

Fall 2026
GOVT 2305-005-090: Federal Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Holland
Course Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00am
Course Number: GOVT 2306
Course Title: Texas Government
Section Number: 005 (SPC-only); 090 (dual credit)
Location: AD140 Levelland Campus
Professor's Office: AD134
Email: tholland@southplainscollege.edu

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 requirement for teacher certification.
Credit: 3 lecture hours
Prerequisites: TSI compliance in reading

Course Purpose: Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint learners with the origin and development of the U.S. 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. 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.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO): students who have completed this course will:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the 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.

Core Objectives addressed:

1. **Critical Thinking:** to include critical thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. **Communication:** to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication

3. **Social responsibility:** to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
4. **Personal responsibility:** to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Course Evaluations: You will have the opportunity to evaluate this course and the instructor toward the end of the semester. A link to complete course evaluations will be provided in Blackboard when it becomes available.

Course Calendar:

Day	Date	Subject
Tuesday	25-Aug	Syllabus and Introduction to American Politics
Thursday	27-Aug	Introduction to American Politics
Tuesday	1-Sep	Federalism
Thursday	3-Sep	No Class – Professor at conference
Tuesday	8-Sep	Federalism
Thursday	10-Sep	Constitutionalism
Tuesday	15-Sep	Constitutionalism
Thursday	17-Sep	Civil Liberties and Rights
Tuesday	22-Sep	Civil Liberties and Rights
Thursday	24-Sep	Civil Liberties and Rights
Tuesday	29-Sep	Exam 1
Thursday	1-Oct	Congress
Tuesday	6-Oct	Congress
Thursday	8-Oct	Presidency
Tuesday	13-Oct	Presidency
Thursday	15-Oct	Bureaucracy
Tuesday	20-Oct	Judiciary
Thursday	22-Oct	Judiciary
Tuesday	27-Oct	Exam 2
Thursday	29-Oct	Public Opinion
Tuesday	3-Nov	Interest Groups
Thursday	5-Nov	Parties
Tuesday	10-Nov	Parties
Thursday	12-Nov	Elections
Tuesday	17-Nov	Elections
Thursday	19-Nov	Elections
Tuesday	24-Nov	Public Policy
Thursday	26-Nov	Public Policy
Tuesday	1-Dec	Public Policy
Thursday	3-Dec	Make-Up Exam
Tuesday	8-Dec	Exam 3 at 10:15AM

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. We may deviate from this schedule by a day or two as we progress through the semester but every effort will be made to follow this schedule. However the date of the make-up exam and Exam 3 will occur on the date scheduled in this calendar.

Office Hours: Please email me if you need to discuss your grade or the course content.

Office Hours	AD134
Monday	11:00am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-3:00pm
Tuesday	1:00pm-3:00pm
Wednesday	By appointment only
Thursday	1:00pm-3:00pm
Friday	11:00am-12:00pm
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

Textbook: Krutz, Glen and Sylvie Waskiewicz. 2025. American Government 4e. Openstax.
<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-4e>
 ISBN-13: 979-8-385190-66-9

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percent
A	90% or greater 900 to 999.99
B	80% to 89.99% 800 to 899.99
C	70% to 79.99% 700 to 799.99
D	60% to 69.99% 600 to 699.99
F	Less than 60% Less than 600

Grade Distribution:

Graded Item	Points Percentage
Exam 1	250 25%
Exam 2	250 25%
Exam 3	250 25%
Quiz 1	15 1.5%
Quiz 2	15 1.5%
Quiz 3	15 1.5%
Quiz 4	15 1.5%
Quiz 5	15 1.5%
Quiz 6	15 1.5%
Quiz 7	15 1.5%
Quiz 8	15 1.5%
Quiz 9	15 1.5%
Quiz 10	15 1.5%
Attendance	100 10%
TOTAL	1000 100%

Exams: There will be three exams throughout the semester. Each exam will be composed of multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and may include short answer or essay questions. Exam 1 will cover the lectures on an Introduction to American Politics, Federalism, the Origins and Development of the U.S. Constitution, and Civil Liberties and Civil Rights. Exam 2 will cover the lectures on Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Judiciary. Exam 3 will cover the lectures on Interest Groups, Public Opinion, Parties, Elections, and Public Policy.

Make-Up Exam: If you miss an exam for any reason you will complete a make-up on the last class day, Thursday, December 3rd. You will only be permitted to complete on make-up exam.

Quizzes: You will complete 10 quizzes throughout this semester. Each quiz will be composed of multiple-choice and true/false questions

Attendance: Attendance every class day is mandatory and you will receive a grade every day class is held. Your attendance grade is calculated by dividing the number of class days you attend by the number of class days that we hold.

Syllabus Statements: 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:
<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Dropping a Course: Students may drop courses through Texan Connect, the Admissions and Records Office, or Advising and Testing Center through the late registration period.

After late registration has closed, a student must complete the online Student Initiated Drop Request to drop a course.

Students may also drop courses in person at any campus location by completing a Student Initiated Drop Form. Complete a Student Initiated Drop Form and return the signed form to the Levelland Admissions and Records Office, the Student Support Center at the Lubbock Downtown Center, the Lubbock Career and Technical Center, or Plainview Center. You must have a picture ID to complete the drop.

A mark of "W" will be given for student-initiated drops that occur prior to and through the last day to drop as indicated in the online Academic Calendar found here:
<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/academiccalendar/index.php>.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy may result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F or X for the course, if circumstances warrant.

Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Submitting work that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student or an online term paper site.
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation;
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or

4. Missing in-text citations.
5. Violating the Artificial Intelligence policy, as outlined in the syllabus. For more information on AI, please reference this in the syllabus statements:
<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
3. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
5. Taking an examination for another;
6. Altering grade records;
7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment;
8. Rewriting another student's work in Peer Editing so that the writing is no longer the original student's;
9. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

A.I. Policy: The use of A.I. technology to create or supplement written work for this class is prohibited. Using A.I. to create or supplement your written work constitutes both cheating and plagiarism in this course. If I suspect a student has used A.I. to create or supplement their written work or an A.I. detection service identifies part or all of the written work to have been generated using A.I., then I will assign the student a zero for the assignment. If a student's written work was incorrectly identified as created or supplemented by A.I. then the student must contact and meet with the instructor within 7 days of their grade posted in Blackboard. The instructor will replace the student's grade if they can demonstrate mastery of the content covered by the assignment. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor if their assignment was incorrectly flagged as using A.I. to create or supplement their written work.

Honorlock: in this course I will be using Honorlock to proctor quizzes, exams, and supported assignments when completed in Blackboard.

No Late Work Without Authorization: You are expected to complete assignments, quizzes, and exams before their due date. Late work will not be accepted unless you have a valid excuse. The instructor will decide what constitutes a valid excuse and will give permission to complete late work when it is appropriate. Participation in extra-curricular activities and travelling for events, even if they are school-sanctioned events, are not valid excuses. You must complete work ahead of time if you will be travelling or participating in extra-curricular activities when the assignment, quiz, or exam is due unless you have made alternate arrangements with me BEFORE the due date of the assignment, quiz, or exam.

Extra Credit: I do not intend to provide any extra credit opportunities in this course. If I provide extra credit it will be announced and made available to the entire class.

Viewing Graded Material: You will be able to view your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in the Gradebook.

Attendance Policy: Since this is an online course I will not take daily attendance. However, you are expected to complete your work on time in accordance with the course calendar. Please email me if you are sick or have another valid reason for failure to complete your assignments.

Classroom Discussions: Given the nature of this course students may express political views contrary to your own and while no one is required to agree with another's political views you are required to be respectful. I encourage you to honestly express your views in this class, when it is appropriate and relevant, but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

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 formal 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.

Emails: Every email must include your name, course and section number so that the instructor can promptly address your question or concern. The instructor will respond to your email within 24 hours. However, the instructor will not respond to emails sent on Saturday or Sunday until the following Monday. Emails sent after normal business hours will not receive a response until the following workday during normal business hours. If the day is a public holiday for which SPC is closed or if campus is closed for other reasons, then I will not respond to the email until the following workday. Please use email rather than course messages.

Course Amendment Statement: The professor reserves the right to make changes to the course and this syllabus as may be necessary. You will be informed of any changes in the "Announcements" section of this course's Blackboard page.

Syllabus Agreement: By continuing to complete the course you agree to the terms of this Syllabus. If you do not agree to the terms of the Syllabus you must drop this course.