

**Common Course Syllabus**  
**GOVT 2305**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

**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.

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and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course.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

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

**Fall 2022**  
**GOVT 2305 (sec 141-143, 441-443, and 511): Federal Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

**Instructor Information**

Dr. Jonathan Martin

Office: AD 121

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Office Phone: 806-716-2198

Office Hours:

- Monday: 8:20-9:20am, 10:50-11:30am, and 1-3pm
- Tuesday: 10:50-11:30am and 2:20-3:20pm
- Wednesday: 8:20-9:20am, 10:50-11:30am, and 1-3pm
- Thursday: 10:50-11:30am and 2:20-3:20pm
- Friday: 8:30-11am

**Textbook**

We are using an OER (Open Educational Resource) from OpenStax. The textbook is FREE and available online through this link:

American Government 3e by Glen Kurtz and Sylvie Waskiewicz

ISBN: 978-1-951693-38-1

<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

OpenStax allows you to read the textbook online at the URL I have provided, or you can download it to your computer as a PDF file. In addition to the textbook, I may assign other reading material in Blackboard throughout the semester.

**Policies and Procedures**

Classroom Decorum

You are expected to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner. It is important to arrive to class on time and not disturb others by talking, using your cell phone, or leaving class early.

Furthermore, I expect every student to be respectful to other students and instructor when discussing politics. Failure to adhere to classroom decorum may result in a point deduction to your participation grade.

Diversity Statement

In this class, the teacher 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 should and can be.

### SPC Standard Disability Statement

Any students who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make and necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from the SPC Disability Service Office during the instructor's office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations until appropriate verification from the SPC Disability Service Office has been provided. For more information, you may contact the Disability Services Office (located in the Health & Wellness Center) at 806-716-2529 or visit <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/health/disabilityservices.php>.

### Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and 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 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360. South Plains College is dedicated to providing a safe and equitable learning environment for all students. Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the college. The Health and Wellness Center offers confidential support (806-716-2529) and Voice of Hope has a 24-hour hotline: 806-763-7273. You are encouraged to report any incidents online at <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/about/campussafety/complaints.php>.

### Title IX Pregnancy Accommodation Statement

If you are pregnant, or have given birth been within six months, under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. Students who wish to request accommodations must contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 to initiate the process.

### Covid-19 Statement

The following statement should be included in all course syllabi for face-to-face and hybrid instruction options:

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

Please also notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at [dedens@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dedens@southplainscollege.edu) or 806-716-2376. Proof of a positive test is required. A home test is sufficient but students must submit a photo of the positive result. The date of test must be written on the test result and an ID included in the photo. If tested elsewhere (clinic, pharmacy, etc.), please submit a copy of the doctor's note or email notification. Results may be emailed to DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN at [dedens@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dedens@southplainscollege.edu).

A student is clear to return to class without further assessment from DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN if they have completed the 5-day isolation period, symptoms have improved, and they are without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Students must communicate with DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN prior to their return date if still symptomatic at the end of the 5-day isolation.

### Course Withdrawals

The last day to withdraw from this class with a grade of 'W' is **December 1**. Students are expected to do the required reading and turn in assignments by the due dates. As stated, if you get behind in your assignments, it is likely you will not finish the course and/or fail.

### Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. At the bare minimum, a student who cheats or plagiarizes will receive a zero for the assignment. In addition, I reserve the right to seek additional penalties, such as a zero for the entire course and filing an Academic Dishonesty Report.

### Student Grievance Procedure

A student grievance is a College related issue or condition that a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, or a hindrance to the educational process. A grievance also includes discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. You can find more information about the student grievance procedure here:

[http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human\\_resources/policy\\_procedure/fm.php](http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/fm.php)

## **Grading and Evaluation**

### Grading Scale

A: 89.5-100%  
B: 79.5-89.4%  
C: 69.5-79.4%  
D: 59.5-69.4%  
F: Below 59.5%

### Final Grade Calculation

Exams	60%
Essays	15%
Participation	15%
Quizzes	10%

### Exams (60%)

There are three exams (including the final exam), comprising 60% of your overall grade. The third exam will be given during the final exam period and is not cumulative. Furthermore, all three exams will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions.

If you miss class on exam day for an unexcused reason, you will take the make-up exam. The make-up exam will have different questions from the normal exam, and I will automatically deduct 15 points from your exam grade as a late penalty.

### Essays (15%)

There are two essays with a required word count of 500 words. The first essay is a letter to the editor in which you will develop a persuasive argument and call-to-action. The topic for the second essay will be announced later in the semester.

### Participation (15%)

Active participation is crucial to your success in this class and, more broadly, to the success of any learning experience. There will be numerous opportunities throughout the semester to participate by engaging in class discussions and completing participation assignments. Moreover, I expect you to show up to class on time and be ready to participate. At the end of the semester, you will receive a participation grade based on the quality of your participation (e.g., participating in discussions, completing in-class assignments, attending class, and adhering to classroom decorum).

I will track your attendance, and you will get a low participation grade if you do not regularly attend class. Furthermore, I reserve the right to deduct points from your participation grade for excessive unexcused absences, violations of classroom decorum (e.g., tardiness, cell phone use, wearing earbuds, rude other students or the instructor). If you have questions about your participation grade throughout the semester, you are welcome to ask me for feedback on how you are doing.

### Quizzes (10%)

I will assign at least 7 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will have between 5-15 questions and cover material from the readings and lecture. Under normal circumstances, you will complete a quiz in Blackboard, but I might assign a pop quiz in class. At the end of the semester, I will drop your two lowest quiz grades.

## **Course Schedule\***

### Week 1 (Aug 29-Sept 1)

Course Overview

Chapter 1: American Government and Civic Engagement

### Week 2 (Sept 5-8)

Chapter 2: The Constitution and Its Origins

### Week 3 (Sept 12-15)

Chapter 3: American Federalism

### Week 4 (Sept 19-22)

Chapter 4: Civil Liberties

Week 5 (Sept 26-29)

Chapter 4: Civil Liberties

Week 6 (Oct 3-6)

Chapter 4: Civil Liberties

\*\*\*Exam 1 is on Thursday, October 6\*\*\*

Week 7 (Oct 10-13)

Chapter 6: The Politics of Public Opinion

Week 8 (Oct 17-20)

Chapter 11: Congress

Week 9 (Oct 24-27)

Chapter 7: Voting and elections

Week 10 (Oct 31-Nov 3)

Chapter 12: The Presidency

Week 11 (Nov 7-10)

Chapter 12: The Presidency

\*\*\*Exam 2 is on Thursday, November 10\*\*\*

Week 12 (Nov 14-17)

Chapter 13: The Courts

Week 13 (Nov 21-22)

\*\*\*No Class due to Thanksgiving Break\*\*\*

Week 14 (Nov 28-Dec 1)

Chapter 9: Political Parties

Week 15 (Dec 5-8)

Chapter 10: Interest Groups and Lobbying

Chapter 5: Civil Rights

Week 16 (Dec 12-15)

\*\*\*Exam 3 is on Tuesday, December 13\*\*\*

\*I reserve the right to alter the class schedule as I deem necessary. Any adjustments will be announced in class and/or listed on Canvas.