

## GOVT 2306: Texas Government Course Syllabus

Professor Daniel M. Regalado, Ph.D.

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**Office Hours:** By appointment only

**Course:** GOVT 2306

**Times:** Web **Location:** Web **Credit Hours:** 3

**Objective:** Introduction to the history and practice of government at the state and local levels within the state of Texas. Topics include a study of general political theory, the Texas Constitution, structure of Texas government, citizen participation, elections and the general functions of county and municipal governments. I will lecture on the major points of the textbook chapters; the remaining material in the chapters/Blackboard page are your responsibility to review and are testable. SCANS 1, 2, 6 and 11.

**Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of 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. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.

**Text:** *Texas Politics Today* (2011-2012 edition) by Maxwell, Crain, and Santos. ISBN # 978-0-495-90948-4

### Grading Policy:

Quantity	Description	Points per item	Total Points
4	Exam	100	400
1	Current Event Article Review (CER)	CER = 80 2 Replies for CER = 20 (10 points each)	100
1	Discussion Posts	10 Original Posts (10 points each)=100 points 20 Replies (5 points each)= 100 points	200
Total			700

**Grading Scale:** A = 630pts and above B = 560-629 pts C = 490-559 pts D = 420-489 pts F = Below 420 pts

**Attendance & Participation:** This is an internet course therefore there will not be any classroom meetings. Participation in the discussion posts, and completion of all assignments is essential to achieving satisfactory progress; therefore it is the student's responsibility to keep up with regularly checking the course webpage/OC e-mail, and the assigned readings so that proper understanding of the material can occur. Please let me know if you require special accommodations.

**Course Assistance:** If you need technical assistance with the course you can contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-MORE (6673), visit this link: <http://www.odessa.edu/OCGlobal/blackboard/> or go to the "Tools" tab and click "Blackboard Help." If you have a question about the material you may contact me via e-mail, phone, or visit me in my office (E-mail is the best way to contact me and if I have not responded to you within 24 hours it means I did not receive your message so please resend it); You can also check the course chat room (Go to the "Tools" tab, then click "Collaboration," then "Chat Room") to see if I am, or another student is, in it and ask a question that way as well.

**Chapter Info:** The Chapter Info tab on the web course will provide the student summaries, questions to consider to help understand the material, and a link for additional resources for each chapter. This material is supplemental and it is highly advised that a student review the information and complete the readings to gain a better understanding of the material which in essence will make posting to the discussion board and exams easier.

**Tests & Final Exam:** There will be a total of four tests, with the fourth exam being your final exam. The tests will consist of 50 multiple choice questions valued at two points each. All exams will cover multiple chapters, and the Final is a Departmental (Comprehensive) version. It is imperative that students complete reading assignments in order to be better prepared for the exams. I do not drop any test grades. No study guides will be provided and the exams will be taken via Blackboard from any location with internet access. The exam will only be available for a specified time period and you will have 3 hours to take the examination- You may stop, save and exit, and continue the exam as needed; remember that you get a total of 3 hours but it does not have to be completed in one sitting. The exam can only be taken one time and once the time has expired the exam will no longer be available. This is an open-book test and all test questions will come out of the textbook.

**Extra Credit:** In this age of technology it is imperative that college students master the art of internet research, therefore for every exam up to ten extra credit points can be earned if the student submits to me their opinion on a website they found pertinent to the material in the chapters covered for the exam. DO NOT use websites such as Wikipedia, Dictionary.com, etc.- Actually research a site related to the material. The assignment should include the URL, the date accessed, author and/or organization that maintain the site, and 2-3 sentences on your opinion of the webpage. The extra credit is optional and due dates are posted; only one extra credit assignment can be turned in per exam. The assignment must be 50-100 words in length and submitted via the appropriate Discussion Board thread.

**Discussion Posts:** The student will be responsible for posting ten original posts and twenty replies on the discussion board for this course (Posts and replies need to be properly cited). Original posts must be at least 250 words in length and should respond to the questions posed for each section. Additionally, all students are required to respond to two of their classmate's original posts- Each reply should be at least 100 words in length and cannot simply be "I agree" or "Great comment" statements- Using your reply twice will not count. When posting/replying, it is ok to disagree with someone's comments (that is what higher education is all about), although please be considerate and polite to your fellow classmates- Rude and derogatory comments will not be tolerated and will result in 0 points for that assignment.

**Current Event News Article Review:** The student will be responsible for submitting a review on their chosen current event news article pertinent to Texas Government (Current meaning no more than a month old)- Students should e-mail the instructor to have their current event news article approved (When you submit your article for approval I need the title and link). Current Event news articles are at a "First Come First Serve" basis meaning that no two students can complete their review on the same news article- The review will be at least 600 words. The review will be a brief summary but mainly your opinion of a current event news article chosen by the student, and should include possible solutions and consequences that can occur- It will be graded on topic, content, and grammar. You will post your Current Event News Article review (Properly cited) at the designated discussion post thread. Additionally, all students are required to respond to two of their classmate's posts= Each reply should be at least 100 words (Please see comments about replying in the "Discussion Posts" section). Late reviews will be penalized 5% of the final grade for every day that it is late. Below are some items of consideration to help your grade:

- 1) Was your review mostly a summary? If it was it should have been mostly your opinion.
- 2) Was your review at least 600 words in length?
- 3) Did you respond to at least two of your classmate's post? If so, was each at least 100 words?
- 4) Did you submit your assignment on time (Remember, 5% for every day it was late)?
- 5) Did you cite your assignment (Link/Title of Article)?
- 6) Did you proofread (How many typos, etc. did your assignment contain)?
- 7) Did you tie it into policy/government via including possible solutions and consequences?

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be handled in accordance to the OC Student Code of Conduct/Board Policy Manual. The Professor has the right to, at his discretion, add or alter any assignments, exams, and or methods."Scholastic Dishonesty" shall include, but not be limited to:

- Plagiarism- defined as the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own written work
- Collusion- defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in completing assignments for fulfillment of course requirements
- Copying from another student's test, discussion post/reply, or any other assignment
- Copying your own reply and using it twice
- Using test materials not authorized by the person administering the test
- Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test without permission from the instructor
- Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing or soliciting, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test
- The unauthorized transporting or removal, in whole or in part, of the contents of the unadministered test
- Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for one's self, to take a test
- Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test

### **Special Needs**

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may also call the Office of Disability services at 432-335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

### **Learning Resource Center (The Library)**

The Library, known as the Learning Resources Center, provides research assistance via the LRC's catalog (print books, videos, e-books) and databases (journal and magazine articles). Research guides covering specific subject areas, tutorials, and the "Ask a Librarian " service provide additional help.

### **Student Email**

Please access your Odessa College Student E-mail, by following the link to either set up or update your account: <http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/>. All assignments or correspondence will be submitted using your Odessa College email.

### **Technical Support**

For Blackboard username and password help and for help accessing your online course availability and student email account contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-6878 or online at [https://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/helpdesk\\_form.htm](https://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/helpdesk_form.htm).

### **Important School Policies**

For information regarding student support services, academic dishonesty, disciplinary actions, special accommodations, or students' and instructors' right to academic freedom can be found in the Odessa College Student Handbook.