

**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 (Texas Constitution and Topics)

Credit: 3 Lecture, 0 Lab

**Foundational Component Area of Core Curriculum:** 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, (but for ALL dual credit classes: American Government, Continuity and Change-Texas Edition, O'Connor, Pearson current edition.) 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excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course.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:
  - 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 I 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

**Government 2306-Texas Government  
Internet Course Syllabus- PRINT THIS OUT!**

Instructor: Mr. Larry Norris

Office: Student Services Building (SS), #118, Levelland campus

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 7:00-9:30 am, Friday 7:00-10:00 am, or by appointment

**Communication Policy:** All written communication must be sent through Blackboard Course Messages. Send written messages to me using the “Course Messages” function in Blackboard and not to my SPC address (I will not reply to any messages sent to my SPC address). I will respond to your message within 24 hours if I receive your message between 8:00 AM Monday and 1:00 PM Friday (excluding holidays). I am not available over the weekends to answer any messages. Remember to be considerate, polite and courteous in all communications. Disrespectful and profane communications will result in the student being dropped from the course

**Textbook: The State of Texas: Government, Politics, and Policy: Third Edition; Sherri Mora William Ruger.**

**ISBN: 9781259548215: McGraw Hill**

**Only the third edition will be accepted for this course.**

**Course Requirements: ( Read carefully!)**

1. **Course Syllabus Agreement and Student Online Introduction:** After thoroughly reading the course syllabus, each student will submit the following statement: “I have read the course syllabus and clearly understand the course policies.” This statement will be followed by a paragraph in which the student provides biographical information such as his/her college major, educational goals, and any other relevant information the student wants to provide the instructor. Click on the **Course Syllabus Agreement/ Student Online Introduction** link on the “Getting Started” page to submit this assignment. This requirement is worth 100 points and is due by Monday September 11 at 3:00 pm. No late submissions will be accepted. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**
2. **Chapter Examinations: (located within the assessments tab)**  
Below is a list of chapters that will be covered in this course. The student will carefully read and study the required chapters in the textbook. The exams are not “Open-book”. The student will take an online 25 question multiple-choice exam over each assigned chapter. A time limit of 30 minutes will apply to each exam. Each question will count 2 points each. Therefore; each exam will equal 50 points. I allow two attempts on each chapter exam. It is the student’s decision whether to take the exam a second time. The highest score of the two attempts will be counted. If a student elects to take the

chapter exam only one time that will be the recorded score. There are 11 chapter exams for the semester. I will drop your lowest chapter exam score (if you do not take an exam that becomes your lowest score). Therefore, only the 10 highest exam scores will be counted.

Ten (10) chapter exams = 500 points.

All eleven chapter exams will open up for test taking on Tuesday September 5th, at 8:00 am. Notice there is due dates/times by which each chapter exam must be taken. Students who fail to take chapter exams by the scheduled date/time will receive a grade of zero (0) for that exam. Once you begin the exam you cannot stop. If you are unable to take an examination because of problems with your computer or your server; you will receive a zero (0) for that examination. Therefore, make sure you are using a reliable server and computer. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

**NOTE: The questions on the exam will be delivered one at a time and the student will not be allowed to revisit the questions. Questions must be answered in the order given. Questions can be skipped; but once a question has been answered or skipped, it cannot be revisited. It is important to remember to click "Save Answer" before moving to the next question. Once you begin the exam you must complete the exam in its entirety. Questions not completed during the allotted time will be counted wrong.**

Chapter 1: Introduction to Texas History and Politics – Exam must be taken by Thursday September 14 3:00 pm.

Chapter 2: The Texas State Constitution and the American Federal System - Exam must be taken by Thursday September 21 15 3:00 pm.

Chapter 3: The Texas Legislature- Exam must be taken by Thursday September 28 3:00 pm.

Chapter 4: The Executive Department and the Office of the Governor of Texas – Exam must be taken by Thursday October 5 3:00 pm.

Chapter 5: The Court System in Texas- Exam must be taken by Thursday October 19 3:00 pm.

Chapter 6: Local Governments in Texas – Exam must be taken by Thursday October 26 3:00 pm

Chapter 7: Voting and Political Participation in Texas –Exam must be taken by Thursday November 2 3:00 pm.

Chapter 8: Campaigns and Elections in Texas- Exam must be taken by Thursday November 9 3:00 pm.

Chapter 9: Political Parties in Texas – Exam must be taken by Thursday November 16 3:00 pm.

Chapter 10: Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas – Exam must be taken by Thursday November 30 3:00 pm.

Chapter 13: Financing State Government – Exam must be taken by Thursday December 7 3:00 pm.

3. **Discussion Board Questions:** There will be two (2) discussion board questions for the semester. I will post a discussion question two weeks before the due date as well as instructions for that discussion board. Each discussion board question will be worth 200 points. Late discussion board responses will not be accepted. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

### **Grading Scheme:**

-Course syllabus and student online introduction = 100 points  
-Eleven Online Chapter Examinations (50 points each)  
Your lowest chapter exam score will be dropped (if you do not take an exam that becomes your lowest score). Therefore, only the 10 highest exam scores will be counted.  
= 500 points  
-Discussion board questions – 2 questions (200) points each = 400 points  
Total course points = 1000 points

### **Grading Scale:**

A= 900 - 1,000 points (90% - 100%)

B= 800 – 899 points (80% - 89%)

C= 700 -799 points (70% – 79%)

D= 600 - 699 points (60% - 69%)

F= 0 - 599 points (0% - 59%)

**There is no curve for this course, no re-tests, no make-up tests, no extra credit projects and grades are not rounded up. In order to obtain a certain grade, you must receive sufficient points.**

**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.

### **Dishonesty:**

Cheating will **Not** be tolerated and will result in immediate failure in the course. While this course is conducted over Blackboard, it is not a group effort, nor is it “open-book”. Honesty and integrity are expected at all times.

### **Drop Policy:**

A student who does not attempt to take three (3) consecutive chapter examinations will be dropped from the course with an X.

**Drop date:**

The last day this course may be dropped is Monday, November 16, 2017.

**Blackboard and Tech Support:**

I will be of no help with computer problems, mechanical failures, ISP problems, etc. Please contact [blackboard@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:blackboard@southplainscollege.edu) for any Blackboard related issues.

**ADA Statement:**

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, Reese Center (Building 8) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the SPC policy at:

([http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human\\_resources/policy\\_procedure/hhc.php](http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/hhc.php))

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

