

## Syllabus PS 2306



### Course Introduction

#### Description:

An introductory, survey course on various Texas government topics. This course includes the study of the origin and development of the Texas constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas. Through this course, students will prepare for contemporary challenges by developing and demonstrating the following core objectives: critical thinking skills, communication skills, social responsibility, and personal responsibility.

- **Critical Thinking Skills:** to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- **Communication Skills:** to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- **Personal Responsibility:** to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- **Social Responsibility:** to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

This course is a part of the core curriculum at Sul Ross State University. Please check your degree plan to determine the status of this course in your program of study.

#### Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this Texas Government course, you will be able to:

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

These are the materials you will need for this course:

- Champagne, A., Harpham, E., and Casellas, J. *Governing Texas*, Third Edition, W.W. Norton & Company.  
If you do not have your textbook or other required materials by the first day of class, contact your instructor immediately. Failure to do so may limit the options you have and may increase your financial burden for this course.

#### Delivery and Terms

1. This is NOT a self-paced course. Your instructor has assigned deadlines for specific assignments as shown in the course schedule.
2. This is a blended course. This means that you may be required to meet in a classroom or other location at specified times throughout the course. Most coursework will be accomplished online in Blackboard.

#### Graded Assignments and Course Schedule

- Four Lesson Exams: One exam at the end of every two lessons. You will take a 40 question multiple choice quiz (each question is worth 3.75 points, for a total of 150 points for each exam) covering information from the book and class lectures related to the lesson objectives. All exams are non-proctored and you have 90 minutes to complete each exam.
- Eight Lesson Writing Assignments, worth 50 points each. The writing assignments should be approximately 250 words in length on one of the topics given for the Lesson Writing Assignments. Formatting will be according to formatting requirements set forth in the writing assignment instructions.

#### Course Schedule

Schedule of Assignments			
Lesson	Chapter(s)	Assignments	Due Dates
1	<b>LESSON 1:</b> Introduction; Texas State and Local Government Introduction: Texas History	Lesson 1 Writing Assignment	01/20



2	<b>LESSON 2:</b> Political Culture and the People (Ch.1) The Land and the Economy (Ch.1)	Lesson 2 Writing Assignment	02/03
	<b>Exam 1 will cover material presented in Lessons 1 and 2.</b>	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>02/03</b>
3	<b>LESSON 3:</b> The Texas Constitutions (Ch.2) Texas in the Federal System (Ch. 3)	Lesson 3 Writing Assignment	02/17
4	<b>LESSON 4:</b> The State Legislature (Ch. 7) The Executive Branch (Ch. 8)	Lesson 4 Writing Assignment	03/03
	<b>Exam 2 will cover material presented in Lessons 3 and 4</b>	<b>Exam 2</b>	<b>03/03</b>
5	<b>LESSON 5:</b> The Judiciary (Ch. 9) and US Supreme Court cases originating in Texas Political Parties (Ch. 4)	Lesson 5 Writing Assignment	03/17
6	<b>LESSON 6:</b> Campaigns and Elections (Ch. 5) Interest Groups and Lobbying (Ch. 6)	Lesson 6 Writing Assignment	04/07
	<b>Exam 3 will cover material presented in Lessons 5 and 6</b>	<b>Exam 3</b>	<b>04/07</b>
7	<b>LESSON 7:</b> County and Municipal Government (Ch. 10) Public Finance (Ch. 11)	Lesson 7 Writing Assignment	04/21
8	<b>LESSON 8:</b> Public Policy (Ch.12) Crime and Correction Policy (Ch. 13)	Lesson 8 Writing Assignment	05/05
	<b>Exam 4 will cover material presented in Lessons 7 and 8</b>	<b>Exam 4</b>	<b>05/05</b>

### Meeting Center Schedule

Please see the schedule below for Meeting Center Events and times. This is your opportunity to talk to your instructor and peers live, ask questions, and share ideas and comments.

Meeting Center Schedule			
Event	Location	Date	Time (CST)
Orientation	Marble Falls High School	01/14	8:00 AM

### Course Grade

This is what you are graded on:

Course Grade Calculation	
Component	Possible Points
<b>4 Lesson Exams, 150 points each</b>	600 points
<b>8 Discussion Board Assignments, 50 points each</b>	400 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

This is how your course grade will be determined:

Course Grade Calculation					
Grade	A	B	C	D	F
<b>Points</b>	900-1000	800-899	700-799	600-699	0-599