

**Spring 2023 1<sup>st</sup> 8 Weeks**  
**GOVT 2306-181: Texas Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

Instructor: Professor Timothy Holland  
Course Time: N/A Online  
Course and Section Number: GOVT 2306-181  
Location: Online  
Professor's Office: AD134  
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Office Phone: (806) 716-2972

**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 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 intergovernmental relations, political participation, the electoral process, public policy, and the political structure of Texas. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas.

Approval Number: 45.1002.5125

**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.

**Internet Access:** This course is an online course and you must have reliable access to a computer and the internet. If you do not own a computer or do not have access to a reliable internet connection then I would recommend using the computer lab, library, or other appropriate alternative. You must have access to a computer and the internet to complete this course. Failure to have access to either a computer or the internet is not a valid excuse for missing assignments, quizzes, exams, or other course content. Please make sure that you have a reliable internet connection when beginning exams and quizzes as you will only have one opportunity to complete those activities.

**Course Evaluations:** See the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluating student performance.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
2. Demonstrate an 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
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
6. Analyze state and local election processes
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues, policies, and the political culture of Texas

**Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):**

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCAs

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.
  - a. 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, actions, 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

**Office Hours:** Please email me if you need to discuss your grade or the course content. Since this is an online course most of our communication will likely occur through email but feel free to attend my schedule office hours in person if you prefer.

Office Hours	AD134
Monday	1:00PM to 2:00PM
Tuesday	11:00AM to 12:00PM & 1:00PM to 2:00PM
Wednesday	1:00PM to 2:00PM
Thursday	11:00AM to 12:00PM & 1:00PM to 2:00PM
Friday	10:00AM to 12:00PM
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

**Textbook:** No textbook for this class. I will however post academic articles, newspaper articles, excerpts, and other material in Blackboard. You will be required to read these readings in lieu of a textbook.

**Grading Scale:**

Grade	Percent
A	90% or greater
B	80% to 89.99%
C	70% to 79.99%
D	60% to 69.99%
F	Less than 60%

**Grade Distribution:**

Graded Item	Points	Percent
Exam 1	250	25%
Exam 2	250	25%
Discussion Post 1	50	5%
Discussion Post 2	50	5%
Quiz 1	50	5%
Quiz 2	50	5%
Quiz 3	50	5%
Quiz 4	50	5%
Quiz 5	50	5%
Quiz 6	50	5%
Quiz 7	50	5%
Syllabus Quiz	50	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Exams:** There will be 2 exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 25% of your total grade. Each exam will be composed primarily of multiple-choice questions, but there will likely be

true/false questions. You will be informed if short answer or essay questions are used in the exam.

There will be 2 exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 25% of your total grade. Each exam will be composed of primarily multiple choice questions and a few true/false questions. Each exam will also contain an essay question. You will complete the essay question in a word document or PDF and attach the document in Blackboard. Instructions will be provided in Blackboard.

- Exam 1 will cover Weeks 1, 2, 3, & 4
- Exam 2 will cover Weeks 5, 6, & 7

Do not click on the exam until you are ready to begin it. The exam will begin once you have clicked on its link and you must complete the exam at that time. You will have one attempt to complete each exam. The exam will only present one question at a time. You must answer the questions in the order in which they are presented to you. You cannot return to a question once you have answered it or skipped it. Do not click on another browser, window, or tab while you are completing the quiz. Clicking on another browser, window, or tab while completing the exam may cause Blackboard to auto-submit the exam before you have completed it.

**Quizzes:** You will complete 8 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will cover the content found within the folder where the quiz is located. Make sure that you read and/or watch all materials provided in the folder before beginning your quiz. Each quiz will be worth 5 percentage points. Each quiz will be composed of 5 to 25 questions. The questions in the quiz will be multiple-choice and, or, True/False questions.

Do not click on the quiz until you are ready to begin the quiz. The quiz will begin once you have clicked on its link and you must complete the quiz at that time. You will have one attempt to complete each quiz (except the Syllabus Quiz). The quiz will only present one question at a time. You must answer the questions in the order in which they are presented to you. You cannot return to a question once you have answered it or skipped it. Do not click on another browser, window, or tab while you are completing the quiz. Clicking on another browser, window, or tab while completing the quiz may cause Blackboard to auto-submit the quiz before you have completed it.

**Discussion Posts:** You will complete 2 discussion post assignments throughout this semester. Each discussion post assignment will cover a topic addressed within the weekly folder where the discussion post is located. To complete the discussion post assignment you will need to post a discussion addressing the question I post to you and the class. You will need to respond to that question in roughly 300 to 400 words (a word count function exists on the bottom left corner of Microsoft Word). However, you should write more than 400 words if you need to. It is always better to write more and fully answer the question than to write too little and leave important details out of your discussion.

You will also need to respond to at least 2 discussion posts by other students. You may respond twice to the same student or respond once to two different students. To make a response post hit the "Reply" button at the bottom of their discussion post. Each response post should be roughly 150 words, but once again write more if you need to.

The discussion post assignment will have two due dates. You will be required to submit your first discussion post on one day (which will be assigned in the appropriate folder) and then you will be required to post your two response posts on a different day as assigned in the appropriate weekly folder.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this course. South Plains College provides for a wide range of punishments for cheating including failing the assignment, quiz, exam, or course. I will be vigilant against cheating and you will at a minimum fail the assignment, quiz, or exam in which cheating or plagiarism has occurred.

**A.I. Generators:** A.I. Generators are prohibited in this course. Any use of A.I. technology to complete or supplement written work is cheating. I will drop you with a failing grade if you use any A.I. technology in this course.

**Late Work:** I will allow you to complete assignments, quizzes, and exams after their due date for reduced points. Point will be progressively reduced the further away from the due date that you complete the assignment, quiz, or exam. If you know that you will be unable to complete an assignment, quiz, or exam because of illness or another reasonable circumstance then you must email me and I will allow your assignment, quiz, or exam to be graded for full points, but such accommodation shall be determined at the discretion of the instructor. ***Late work will NOT be accepted if it is submitted more than two weeks after the due date. All exams, quizzes, and other assignments due in the final two weeks of the semester must be completed on time. I am required to submit final grades a day after your final exam is due and therefore I cannot provide the leniency I am providing for earlier weeks.***

The final exam (Exam 2) and final quiz (Quiz 7) must be completed on time. I am required to submit final grades at 10AM the day after the due date for Week 7. Therefore I cannot be lenient on late submissions toward the end of the semester.

**Extra Credit:** There will likely not be opportunities for extra credit. If extra credit is available it will be available to the entire class. Do not ask for extra credit opportunities.

**Viewing Graded Material:** You will be able to view your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in "My Grades"

**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. You may be dropped from the course if you miss two or more consecutive weeks of activities. Please email me if you are sick or have another valid reason for a prolonged absence.

**Illness Policy:** Please do not come to class if you are sick. Regardless of whether it's a cold, or COVID-19, or any other common illness, I would prefer you did not come to class so that you do not spread your illness to other students or myself.

**COVID-19 Statement:**

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

**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 but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

**Diversity Statement:** In this class I will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it can be.

**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 the 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. URL:

<http://www.southplainscollege.edu/health/disabilityservices.php>

**Pregnancy Accommodations Statement:** 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 Health and Wellness Center. 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 the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or [emaildburleson@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:emaildburleson@southplainscollege.edu) for assistance.

**Non-Discrimination Statement:** South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 793366. Phone Number 806-716-2360.

**Campus Concealed Carry Statement:** 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 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 and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php>

**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, day and time the class meets. I am teaching multiple courses and sections and most of your other professors are as well. Therefore, it is imperative that you always include this information so we know which class you are in so that we know where you are coming from and can quickly respond to your concerns.

If you do not receive a response to an email within 48 hours please re-send your email.

**Class Schedule:** All assessments must be completed before 11:59AM on their due date.

**Course Calendar:**

Week	Begin Date	End Date	Subject	Graded Items
1	17-Jan-23	26-Jan-23	Introduction to Texas Politics and Federalism	Quiz 1 and Syllabus Quiz
2	27-Jan-23	2-Feb-23	Texas Constitution	Quiz 2 and Discussion Post 1
3	3-Feb-23	9-Feb-23	Texas Legislature and Executive	Quiz 3
4	10-Feb-23	16-Feb-23	Texas Courts and Local Government	Quiz 4 and Exam 1
5	17-Feb-23	23-Feb-23	Parties, Interest Groups, and Public Opinion	Quiz 5 and Discussion Post 2

6	24-Feb-23	2-Mar-23	Elections	Quiz 6
7	3-Mar-23	9-Mar-23	Public Policy in Texas	Quiz 7 and Exam 2

**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 the course.

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.