

South Plains College

GOVT 2305

SUMMER SESSION I 2026

Federal Government

Traditional Course, LDC 1010

Professor Drew Landry

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Office Phone Number: (806) 716 – 4032

Student Hours: By appointment only

Common Course

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, Lubbock Downtown, Lubbock Career and Technical Center, Reese, Plainview

Textbook: Varies according to instructor, (but for ALL dual credit classes: We The People, 12th Edition; Authors: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, and Tolbert; Publisher: Norton.) 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 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.

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and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course.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

Course Description

This course is a survey of the fundamental principles of political science, including, and more emphasis of, the American system of government and the origins and development of the Constitution of the United States. Its emphasis is placed on constitutional backgrounds and the organization and functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial segments of the national government, civil liberties and civil rights, public opinion, media, bureaucracies, and domestic and foreign policy. This course satisfies the Legislative requirements for teacher certification.

Course Requirements/Expectations

Late work will not be accepted unless a note from a medical doctor is presented.

Please no cell phone, pager, iPod, earbuds, headphones, etc. usage during class. This is rude to me and distracting to your classmates. Please be respectful of others and power down your cellular devices, pagers, iPods, etc. and remove your earbuds or headphones prior to the start of class.

Once the time for class arrives, the doors will close and lock and class will begin. Your admittance into the class will not be allowed once the doors are closed. Should you be late, you may attend a later or earlier class similar to the one in which you are registered. This policy will start in the third week of the semester. I advise you to not be late. If an emergency occurs, that is a different situation and I should be notified.

Students may use a laptop or tablet computer during lecture. However, no student is allowed to take a picture of notes unless given specific permission to do so. Students are prohibited from sending another person into class to take a picture of the notes.

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

Required Textbook

Comes with class as e-book

Schmidt, S.W., Shelley, M.C., Bardes, B.A., & King, B.R. (2025). *American Government and Politics Today: Brief 12th Edition*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Communication

In the event students need to get in contact with Professor Landry, please send all communications to his South Plains College email. In doing so, please put the class in which you are enrolled in the subject line so it is known how to specifically help you remedy the issue. Also, please follow the guidelines put forth in the Academic English portion of the syllabus when submitting an email.

Coursework

Students will be given four (4) exams throughout the semester. The exams are aimed to evaluate student progress in the class. If discrepancies exist, notify me immediately. There are no makeups except in the case of an emergency that requires documentation. The exams are either in-class writing assignments or multiple choice exams.

There will be content quizzes throughout the semester. These are conducted through a paper-based, take-home style manner or may be online through the class' Blackboard site. Students will be given a due date to hand in the quiz. Quizzes are allowed to be turned in earlier than the given deadline. Finally, no makeups are available for these quizzes. Makeups include but are

not limited to asking for a new quiz for whatever reason outside of a doctor's note or some other legal reasoning.

Last, but certainly not least, is class participation. Students are required to participate in class. A significant amount of class points lies in participating and if a student is absent, she/he cannot participate in class. If students are late and/or arbitrarily leave class for a significant amount of time, uses cell phone during class, etc., their participation grade will suffer. If an emergency occurs, that is a different situation and I should be notified.

Exam Day Conduct

When taking exams, students need a pencil and an eraser. Cellular devices, tablets, iPods, earbuds, headphones, pagers, etc., need to be either turned off, removed, or silenced – **not on vibrate** – and stowed away in a backpack, purse, bag, or any other packaging device. All backpacks, purses, bags, etc., need to be placed on the floor and in the front of the classroom and all course material need to be inside it and closed. If any student chooses to ignore this directive and unsilenced phone goes off during an exam, every student in the class will have ten (10) points automatically deducted. Also, all hats are to be removed upon taking an in – class exam. In short, do not be a jerk.

Yawning

If any student feels the need to yawn during class, it is expected to do so silently while covering his/her mouth. Failure to follow such a simplistic social norm may result in the professor responding to such action.

Grades

Rounding

Students are ingrained to think a percentage ending in “.5” will be rounded to the nearest whole number. I only round to the nearest whole number if a student has at least a “.9.” This is my practice and I have done this for numerous years. I have no intention of changing it. If you desire a better grade, you will have to earn it.

In calculating grades, I keep it very simple. I take the total points a student accumulated and divide that number into the total points possible and multiply by one hundred (100). The result from this basic math is your class percentage. A scale of what percentage constitutes a letter grade is below.

Grading Breakdown

Four Exams (Two worth 110 points; Two worth 100 points) =	420
Five Content Quizzes (worth 30 points each) =	150
Participation (worth 75 points) =	75

Total Points = 645

Grading Scale

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

At the end of the semester, I will not respond to any student who wishes to plead for a grade change and/or for extra work. Students need to keep track of their grades throughout the semester.

Attendance Policy

Your attendance in class is heavily recommended but not required. Attendance will be taken throughout the semester at the discretion of the professor.

If any student accumulates excessive absences after the last day to drop classes (12/04/2025), he/she will earn an “X” for the course.

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 and/or quizzes, 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. This includes the use of artificial intelligence (AI) assistance on any assigned materials.

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 or from AI assistance, 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 (unless specifically asked by the professor or an authorized person) 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.

Technology Policy

The following is Professor Landry's policy on the usage of laptop computers, iPads, earbuds, headphones, and other mobile tablets in the classroom. Professor Landry will allow students to use tablets and laptops but no student may take a picture of the notes unless given special permission to do so. While given this privilege, remember it can be removed should students become distracted and/or no longer pay attention to lecture.

Texting is a neat method of communicating but will not be tolerated in the classroom. It is obvious when a student is texting and if/when a student is spotted, he/she will be asked to stow it away. If you are expecting a call or have children in daycare, notify me immediately and I will make an exception for you.

Students are prohibited from recording the class, other students, and/or the professor either visually or audially for non-academic purposes (i.e. taking a picture of someone in class without his/her permission). All academic accommodations to record, however, will be honored and respected.

Please remove all earbuds/headphones prior to the start of class. The class works well enough without background music.

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, take home essays, or emails.

Statements on Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Nondiscrimination, Title IX, C.A.R.E., and Campus Carry

Please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/> for the aforementioned information.

Tobacco and In-Class Food Use

Students are to follow SPC's rules and regulations on cigarette and electronic cigarette use. Also, students are not to use smokeless tobacco in class. This includes but not limited to: snuff, dip, chew, packets, etc. It is rude and distracting to do this during class and any violation will be dealt with accordingly.

If a student chooses to eat food during class, she/he is responsible for keeping a tidy space. Please do not bring food that carries a pungent smell or forces a loud crunch.

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.

Illness

If you are not feeling well, please do not attend class. The same goes for me.

Course Outline

Week 1 – Declaration of Independence; Constitution
Federalists and Anti – Federalists; Early Problems; *First Exam*
Week 2 – Congress; *Second Exam*
Week 3 – Presidency; *Third Exam*
Week 4 –The Courts; *Fourth Exam*
Week 5 – Political Parties; *Final Exam*

Dates to Remember

June 19 – Juneteenth – *No Class!*
June 25 – *Last Day to Drop Classes!*
July 1 – *Final Exam*