

GOVT 2107

South Plains College

SPRING 2023

Federal and Texas Constitutions

Online Course

Professor Drew Landry

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Levelland Campus

Student Services, rm 116

Office Number: (806) 716 – 4032

Office Hours: MW: 11:00am – 2:00pm; Friday: 10am – 12pm (noon); or by appointment.

No office hours during finals week.

Course Description

Enrollment limited to students who have already completed a minimum of six (6) SCH of Government courses but have not satisfied the statutory requirement for study of the federal and state constitutions. This course serves as “bridge” for those students. To put plainly, this is a course for students who completed Government 2302 but not 2301. Instead of forcing students to complete two (2) new classes, they may complete this short class while enrolled either in Government 2305 or 2306. Finally, due to this course studying the United States and state constitutions, specifically Texas, it will last five (5) weeks.

Course Requirements/Expectations

This is an online, distance learning course. It takes a great deal of discipline, self-motivation, and effective time management to successfully complete an online course. Many students find it helpful to set aside specific times each week to complete the assignments.

While this course requires no prior knowledge of American politics, there is considerable reading related to a wide range of constitutional topics. It is essential that students complete the weekly readings *before* attempting to complete the assignments. We cover a great deal of material so it is critical that you take careful notes and keep abreast of the readings and assignments. If you feel you need extra help in managing the course materials, contact me and I will help you.

This course requires an internet connection and South Plains College recommends using Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome when completing the work. Microsoft Edge or Safari, however, is not recommended for use.

Required Textbook

No Required Textbook but several online resources mentioned below.

Declaration of Independence

(http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html)

U.S. Constitution (<http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/>)

History of U.S. Constitution

(http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_history.html and
<http://www.history.com/topics/constitution>)

Texas Constitution (<http://www.constitution.legis.state.tx.us/>)

History of Texas Constitutions (http://texaspolitics.laits.utexas.edu/7_2_0.html)

Syllabus Agreement

Every student will have three (3) days to examine the syllabus. By remaining in this course beyond that point, the student indicates his/her acceptance of the syllabus. Any student who remains in the class beyond the first week, agrees to comply with the rules expressed or implied in this syllabus.

Grading Policy

Since this is a seven-week course spaced out into a fifteen-week semester, all class sessions will be available to complete at students' pace. All assignments, however, have specific due dates and the final assignment is due *Monday, May 8, by 5pm*. While students may work ahead on the assignments, they may not work backwards.

Quizzes and Exams

This course will be fairly straightforward. Students will read sections from one of the resources and will take five (5) quizzes and one (1) comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam will consist of thirty – five (35) multiple choice questions from the material students already read and shall be worth three (3) points each.

Students may use the required resources to assist them on the quizzes but may not do so on the comprehensive exam. Please bear in mind that all quizzes and the exam are timed.

Grades

Calculating Grades

In calculating final grades, I keep it simple. I divide the points a student accumulates over the semester by the total points possible, then multiply that answer by one hundred (100). The result of the calculations will be the student's percentage for the semester.

Rounding

On the issue of "rounding up" on grades, I have a strict but fair policy. I do not "round up" for any border line student unless he/she has at least a ".9." If a student has not attained a ".9," then his grade will not be "rounded up." If you want a better grade, you need to earn it.

Grading Scale

100 – 90%	A
89 – 80%	B
79 – 70%	C
69 – 60%	D
59% and below	F

Communications

There are many methods to contact me. The top of the syllabus states I will meet with you only by appointment if you need a face to face discussion; my email if a quick explanation will suffice your question; and my office number if you need an over the phone conversation. I am dedicated to a two (2) business day response to any correspondence from you. Odds are in favor of me getting back to you sooner than that. If there is an emergency – which is defined as a test failing on you – then please email me immediately at my SPC account. Do ***NOT*** message me through Blackboard.

Attendance Policy

Regulating attendance in an online course is tricky. With that being stated, students will be considered “no longer attending” after two (2) consecutive incomplete assignments *and* not informing me the reason for such inaction. This is the fairest action for all students. The point of this is twofold: do not miss any assignments and notify me immediately if you will miss.

Academic Integrity

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Cheating: Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating.

Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.

Plagiarism: Offering the work of another as one’s own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Punishment for Plagiarism

Any student who commits plagiarism and is caught in doing so will be punished on the first offense with a zero (0) for the grade. If a student commits and is caught on a second offense of plagiarism, the professor will seek the removal of the student from the course with an F for the grade, report the student to the Dean of Students, and may suggest the student's expulsion from the college.

Intellectual Property: All material on the course's Blackboard page, including quizzes, are the intellectual property of the professor and at no time may a student screenshot a question or post any exam or quiz material online. If a student does this, he/she will be warned on the first offense. If the instance repeats, the student will be disciplined accordingly. This is a form of stealing from me and it will not be tolerated.

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. Professors expect all students to demonstrate proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in all their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take home essays.

Nondiscrimination Policy

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities (choices of sports team, however, are fair game – ha). The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

Diversity Statement

In this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group difference 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 Office) 806-716-2577, Lubbock Centers (located at the Lubbock Downtown Center) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement

If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, Under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Health and Wellness Center. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or email dburleson@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.

Computer Issues

Having access to a properly functioning and update computer is absolutely necessary for this course. Students may arrange to visit the SPC computer lab, library, your local library, or someone else's computer, but using the excuse of a crashed computer will not be accepted for failing to complete tests or assignments. If a student does not have access to a functional computer, then do not take this course. Computer problems of any kind will not be excused. That is the nature of this computer course. If any student finds that unacceptable, then do not take the course.

Technical Support

Email blackboard@southplainscollege.edu or call (806)716-2180 for any and all technical problems with the Blackboard software (they are much better than me at solving computer problems).

Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure all tests have been completed by their due date. Any test not completed by the due date automatically receives a zero (0). You are highly encouraged not to wait until the last minute to complete assignments. Technical and personal problems are not considered acceptable excuses for late work, since you are able to complete them well in advance of the date.

COVID-19

Makeup of assignment(s) and exam(s)

If a student misses an assignment(s) and/or exam(s) due to COVID-19 or any other illness, a doctor's note will be required in order to make up the assignment and/or exam. The note must cover the dates you missed, which must coincide with your missing assignment(s) and/or exam(s).

Amendments

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time. Students will be notified of such change(s) with appropriate time to adapt.

Course Schedule

Session One: Declaration of Independence

Reading: [Declaration of Independence](#)

Quiz due: January 27, 5:00pm

Session Two: Overview of the U.S. Constitution

Reading: [History of U.S. Constitution](#) and [More on U.S. Constitution](#)

Quiz due: February 10, 5:00pm

Session Three: U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights

Reading: [First Amendment](#), [Texas v Johnson](#), and [Snyder v Phelps](#)

Quiz due: February 24, 5:00pm

Session Four: Overview of the Texas Constitution

Reading: [History of Texas Constitution - Chapter Two](#)

Quiz due: March 17, 5:00pm

Session Five: Amending the Texas Constitution

Reading: [Article XVII](#); [List of Proposed Amendments to the Texas Constitution](#)

Quiz due: March 31, 5:00pm

Session Six: Comparing and Contrasting the U.S. and Texas Constitutions

Reading: [U.S. Constitution](#); [Texas Constitution](#)

Quiz due: April 14, 5:00pm

Session Seven: Review

Final Exam Due: May 8, 5:00pm