



Government 2306.104CL
Texas Government
Course Semester (SPRING 2022)
LRC258, Monday-Wednesday 11:00-12:20 PM

Instructor Information: Nathan Goldman, ngoldman@com.edu, phone number (409) 933-8257

Office hours and location: LRC Suite A 223B, Monday and Wednesday, 9:00 AM – 11:00AM, Tuesday 1:30-3:30PM, Thursday 1:30-3:00 PM, and by arrangement

Required Textbook: *Lone Star Politics (6th Ed.)*, Ken Collier et al, Sage (CQ) Press, 2020

Course Description:

Government 2306 is an introduction to politics and government of the state of Texas. The purpose of this introduction is to acquire knowledge of the basic principles and practices of the state government.

This semester we will study the origins and development of Texas government, the political science of and the origins and development of the state constitution; the idea of separation of powers and checks and balances in state government; the institutions of the legislature, the plural executive, public administration, and the judiciary; public opinion, political parties, and elections; and issues of public policy.

This introductory course will attempt to understand basic questions and problems encountered by political science and political philosophy. These questions emerge from study of the specific practices and institutions of the state government. Instead of abstractions, the questions will emerge from study of concrete institutions.

Course requirements:

1. **Materials:** Chapter powerpoints, oral lectures, and short videos will be posted in the content section of Blackboard for this class.
2. **Tests:** There are four tests covering the required readings and lectures. The tests will be short answer (2 to 3 paragraphs) essay questions. There is a bonus of up to 10 points for a one page essay on any topic related to the material in the tested chapters. It is due on the day of the test. Test 4 is noncumulative and will be due by Midnight, Wednesday, May 11th.
3. **Paper:** Students must write a three to five page analytical essay on any topic in Texas Government, Politics or Policy. If policy, you can pick a national topic like immigration, abortion, death penalty,

etc., but you must deal with it from the perspective of Texas. The essay will be due midnight Wednesday May 2nd.

Determination of Course Grade:

- A 100 – 90
- B 89 – 80
- C 79 – 70
- D 69 – 60
- F 59 – 0

Tests count 80% of the final grade. The essay paper counts 20%. There is a ten point bonus available for each test if the student writes a one-page paper on some topic in the chapters covered by the test. The paper is due at the time of that test.

Late Work: Late work will be accepted, but the grade will be reduced five points for every day late.

Attendance Policy: I will be able to track attendance by how often the student signs in to the course on Blackboard.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Student Learner Outcome	Connects to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Explain the origin and development of Texas c onstitution	Critical Thinking	Exam
2. Demonstrate knowledge of state and local government	Critical Thinking	Exam
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.	Critical Thinking	Exam
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.	Critical Thinking	Exam
5. Evaluate role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.	Critical Thinking	Exam
6. Analyze election process.	Social Responsibility	Exam
7. Describe rights and responsibilities of citizens.	Personal Responsibility	Exam
8. Analyze Texas policies	Critical Thinking	Exam
9. Complete essay and in-class	Communication	Essay/In-Class Presentation

presentation on issues in Texas government and politics.		
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Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating will result in a zero on a test. **Plagiarism**, the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own, is a form of cheating. Admittedly, sometimes plagiarism is not cut and dry. Here is a **link to resources about ways to avoid plagiarism:** <http://en.writecheck.com/ways-to-avoid-plagiarism/>

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact the head of the department, Shinya Wakao, swakao@com.edu .

Course outline

- January 18 Introduction, Chapter 1
- January 24 Constitution, Chapter 2
- January 31 Legislature, Chapter 3
- February 7 Test 1
- February 14 Governors, Chapter 4
- February 21 Plural Executive (Bureaucracy), Chapter 5
- February 28 Judiciary, Chapter 6
- March 7 Test 2
- March 21 Texas Justice, Chapter 7
- March 28 Elections, Chapter 8
- April 4 Political Parties, Chapter 9
- April 11 Test 3
- April 18 Organized Interests, Chapter 10
- April 25 Local Government, Chapter 11
- May 2 Public Policy, Chapter 12
- May 4 Final paper due Midnight, May 4th
- May 9 Test 4 – due by Midnight, May 11th

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook. https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf. An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with an instructor’s professional judgment of the quality of the student’s work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal. https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf.

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college career. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Holly Bankston at 409-933-8520 or hbankston@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is in the Student Success Center.

Counseling Statement: Any student that is needing counseling services is requested to please contact Holly Bankston in the Student Success Center at 409-933-8520 or hbankston@com.edu. Counseling services are available in the student center for free. Appointments are strongly encouraged. However, some concerns may be addressed on a walk-in basis.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a 'W' grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Student are only permitted to withdraw six times during their college career by State law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is May 2. The last date to withdraw for the 16-week session is April 25. The last date to withdraw from the 2nd 8-week session is May 4.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date off attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention is very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

COVID-19 Statement: All students, faculty and staff are expected to familiarize themselves with materials and information contained on the College of the Mainland's Coronavirus Information site at www.com.edu/coronavirus. In compliance with Governor Abbott's May 18th Executive Order, face covering/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. We will no longer enforce any

COM protocols that requires face coverings. We continue to encourage all members of the COM community to distance when possible, use hygiene measures, and get vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. Please visit www.com.edu/coronavirus for future updates.