

**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

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and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn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

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution.
2. Demonstrate 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 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

GOVT 2306, Texas Government; Blackboard

Term: Fall 2023

Instructor: Daniel Bunye

Office: SPC Downtown, #1017

Office Hours: As posted, or by appointment

Phone: (806) 716-2467

Text: Governing Texas, 5th edition. Champagne, Harpham, and Casellas.

ISBN: 978-0-393-427004 (paperback)

Purpose: The objective of this course is to acquaint the undergraduate student with the structure, organization, and functions of the Texas State Government. This course is designed along the lines of an independent study course, and thus relies heavily on the student's efforts. Further, GOVT 2306 meets statutory requirements as set forth by the state of Texas.

Course Requirements: This is a reading intensive course! Only those students with strong reading and comprehension skills, along with considerable resolve and dedication, should enroll in this course. The student is *strongly* advised to dedicate significant effort to the readings required for this course, and not fall behind. The requirements for this course are extensive, but should not be excessively difficult if granted appropriate attention.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Example Grades</u>
Chapter Quiz Ave.	50%	80 x .20= 40.0
Essay Ave.	30%	85 x .30= 25.5
Discussion Ave.	20%	95 x .20= <u>19.0</u>
		84.5, B

Grades: The grading scale for this course is as follows:

100-90= A

89-80= B

79-70= C

69-60= D

59-00= F

There is **no** curve for this course, nor for any assignment. You will be graded only by your own efforts. No extra credit is available. Additionally, rounding up of final grades will occur for a maximum of one (1) point (thus, a 78.9 will ***not*** be rounded up to a 'B').

Attendance: Aside from ensuring course participation in the first week of each semester, attendance will not be checked for this course.

Dishonesty: Cheating and/or plagiarism will *not* be tolerated! Either may result in failure of the course. Violators may be removed from South Plains College. Assisting another to cheat or plagiarize may also result in course failure. While this course is conducted over Blackboard/internet, it is *not* a group effort. Honesty and integrity are expected at all times. A plagiarism tab with further explanation may be found at the opening menu (left side of screen) of this course.

Foundation Skills: This course will attempt to accomplish the following academic skills:

Basic Skills: Reading (F-1), Writing (F-2)

Thinking Skills: Creative Thinking (F-7), Decision Making (F-8), Problem Solving (F-9), Knowing How to Learn (F-11), Reasoning (F-12)

Personal Qualities: Responsibility (F-16), Self-Esteem (F-14), Self-Management (F-16), Integrity/Honesty (F-17)

Statement of Nondiscrimination: It is the policy of this instructor not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status, particularly veterans of the Vietnam era. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations and/or resolutions of professional organizations in education and psychology, my diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences to be inconsistent with my instructional mission and educational goals.

Student Support: If you are having any problems with Blackboard, please contact Brooke Walker at (806) 716-2180 or at: blackboard@southplainscollege.edu

Pop-up Blockers: Students are encouraged to disable all pop-up blockers, as these can interfere with the taking of the chapter quizzes. This problem seems to be more pronounced with laptop use, but has also occurred with desktop PC's.

Smartphone Use: The student is *strongly* discouraged from using a smartphone to complete this course, or any aspect therein. Doing so will often result in numerous difficulties, problems, and error messages. You will have difficulty opening files and tabs, and will have issues taking the chapter quizzes. If you choose to disregard this warning, you do so at your own risk; the instructor will be unable to offer assistance, nor any remedy, if problems occur.

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 through the Guidance and Counseling Centers at Reese Center (Building 8) [716-4675](tel:716-4675), or Levelland (Student Services Building) [716-2577](tel:716-2577)

Pregnancy: 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 Director of Health and Wellness. 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 Director of Health and Wellness at (806) 716-2529 for assistance.

Due Dates: All due dates for quizzes, essays, and discussion participation are set and are ***not*** negotiable. The student is **strongly** urged to make the necessary and appropriate accommodations to meet their obligations as far in advance as possible.

Assignment Explanations: The following is a brief explanation of all assignments for this course. Should the student have any questions, please contact the instructor immediately.

Chapter Quizzes: Below is a list of chapters that will be covered in this course. A short description follows each chapter number. All quizzes are available immediately, but please note the various due dates. Questions for these quizzes will be of Multiple-choice style. There will be twenty questions for each quiz, and a time limit of forty-five (45) minutes will apply. You will be allowed to attempt each quiz twice, with the highest score saved. Quizzes will be available from 12:00am on the first day of availability until 11:30pm on the last day of availability (but please note, you will need to start the quiz by 11:14 pm to get the full 45 minute time allowance). Students who fail to take a quiz during the availability period will receive a grade of zero (0) for that quiz.

Chapter 1: The Political Culture, People & Economy of Texas (Friday, 9/29)

Chapter 2: The Texas Constitution (Friday, 9/29)

Chapter 3: Texas in the Federal System (Friday, 9/29)

Chapter 4: Political Parties (Friday, 9/29)

Chapter 5: Campaigns and Elections (Friday, 11/3)

Chapter 6: Interest Groups and Lobbying (Friday, 11/3)

Chapter 7: The Legislature (Friday, 11/3)

Chapter 8: The Executive Branch (Friday, 11/3)

Chapter 9: The Judiciary (Friday, 11/3)

Chapter 10: Local Government (Friday, 12/8)

Chapter 11: Public Finance (Friday, 12/8)

Chapter 12: Public Policy (Friday, 12/8)

Chapter 13: Crime and Corrections Policy (Friday, 12/8)

Chapter 14: Building the Future (Friday, 12/8)

Essays: There are a total of three essays for this course. All students **must** do at least the first essay for this course this semester. If you are satisfied with your grade, you have completed this aspect of the course. If not satisfied, you may attempt essay two and/or three. Each essay will be graded, and the grade averaged with that from essay one. Each Part of the course will have two essays options; the student will select one of these. Essays should be *no less* than one (1) full page (New Times Roman, font size 12, Double-spaced), with Top, Bottom, and Side margins not to exceed one inch when printed out. Late papers, and those which do not meet minimum length requirements, are *not* accepted for any reason. All papers should be presented as a WORD document (do not submit a pdf, or any other file format). As the essay topics are often based on one's opinion, the primary grading emphasis will be on proper presentation. Refer to the Essay Guidelines Sheet prior to composition and submission of your essays. The

Due Dates for each essay are listed below, but you may turn in any essay at any time before its due date.

Essay #1: Friday, 9/22
Essay #2: Friday, 10/27
Essay #3: Friday, 12/1

Discussions: Each Part of this course has a discussion topic. Students are expected to participate in the discussion of the topic provided. You are expected to both post an original commentary (one full page, if I printed it out), plus provide reaction to those comments of others (a *minimum* of two responses [1/2 page each]). Failure to post or respond will result in a grade of zero (if you post, but do not respond, that will also earn a grade of zero). These are “discussions”, not merely a simple listing of a few statements. Several sentences expressing your agreement with another student’s post will be considered Minimal Effort. Minimal effort/participation will receive grades of 50%, or at most 75%. Grading is obviously subjective, with both **quantity** (Refer to Discussion Expectations Tab) and **quality** (respectfulness, appropriateness, spelling, punctuation, etc.) of content being considered, but is based on the following guidelines:

Outstanding, Appropriate, and/or Engaging:	100%
Moderate, Relevant, and/or Interesting:	85%
Weak, Not often Relevant, and/or Less Engaged:	75%
Minimal, Simplistic, and/or Uninvolved:	50%
Non-Existent (either post or response):	0%

If you present “average” work, you can expect an average grade. If you desire the higher grades, provide maximum effort.

The Due Dates for each Discussion are listed below:

Discussion 1: Post: Friday, 9/15; Responses: Tuesday, 9/19
Discussion 2: Post: Friday, 10/13; Responses: Tuesday, 10/17
Discussion 3: Post: Friday, 11/17; Responses: Tuesday, 11/21

*Failure to Post by that respective due date will result in a 25 point deduction in the final score for that Discussion.