.

This assignment is separated into two parts:

1. Topic Selection, Thesis, and Preliminary Sources (5%)

- Submit using Turnitin on Blackboard

Must include:

- The topic you choose
- A thesis statement
- At least 5 sources you plan on using
- **An example can be found on Blackboard**

2. Essay (15%)

Instructions:

- Double spaced
- 12 point font
- Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins
- at least 1000 words in length (that is NOT including headers, footers, citations, etc.)
- Uses citations (APA or MLA)
- These will be turned in using Turnitin on Blackboard.
- You will use Turnitin on Blackboard to turn in this assignment.
- **A full rubric and instructions can be found at the end of this syllabus.**

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class regularly and be prepared to participate in discussion. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late you will be counted absent. If you leave early without telling me beforehand, you will be counted absent. If you sleep during class, you will be counted absent. If you are on your phone or not paying attention, you will be counted absent.

Note: Expect written assignments to be graded within a business week of the due date.

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Policies

Late Policy and Technology Problems

THE PROFESSOR WILL ACCEPT NO EXCUSE FOR LATE WORK. If for some reason the professor or the Blackboard server has made a mistake, you will not be penalized. Be aware that when something only happens to you, it is your problem. Please always start early and finish early to avoid problems.

Exams can only be made up with proper documentation such as a doctor's note.

Make Up Exam

If you miss the first exam and do not have proper documentation, you will be able to take a retake the exam during finals week for half credit. Students will have to schedule a time during my office hours, during finals week in order to take advantage of this opportunity. There are no exceptions.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class regularly and be prepared to participate in discussion. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late you will be counted absent. If you leave early without telling me beforehand, you will be counted absent. If you sleep during class, you will be counted absent. If you are on your phone or not paying attention, you will be counted absent.

Technology

No cell phone, Apple Watch, iPod, headphones etc. usage during class. The use of cellular/mobile phones is prohibited in the classroom. If you are expecting a call or need to leave early, notify me immediately or before class and I will make an exception for you. Students may use a laptop computer during class but are not permitted to instant message others, check social network updates, email, etc. The usage of the laptop computers is meant for taking notes and considered a privilege, not a right, given to you by me and can be taken away at any time.

If you use ANY electronic device during an exam, your exam will automatically be taken up and you will be given a zero.

Extra Credit

You will NOT have the opportunity to earn extra credit points during the course, so do not ask.

Drop Policy

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. Other than that, it is your responsibility to drop the course.

Disruption of Classroom Environment

Your professor will not tolerate any disruption of the classroom environment. This includes any problems your facilitator encounters with you AND hateful/disrespectful

remarks made in the classroom, on discussion postings, email, or chat. I will drop you with an F for violation of this policy.

Emailing Your Professor

I require students to send a professional email when contacting me. If you send an unprofessional email to me, I will respond asking you to retype your email. In addition, do not attempt to argue with me over a grade you receive, if you do I will either lower your grade further, or drop you with an F. When emailing, please include what course you are enrolled in (Example: GOVT 2305.156).

DO NOT attempt to communicate with me through Blackboard. I only communicate through email, preferably your SPC email.

Unless there are unforeseen circumstances, you can expect me to reply to emails within 24 hours. If I do not, don't be afraid to email me again or forward your message to me.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is the taking of credit for something that is not the work of the owner. It is cheating and will not be tolerated. See the General Catalog for more information on plagiarism. Cheating or dishonesty of any type in this course will result in the student being dropped from this course with an "F."

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resources:

There are now websites that will actually generate semi-unique material that somewhat resembles original material. Since the technology is available to create this content, technology is also available to detect this content. Make no mistake, this is plagiarism. I am not asking AI to write a paper, I am asking you, the student, to create this content. If you submit work that is not your own, original material, it will be considered plagiarism and receive a grade of zero. The incident will also be detailed to the Dean of Students for disciplinary actions.

Academic English

South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English 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.

For information regarding Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Non-Discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please use the following link: [Syllabus Statements \(southplainscollege.edu\)](https://southplainscollege.edu).

[Course Schedule and Readings: Here is an overview of the course. Complete readings and assignments in the order presented below](#)

Section 1

Week 1: Introduction and Syllabus

- **Read**
 - Syllabus

Week 2: Texas Constitution

- **Read**
 - Chapter 2
 - Chapter 7
 - Chapter 8
 - Chapter 9
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 1

Week 3: Texas Constitution

- **Read**
 - Chapter 2
 - Chapter 7
 - Chapter 8
 - Chapter 9
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 1

Week 4: Texas Constitution

- **Read**
 - Chapter 2
 - Chapter 7
 - Chapter 8
 - Chapter 9
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 1

Week 5: Local Government

- **Read**
 - Chapter 10

Week 6: Federalism

- **Read**
 - Chapter 3
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 2

Week 7: Federalism

- **Read**
 - Chapter 3
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 2
- **Assignments due October 13th by 5:00PM**
 - **Discussion 1**
 - **Discussion 2**

Week 8:

- **Exam 1: October 18th**
- **Assignments due October 20th by 5:00PM**
 - **Topic Selection, Thesis, and Preliminary Research**

Section 2

Week 9: Voting and Elections

- **Read**
 - Chapter 5

Week 10: Voting and Elections

- **Read**
 - Chapter 5

Week 11: Political Parties

- **Read**
 - Chapter 4
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 3

Week 12: Political Parties

- **Read**
 - Chapter 4
- **Assignments**
 - Discussion 3

Week 13: Texas Political Culture and Public Opinion

- **Read**
 - Chapter 1

Week 14: Texas Political Culture and Public Opinion

- **Read**
 - Chapter 1
- **Assignments Due December 1st by 5:00PM**
 - Essay

Week 15: Catch Up Week

- **Assignments Due December 8th by 5:00PM**
 - Discussion 3

Week 16: Finals Week

- **Final Exam: December 13th at 9:00AM**

Concise Calendar and Due Dates

- Discussion 1: **Due October 13th by 5:00PM**
- Discussion 2: **Due October 13th by 5:00PM**
- Exam 1: October 18th
- Topic Selection, Thesis, and Preliminary: **Due October 20th by 5:00PM**
- Essay: **Due December 1st by 5:00PM**
- **Last Day to Drop: December 6th**
- Discussion 3: **Due December 8th by 5:00PM**
- **Final Exam: December 13th at 9:00AM**

Rubrics

Discussions

Rubric Grading	59 points or less	60 – 69 points	70 to 79 points	80 to 89 points	90 or more points
	<p>Student Discussion does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - answer most questions in prompt - Explain most important concepts - appear to have used article/podcast - Use validating evidence - write in paragraph prose - Makes a strong argument <p>Student Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains considerable grammar mistakes - Has at least 2 sources including the article/podcast - Does not meet word count - Has no citations - Has poor sentence structure and organization 	<p>Student Discussion does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - answer most questions in prompt - Explains most important concepts - appear to have used article/podcast - Use validating evidence - write in paragraph prose - Makes a strong argument <p>Student Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contains some grammar mistakes - Has at least 2 sources including the article/podcast - meets the word count - Has no citations - Contains poor sentence structure and organization 	<p>Student Discussion does not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contain citations or has incorrect citations - Use validating evidence - write in paragraph prose <p>Student Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes a strong argument - Has at least 3 sources including the article/podcast - answer most questions in prompt - Explain some important concepts - Use the article/podcast - Contain some grammar mistakes - Meet word count - Good sentence structure and organization 	<p>Student Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes a strong argument - writes in paragraph prose - Has at least 4 sources including the article/podcast - answers most questions in prompt - Explains most of the important concepts - Uses article/podcast - has few grammar mistakes - Meets the word count - Has correct citations - Has good sentence structure and organization - Uses validating evidence 	<p>Student Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes a strong argument - writes in paragraph prose - answers all questions in prompt - Has more than 5 sources including the article/podcast - Explains all important concepts - Uses article/podcast - has few grammar mistakes - Meets the word count - Has proper citations - Great sentence structure and organization - Uses validating evidence

Essay

Topic Selection, Thesis, and Preliminary Sources

Rubric Grading	59 or less points	60 - 69 points	70 to 79 points	80 to 89 points	90 or more points
	No topic Has no thesis Contains considerable grammar mistakes Does not follow instructions Less than 3 sources	Topic chosen Has unclear thesis Contains considerable grammar mistakes Follows most instructions Less than 3 sources	Topic chosen Has a partial thesis Contains grammar mistakes Follows all instructions Has between 3 – 4 sources	Topic chosen Has a thesis Contains few grammar mistakes Follows all instructions Has 3 – 4 sources	Topic chosen Has strong thesis Contains few grammar mistakes Follows all instructions Has 5 or more sources

Essay

Rubric Grading	59 or less points	60 - 69 points	70 to 79 points	80 to 89 points	90 or more points
	Has no clear thesis Contains considerable grammar mistakes Poor sentence structure and organization Does not follow instructions Does not use validating evidence Does not write in paragraph prose Has no or incorrect citations Less than 3 sources	Has no clear thesis Contains considerable grammar mistakes Poor sentence structure and organization Follows most instructions Does not use validating evidence Does not write in paragraph prose Has no or incorrect citations Less than 3 sources	Has a partial thesis Contains grammar mistakes Good sentence structure and organization Follows all instructions Uses validating evidence Writes in paragraph prose Has correct citations Has between 3 – 5 sources	Has a thesis Contains few grammar mistakes Good sentence structure and organization Follows all instructions Uses validating evidence Writes in paragraph prose Has correct citations Has 3 – 5 sources	Has strong thesis Contains few grammar mistakes Great sentence structure and organization Follows all instructions Uses validating evidence Writes in paragraph prose Has proper citations Has more than 5 sources

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