

Government 2306 – Texas Government Course Syllabus – 2nd 8 Weeks Fall 2013

Instructor: Robert W. Haywood, M.A.

Email: Rhaywood@odessa.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVE

Since 1947, the Texas state legislature has required that public college and university students complete six semester-hours in American national, state, and local government. The survey course in Texas government is designed not only to meet that requirement but also to provide you with the basic knowledge and understanding of government activity at the state and local level. This course should also give you a better understanding of certain germane disciplines such as history, sociology, philosophy, literature, and economics while preparing you for careers in teaching, public service and the law. You also benefit from taking a course such as this by not only learning how government affects your life but how you can affect public policy. This particular course also satisfies the government requirement for teacher certification as required by the Texas Education Agency.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the history and practice of government at the state and local levels with a special emphasis to 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. This course satisfies the government requirement for teacher certification by the Texas Education Agency.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to comprehend and demonstrate their comprehension of the following:

1. The Texas Constitution
2. Texas within the federal system
3. Separation of powers, checks and balances
4. The branches
5. Public opinion, interest groups, and political parties
6. State and local elections
7. Citizenship
8. Policy and political culture

TEXTBOOK

Maxwell, et al., *TX.GOV*, 1st Edition

METHODS OF EVALUATION

This course will be taught using assigned readings, multi-media presentations, class discussion boards. Student progress will be demonstrated and measured through targeted writing assignments and examinations.

The student's final grade will be determined by the following:

12 Chapter Quizzes: 50%
2 Unit Exams: 25%
2 Research Papers: 25%

The following grading scale applies:

90+ = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, >59 = F

EXAMINATIONS

There will be two unit examinations which will cover the material in the designated chapters of your text, lectures/presentations, discussions and assignments. These exams will consist of a total of twelve essay questions.

For the exams, you will be able to work on them throughout the week and do not have to complete the test in a single attempt.

CHAPTER QUIZZES

Each week there will be a twelve-question quiz administered over each of the chapters we cover and they will consist of ten multiple choice questions and two essays.

RESEARCH PAPERS

Students will be required to complete two 4+ page paper as part of this course. These papers will each cover a topic focused on a branch of Texas government and they are to be your original work which will contain both researched information and your personal analysis and application of that information. These papers are to be fact based and driven, and not to include your opinion, speculation or slang. These papers will be graded mostly for content but will need to be composed at a level appropriate for college students. The papers should be in APA style, which means, among other things, the paper will have a cover page and works cited page.

Click here for a great resource:

[APA Style Manual](#)

The topic options for the papers are as follows:

1. Choose a Texas State Representative or Senator and write a brief biography of your chosen member. These are to be members of the Texas legislature, not the United States Congress. Be sure to include their political party, election information, vital issues, and any controversial or newsworthy actions. Additionally, you will detail a bill on which they voted against the majority of their party and explain why they chose to do so.
2. Choose and profile a Texas government agency. Provide details on this agency including year established, function, leadership and at least two newsworthy incidents involving this agency from the past five years.

All written assignments are to be typed, double-spaced using a 12-point font (Arial or Times New Roman) and 1-inch margins. These papers should be submitted directly through blackboard.

LATE WORK POLICY

This is an Internet delivered course. All required work (assignments, tests, quizzes, discussion boards) must be completed during the week they are active (available) on the blackboard. You can't go back and catch up because each session is only open for one week, and can't be reopened for an individual student. Therefore, if you do not complete a required (graded) item during the times that a session is active, you will receive a zero for that graded item. For extremely extenuating circumstances, the instructor may consider exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.

WITHDRAWAL PROCESS STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

If you stop attending class, and do NOT fill out the appropriate form to drop or withdraw from the class, you will receive an "F" as your final grade. It is your responsibility to be aware of the dates and procedures for this process. Properly dropping or withdrawing from a course ensures that your GPA and financial aid will not be adversely affected. **The last day to withdraw for Fall 2013 2nd 8-week classes with a "W" is Tuesday November 26, 2013.**

SPECIAL NEEDS

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. Issues with special needs will be referred to the Office of Disability Services.

AM I REQUIRED TO COME TO CAMPUS FOR THIS COURSE?

No, you do not have to come to campus for this course. There are no activities, labs, or assessments that require you come to campus.

OPTIONAL CAMPUS SUPPORT

You are welcome to use the services and equipment available at Odessa College. Services include academic advising, equipment, libraries, and tutoring.

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Suspected cheating or plagiarism may result in a (re)examination in a controlled environment, a failing grade, or dismissal from the course. As per OC Board Policy the option is with the instructor: In cases of academic dishonesty, the instructor has the authority to impose appropriate scholastic penalties.

No student shall engage in behavior that, in the judgment of the instructor of the class, may be construed as cheating. This may include, but is not limited to, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty such as the acquisition without permission of tests or other academic materials and/or distribution of these materials and other academic work. This includes students who aid and abet as well as those who attempt such behavior.

Plagiarism: *The unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.*

All work must be in your own words, written, edited and produced for this course, this semester. If there is Evidence of plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty, on any work for the course will receive an automatic score of zero for the exercise in question. The instructor may also take additional steps consistent with Odessa College regulations. This syllabus and schedule are subject to change as the instructor deems necessary.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITES

All Times Central Standard Time (CST)

Sessions	Readings	Assignments / Assessments	Due Dates
Session 1 October 21-27, 2013 Texas Culture and Diversity	Syllabus Chapter 1	Quiz #1	Sunday October 27 by 11:59 pm
Session 2 October 21-27, 2013 Texas in the Federal System	Chapter 2	Quiz #2	Sunday October 27 by 11:59 pm
Session 3 October 28-November 3, 2013 The Texas Constitution	Chapter 3	Quiz #3	Sunday November 3 by 11:59 pm
Session 4 October 28-November 3, 2013 Voting and Elections	Chapter 4	Quiz #4	Sunday November 3 by 11:59 pm
Session 5 November 4-10, 2013 Political Parties	Chapter 5	Quiz #5	Sunday November 10 by 11:59 pm
Session 6 November 4-10, 2013 Interest Groups	Chapter 6	Quiz #6	Sunday November 10 by 11:59 pm
Session 7 November 11-17, 2013 Midterm Exam	None	Unit #1 Exam: Chapters 1-6	Sunday November 17 by 11:59 pm
Session 8 November 11-17, 2013 Research Paper #1	None	Research Paper #1	Sunday November 17 by 11:59 pm
Session 9 November 18-24, 2013 The Legislature	Chapter 7	Quiz #7	Sunday November 24 by 11:59 pm
Session 10 November 18-24, 2013 The Executive Branch	Chapter 8	Quiz #8	Sunday November 24 by 11:59 pm
Session 11 November 25-December 1, 2013 Texas Judiciary	Chapter 9	Quiz #9	Sunday December 1 by 11:59 pm
Session 12 November 25-December 1, 2013 Law and Due Process	Chapter 10	Quiz #10	Sunday December 1 by 11:59 pm

Session 13 December 1-8, 2013 Public Policy in Texas	Chapter 13	Quiz #13	Sunday December 8, 2013 by 11:59 pm
Session 14 December 1-8, 2013 Local Government	Chapter 14	Quiz #14	Sunday December 8, 2013 by 11:59 pm
Session 15 December 9-12, 2013	None	Final Exam	Thursday December 12 by 11:59 pm
Session 16 December 9-12, 2013 Research Paper #2	None	Research Paper #2	Thursday December 12 by 11:59 pm