

**Statement of the SPC Social Science Department's  
Government/Political Science Division for  
GOVT 2305 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 2305

Course Title: Federal 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.

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

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 requirements for teacher certification.

Course Purpose: Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint the learner with the origin and development of the US Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas.

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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excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn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 (SLO):

Students who have completed this course will be expected to:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of our federal system.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. Politics.

#### 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

## INSTRUCTOR SYLLABUS

### **Instructor Information:**

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**Name:** Professor McGee

**Messages for Professor:** Use "Messages" found on your left under course tools.

**Office:** AS 115 (Levelland). **Office Hours:** 7-8AM and 10:50AM-Noon MTWT. (No office hours on Friday). **Professor is unavailable from noon on Friday till 7AM on Monday as well as on college holidays.**

**Office Phone:** (806) 716-2128 Please leave a message if I do not answer.

**Biography:** AA Texarkana College; BA University of Texas at Austin; MA Texas State University; Additional Courses: Texas Tech University and Texas A&M University. Assistant City Manager in Texarkana, Texas for 7 years. Twenty-four Years at South Plains College as tenured professor. 17 Years Internet and ITV experience.

**Course Grade:** Your grade is determined by the number of points you earn on the three parts of this course: Attendance, Discussion Postings, and four Module Exam: A=3960-4400; B=3520-3959; C=3080-3519; D=2640-3079; F is less than 2640 points You will also have the opportunity to earn extra credit points during the course.

**Attendance:** Attendance and participation in this course is crucial. This portion of the course rewards attendance with 1000 points. For each time you are absent in a MWF class, I will deduct 100 points. For each time you are absent in a TT or MW class, I will deduct 150 points. You must be in your seat at the scheduled start of class and remain in the room till the end of class to receive credit. Also, I will interact with several students each day by asking questions. If you refuse to participate, then you will be counted absent.

**Discussion Postings:** Each week you will make two discussion postings. One of your postings will be your reaction to an article related to U.S. government that you read on the approved websites as noted within each module. Your posting must begin with the title of the article and the date you read it. These original posts must be at least 400 words in length. The first paragraph must be a brief overview telling about the contents of the article and then the second paragraph must be an extensive reaction (your thoughts about the topic).

Later in the week, read postings by other students/or your professor and then make your second required posting agreeing or disagreeing with another student. Write a long paragraph (at least 200 words in length) for these reply posts.

**Postings must be made on at least two separate days. In other words, do not do all of your work on one day. Discussions are due at 11:55 PM CST each Sunday of the course.** You will earn 50 points for each of your two required posts for a total of 100 points for each week of the course. (1,400 course total).

**Module Exams:** Each module concludes with a module exam that you will take with supervision. This is a closed note exam. You will be allowed 60 minutes to take the exam. Each is worth 500 points.

### **Policies:**

**Make-up and Late Work Policy:** Only one major exam can be made-up. For make-ups you will be required to be in Levelland on a Saturday morning to take an extensive comprehensive essay exam covering the entire course. No late work will be accepted for any other component of the course.

**Drop Policy:** If you miss 6 TT/MW class meetings or 9 MWF class meetings, you will be dropped from the course. Otherwise, it is your responsibility to drop the course.

**Technology Problems:** If you have an unreliable server or computer, please go to a public computer to do your work. If for some reason the professor of 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. The professor is not responsible for natural events or acts of terrorism. Please always start early on assignments and finish early to avoid problems.

**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.

Saving Your Answers: When taking an exam, make sure that you SAVE your answers, wait a minute or two, then submit your exam. Make sure you accomplish this before your time expires for the exam. If you do not follow this procedure, I will receive no response from you and you will receive a zero for that assessment.

Calculating Your Grade: "My Grades" shows the grades you receive throughout the course. If you wish to calculate your current grade: Divide your current points to date by the number of possible points you could have made to this point. Your professor will not calculate your grade for you.

Release of Grades: Your discussion and exam grades will be released after the period to complete the assignment has ended. Normally that will be at the end of the next day. If there is a delay, your professor will let you know.

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, mail, or chat. I will drop you with an F for violation of this policy. If you are habitually late to class I will drop you from the class with an X. If you are using your cell or your cell "rings" in class, you will be dropped from the class. Silence or turn off your phone during my class.

Cheating/Dishonesty: Cheating or dishonesty of any type in this course will result in the student being dropped from this course with an "F."

Chatting in Discussion Postings: Discussion postings are not a format to chat with fellow students. You will receive a zero for the entire posting assignment if you violate this policy.

Academic 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.