



GOVT 2306.022I2
Texas Government
Fall 2, 2024
Online
October 14, 2024 – December 5, 2024

Instructor Information: Will Geisler, wgeisler@com.edu, 972.983.1816

Student hours and location: Three credit hours, online

Virtual Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9:00am-10:00am.

Required Textbook: Collier, Lone Star Politics, 8th Edition.

Course Description: 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.

Course requirements (including description of any special projects or assignments):

Chapter Work:

For each chapter, do the following:

1. Carefully read the chapter in your textbook and take notes.
2. Read the Learning Objectives.
3. Watch the PowerPoint presentation for the chapter.
4. Watch the chapter video.
5. Do the chapter discussion forum
6. Do any written assignments as you encounter them in the chapter
7. When you have mastered the chapter, take the chapter exam (two attempts).

Late Work/Make-Up, and Extra Credit Policy

Late work is generally not accepted. If late work is accepted, the grade may be lowered or given a 0 at the discretion of the instructor.

Determination of Course Grad/Detailed Grading Formula

Orientation (Quiz - 5 points, Introductory Discussion – 5 points):

After you have carefully read the Read Me First menu item, then do the orientation items.

Chapter Exam (420 points):

There are 14 chapter exams each worth 30 points. The format for each exam is "open book" and each exam has a time limit of 30 minutes. Utilize the PowerPoint chapter presentations, the eFlashcards, as well as the textbook to prepare for each exam.

Each student will have two attempts per exam, so study hard before you attempt to take an exam. Exam questions are pulled from a larger group of questions. By design, there is not enough time to look up each and every question, so study prior to taking the exam. The higher grade will be recorded and the grade will post immediately after submission.

You must be prepared for each exam by reading the assigned chapter. Do not procrastinate; give yourself time to complete each exam in sequence as you progress through the chapters and the units. You may, of course, move at your own pace ahead of each deadline.

On rare occasions, there may be an issue with the exam questions. Please let me know if that is the case. I always appreciate help in catching errors in the exam. Always feel free to check the answers against the book – if you have a question about an answer marked wrong, just email me with the question and your evidence (a pic) from the book.

Unforeseen glitches during an exam attempt can occur from time to time. There are several steps you can take to ensure you do not have a problem during an attempt. Go ahead and contact me if you have any problems with the exam, if it is a tech support problem, consult tech support.

Written Projects (285 points):

There are five written projects for the course.

- Texas Rights Project (25 points)
- Legislative Profiles (35 points),
- Governor Profiles (50 points),
- State and Local Government (50 points)
- Texas Interest Group Project (50 points)
- Final Paper (75 points)

See instructions for each assignment in Blackboard. There will be an attached rubric given with the grade on the written assignment. Be sure to answer all questions for each assignment. Questions that require more work are always worth more points. Do not skip questions that require paragraph summaries or extended replies, you're grade on the assignment will suffer greatly if you do.

Incomplete written assignment may not be accepted and may be given a 0, so do not turn in half-completed work or skip any of the questions. Do not cut and paste any answers for the written assignments unless otherwise indicated. That is plagiarism. Students who plagiarize will get a 0 on the assignment and may fail the course and be reported to the college.

Discussion Forums (280 points)

There are 14 discussion forums each worth 20 points. To get the full credit, write a 250-300-word response (include the word count at the end of your post). Your response should carefully address all parts of the question in a coherent, organized, and professional manner. You must also respond to someone else's post with a 100-word response (use word count again). Your responses should be your own words. Do not cut and paste - this is plagiarism. If you do quote the textbook or other sources, be sure to use parenthetical citation or footnotes for proper attribution. Use proper grammar and spelling – posts with excessive grammar and spelling errors may receive a lowered grade or a 0.

Grading Scale/Formula:

A = 900-1000 points

B = 800-899 points

C = 700-799 points

D = 600-699 points

F = 0-599 points

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra Credit Policy:

Late work may or may not be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. If the work is accepted, the grade may be lowered. Make-Up work may or may not be allowed at the discretion of the instructor. Extra credit may or may not be offered at the discretion of the instructor.

Attendance Policy:

You should login to the course a minimum of three times per week. You are welcome to work ahead, but do not turn in work late, it may not be accepted

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	CONNECTSTO CORE OBJECTIVES	ASSESSED VIA
1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.	Critical Thinking (CT)	Exam/Written Assignment
2. Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.	Critical Thinking (CT)	Exam/Written Assignment
Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.	Critical Thinking (CT)	Exam/Written Assignment
Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.	Critical Thinking (CT)	Exam/Written Assignment
Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas	Critical Thinking (CT) Personal Responsibility (PR) Communication Skills (CS1)	Exam/ Written Assignment
Analyze the state and local election process.	Critical Thinking (CT) Social Responsibility (SR)	Exam/Written Assignment
Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.	Social Responsibility (SR) Personal Responsibility (PR)	Exam/Written Assignment

Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.	Critical Thinking (CT)	Exam/Written Assignment
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Academic Dishonesty:

Any student who has been found to have been academically dishonest due to plagiarism, cheating, or collusion on an assignment **may receive a grade of zero for the assignment, and may be given an F for the course and reported to the college for disciplinary action.**

Plagiarism:

The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. Any student who has been found to have been academically dishonest due to plagiarism **may receive a grade of zero for the assignment, and may be given an F for the course and reported to the college for disciplinary action.**

Link(s) to resource(s) 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 at wgeisler@com.edu or by phone at 972.983.1816. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Dr. Shinya Wakao at swakao@com.edu or at 409-933-8107.

Course Schedule

Next to each unit is the time allotted for that unit's work to be completed. All Deadlines are by 11:59pm on the date indicated. For each chapter: read the chapter, read the chapter learning objectives, watch the PowerPoint, watch the chapter video, study the chapter, do the chapter discussion forum, and take the exam. Do any written assignments as you encounter them in the chapters.

Orientation Activities

Introductory Discussion Board (due 10-14)

Orientation Quiz (due 10-14)

Unit 1 - Foundations

Chapter 1 - Intro to Texas Government

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 10-15)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 10-16)

Chapter 2 - Texas Constitution

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 10-18)

Written Assignment: Texas Rights Project (due by 10-18)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 10-19)

Chapter 11 - Local Government in Texas

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 10-20)

Written Assignment: State and Local Government Project (due 10-21)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 10-22)

Unit 2 - The Texas Legislature

Chapter 3 - Texas Legislature

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 10-25)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 10-26)

Chapter 4 - Legislative Organization

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 10-27)

Written Assignment: Legislative Profiles (due 10-28)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 10-29)

Unit 3 - The Texas Executive

Chapter 5 – The Plural Executive in Texas

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-2)

Written Assignment: Governor Profile (due 11-2)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-2)

Chapter 6 - Texas Judicial System

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-3)

Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-4)

Chapter 7 - Texas-Sized Justice

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary

Watch the Chapter PowerPoint

Watch Chapter Video

Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-7)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-8)

Unit 4 - Political Behavior

Chapter 8- Campaigns and Elections
Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary
Watch the Chapter PowerPoint
Watch Chapter Video
Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-11)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-12)

Chapter 9 - Political Parties

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary
Watch the Chapter PowerPoint
Watch Chapter Video
Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-15)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-16)

Chapter 10 - Organized Interests

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary
Watch the Chapter PowerPoint
Watch Chapter Video
Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-18)
Written Assignment: Texas Interest Group Project (due 11-19)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-20)

Unit 5 - Policy

Chapter 12 - Fiscal Policy
Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary
Watch the Chapter PowerPoint
Watch Chapter Video
Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-22)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-23)

Chapter. 13 - Energy, Environment, and Transportation

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary
Watch the Chapter PowerPoint
Watch Chapter Video
Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 11-30)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 11-31)

Chapter 14 – Social Policy, Education, Health

Read the Chapter, Learning Objectives, Chapter Summary
Watch the Chapter PowerPoint
Watch Chapter Video
Do the Chapter Discussion Forum (due by 12-1)
Take the Chapter Exam (due by 12-2)

Final Paper (due by 12-3)

Concluding Discussion Forum (due 12-3)

Note: The professor reserves the right to make changes or modifications, if necessary, to this syllabus.

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://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2024-2025_v2.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.*

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact:

Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator

Phone: 409-933-8919

Email: AccessibilityServices@com.edu

Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

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 permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is October 2. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 15. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is November 26.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.