

Fall 2025
GOVT 2305-155-451: Federal Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Holland
Course Time: Online Course N/A
Course Number: GOVT 2305
Section Number: 153 (spc-only) 451 (dual credit)
Location: Blackboard (online)
Professor's Office: AD134
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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.

Technology Requirements: This course is fully online 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.

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:

Week	Begin Date	End Date	Subject	Graded Items
1	25-Aug	29-Aug	Introduction to American Politics	Syllabus Quiz, Introduction Discussion, Quiz 1
2	1-Sep	5-Sep	Federalism in the United States	Quiz 2
3	8-Sep	12-Sep	The Origins and Development of the U.S. Constitution	Quiz 3
4	15-Sep	19-Sep	Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and Civic Duties	Quiz 4 and Discussion 1
5	22-Sep	26-Sep	Exam 1	Exam 1 and Assignment 1
6	29-Sep	3-Oct	Congress	Quiz 5
7	6-Oct	10-Oct	Presidency	Quiz 6 and Discussion 2
8	13-Oct	17-Oct	Bureaucracy	Quiz 7
9	20-Oct	24-Oct	Judiciary	Quiz 8
10	27-Oct	31-Oct	Exam 2	Exam 2 and Assignment 2
11	3-Nov	7-Nov	Public Opinion and Interest Groups	Quiz 9
12	10-Nov	14-Nov	Political Parties	Quiz 10
13	17-Nov	21-Nov	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting	Quiz 11 and Assignment 3
14	25-Nov	28-Nov	Thanksgiving Break	None
15	1-Dec	5-Dec	Public Policy	Quiz 12
16	8-Dec	9-Dec	Exam 3	Exam 3

Class Schedule: All graded items must be completed **BEFORE 12:00PM (NOON)** on their end date. Please note that you can and should complete work before the last day it is available.

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 please feel free to attend my scheduled office hours in person if you prefer. If you cannot attend my scheduled office hours we can also schedule an appointment outside my normal office hours.

Office Hours	AD134
Monday	By appointment only
Tuesday	1:00PM-2:00PM
Wednesday	10:00AM-12:00PM & 1:00PM-3:00PM
Thursday	1:00PM-3:00PM
Friday	10:00AM-11:00AM
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

Textbook: We are using a free online textbook through OpenStax. You can access this textbook for free at the URL below.

American Government 2e 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.

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
Exam 1	150
Exam 2	150
Exam 3	150
Quiz 1	20
Quiz 2	20
Quiz 3	20
Quiz 4	20
Quiz 5	20
Quiz 6	20
Quiz 7	20

Quiz 8	20
Quiz 9	20
Quiz 10	20
Quiz 11	20
Quiz 12	20
Discussion Post 1	20
Discussion Post 2	20
Assignment 1	20
Assignment 2	20
Assignment 3	20
Assignment 4	20
Assignment 5	20
Assignment 6	20
Assignment 7	20
Assignment 8	20
Assignment 9	20
Assignment 10	20
Assignment 11	20
Assignment 12	20
Syllabus Quiz	15
Introduction Discussion	15
TOTAL	1000

Exams: Each exam will be composed primarily of multiple-choice questions, but there will likely be true/false questions and fill-in-the-blank questions. I may include short answer or essay questions but you will be informed ahead of the exam if I exercise this option. Each exam will only cover the content since the last exam. The final exam will not be cumulative.

Assignments: You will complete one assignment each week. These assignments will be untimed and unproctored. They will be a simple worksheet for you to complete as a means of helping you study and demonstrate your knowledge of the content from that week. These assignments are graded but you are free to use your notes to assist the completion of the assignment.

Quizzes: 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 30 points. Each quiz will be composed of 5 to 20 questions. The questions in the quiz will be multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and, or, True/False questions.

Discussion Posts: Each discussion post assignment will cover a topic addressed within the weekly folder where this assignment is located. To complete this assignment you will need to make one post responding to the discussion question and you will need to reply to at least one other student's discussion post.

Introduction Activities: You will complete two introduction activities in Week 1 for a grade. The Syllabus Quiz will cover the syllabus and ensure you understand the syllabus and the

expectations of this course. The Introduction Discussion will be a short discussion post assignment that will allow you to practice using the discussion board feature and allow us all to get to know one another in the online setting.

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.

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.

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 Monday, or any other day is a public holiday for which SPC is closed, then I will not respond to the email until the following workday.

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

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.