



**Government 2306-011IN
Texas Government
Fall 2022
INTERNET COURSE
1/18/2022-5/11/2022**

Instructor Information

Name: Mr. John Presnall

Email: jpresnall@com.edu

Phone: 409.933.8212 (Leave Message)

Student/Office Hours: MW 10:15-11:00 AM; TTH 8:00-11:00 AM

Office Location: COM Blackboard Login Page Address— <https://de.com.edu>

Required Textbook: Ken Collier, Steven Galatas, and Julie Harrelson-Stephens, Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas, 6th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2020).

ISBN-10: 1544316267

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

This semester we will study federalism and inter-governmental relations, the political culture of Texas, the origin and development of the Texas Constitution, the structure and powers of state government, political participation, the election process, and issues in public policy.

This an online course consisting of three (3) Units in which each Unit will ne open for approximately five (5) weeks. Each Unit is self-paced, but students should log into Blackboard at least four or five times a week. Students can complete the assigned work on their own time, but they must remain mindful of the course outline and due dates. Please keep abreast of posted announcements.

Course Requirements

Lesson Activities: There are 12 sets of lesson notes (3 per unit). Within each lesson notes section there are a series of activities. These are for self-assessment and study purposes only. The notes and activities do not count toward the grade, but they provide helpful study materials supplemental to the textbook readings. These activities can be found under Content

Course Discussion Boards: Discussion represents the interactive component of this course. There will be three discussion assignments with specific opening dates and closing dates for each. Please be mindful of the closing due dates. The discussions are a way of exchanging information and insight with your fellow students. Your grade will be based on your full and thoughtful participation, and not on the content of your ideas and opinions. They will be found under Discussion Boards.

Content from each Discussion topic will be on the Unit Exams.

For each topic you are required to post 1 initial response to the topic (at a minimum of 300 words). You must also make at least 2 comments to other students' initial responses (at a minimum of 150 words). Points will be deducted for insufficient initial responses, as well as for comments (e.g., "You're right!" "I agree." Are not sufficient comments.) Please write in clear prose, and refrain from using text speech, net speech, and online slang.

DO NOT WAIT until the due date to begin posting. Post throughout the window between the opening dates and closing due dates.

Follow the discussion guidelines posted in the Getting Started section of the course.

Short Papers: Throughout the course you will complete three (3) two page at a minimum papers over a selected topic. Additional information regarding paper length, format, citations, etc. will be provided in the assignment file. Content from each paper topic will be on the Unit Exams. Papers will be found under Assessments.

Course Exams: There will be 3 Unit Exams and 1 Final Exam. Each exam will cover the required textbook chapter readings and lecture notes for that unit. The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions. Unit Exams and the Final Exam will be found under Assessments.

Research Paper: Write a **Position Paper** on a current public policy controversy in the Texas (e.g., Should marijuana be legalized in Texas?; Should Texas legalize casino gambling?; Should Texas prohibit "sanctuary cities?"; Should Texas prohibit the teaching of "Critical Race Theory" in public primary and

secondary schools?; Should Texas reverse its voting laws requiring a government issued photo ID and prohibiting mail in ballots?; Should Texas introduce Covid vaccine mandates?; etc.).

Make sure that your paper is on a topic that is statewide in scope, and not an issue that pertains to the entire nation.

Write a paper taking a position (yes or no) on a current public policy controversy. What is the issue? Explain in detail. What is the policy proposal (e.g., which law? which action? which program? which institution? etc.) you are in favor of or against? Explain in detail.

Conduct research on the topic, citing at least three sources from credible and reliable publications, web sites, journals, books, etc. Formulate an argument based on evidence in defense of the position you are taking. Also, respond to the most common objections to this position. Explain how this position impacts the issues of personal responsibility and social responsibility.

The paper should be 1000 words (approximately 5 pages), double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and a 12-point font. Use a standard style for references, citations, and the list of sources (e.g., MLA, Chicago, or APA). The Research/Position Paper will be found under Assessments.

Determination of Grade

Unit Exams—	45% (15% each) toward final grade.
Discussions—	15% (5% each) toward final grade.
Papers—	30% (10% each) toward final grade.
Research Paper—	5% toward final grade.
Final Exam—	5% toward final grade

Grading Timeframe: I will grade on Mondays and Fridays after each due date, and grades will appear in Gradebook during that week. Discussion grades will not appear until after the closing due date for each discussion. Your grade will be based on the totality of your initial response posts and your two comments.

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

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra Credit Policy: Late and make-up work will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Students need to notify the instructor via email of any problems in this regard. Extra Credit assignments will be offered toward the end of the semester. Keep abreast of posted announcements.

Attendance Policy: Frequent attendance is required. In a sixteen-week online course, this means you should log into Blackboard at a minimum of four or five times a week. Please keep abreast of posted announcements.

You should expect to spend at least three hours a week in Blackboard reviewing lesson activities, notes and videos, completing unit discussions and exams, and completing other course materials.

Much of the textbook reading and studying can be done outside of Blackboard. Each Unit is self-paced. Students can complete the assigned work at their own most convenient time, but they must remain mindful of the course outline and due dates.

Communicating with your instructor: All communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. **Please use the Blackboard email tool to contact the instructor.** Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. Log onto class regularly to keep abreast of posted announcements.

Student Learner Outcome (SLO)	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.		Exam
2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.		Exam
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.		Exam
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.		Exam
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties.	Communication	Paper
6. Analyze the state and local election process.		Exam
7. Describe the rights and		Exam

responsibilities of citizens.		
8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.	Communication	Paper
9. Complete a required paper on a selected writing pertaining to issues in Texas government and politics.	Communication	Paper
10. Evaluate choices and actions of others or one's own and relate consequences to decision-making.	Communication	Paper

Academic Dishonesty: Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty, such as cheating on exams, is an extremely serious offense and will result in a grade of zero on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving proper citation. It includes paraphrasing someone else's words, copying directly from a website and pasting it into a written assignment, and using someone else's words without quotation marks. Any written assignment containing any plagiarized material will receive a grade of zero and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

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 Department Chair, Shinya Wakao at 409-933-8212 or swakao@com.edu.

Texas Government Course Outline

Tuesday, January 10—Wednesday, May 11, 2023

Introduction—Tuesday, January 18

Required Reading

Read Me First and Syllabus

Required Assignments

Complete Initial Tasks—Email and Discussion Board Introduction Post

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, January 23

Unit 1—Texas Political Foundations—Tuesday, January 18—Sunday, February 20

Required Reading (Found in Textbook and Content)

Chapter 1 and Notes—Texas Political History and Political Culture

Chapter 2 and Notes—Texas Constitution

Chapter 11 and Notes—Local Government

Required Assignments

Discussion 1 (Found in Discussion Board)

Post Initial Discussion and 2 Responses

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, February 20

Paper 1 (Found in Assessments)—Opens Tuesday, January 18

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, February 20

Unit 1 Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Tuesday, January 18

DUE: 11:59, Sunday, February 20

Research Paper (Found in Assessments)—Opens Tuesday, January 18

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Unit 2—Political Participation in Texas—Monday, February 21—Sunday, April 3

Required Reading (Found in Content)

Chapter 8 and Notes—Voting, Campaigns, and Elections in Texas

Chapter 9 and Notes—Political Parties in Texas

Chapter 10 and Notes—Organized Interests in Texas

Required Assignments

Discussion 2 (Found in Discussion Board)

Post Initial Discussion and 2 Responses

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, April 3

Paper 2 (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday, February 21

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, April 3

Unit 2 Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday,
February 21

DUE: 11:59, Sunday, April 3

SPRING BREAK—Monday, March 14—Sunday, March 20 (Blackboard will be open for Unit 3, but students are not required to login or work during the break).

**Unit 3—Political Institutions—Monday, April 4—Wednesday,
May 11**

Required Reading (Found in Content)

Chapter 3 and Notes—Texas Legislature

Chapters 4 & 5 and Notes—Texas Executive Branch

Chapters 6 & 7 and Notes—Texas Judiciary and Justice

Required Assignments

Discussion 3 (Found in Discussion Board)

Post Initial Discussion and 2 Responses

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Paper 3 (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday, April 4

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Unit 3 Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday,
April 4

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Final Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday,
April 25

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Research Paper (Found in Assessments)—Opens Tuesday,
January 18

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

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 the 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 located 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 on campus in the student center for free and students can also email counseling@com.edu to setup their appointment. 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. Students are only permitted to withdraw six times during their college career according to state law. The last day to withdraw is April 25.

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.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important for us. Students will be referred to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If a student is referred to the Early Alert Program he or she will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center. Someone from the Counseling Department will schedule a meeting with the student to see what assistance can be offered in order to meet 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 18 Executive Order, face coverings/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. Protocols and college signage are being updated. We will no longer enforce any COM protocol 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 com.edu/coronavirus for future updates.