

GOVT 2306: Texas Government Course Syllabus

Professor Daniel M. Regalado, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: M: 10:50-11:50am; TTh: 10-11am & 12:20-2:20pm; W: 5:30-6:30pm

Times: W 6:30-7:50am/Hybrid **Location:** DH 216 **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 |
|----------|--|---|--------------|
| 3 | Exam | 100 | 300 |
| 3 | Current Event News Article Review (CE) | 2 CE (55 points each)= 110 points 4 Replies (10 points each)= 40 points | 150 |
| 1 | Discussion Posts (DP) | 10 Original Posts (10 points each)=100 points 20 Replies (5 points each)= 100 points | 200 |
| Total | | | 650 |

Grading Scale: A = 585pts and above B = 520-584pts C = 455-519 pts D = 390-454 pts F = Below 390

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.

Tests & Final Exam: There will be a total of three tests, with the third exam being your Final. The tests will consist of multiple choice, identification and essay questions. All exams will cover multiple chapters, and the Final is a departmental version. It is imperative that students complete the reading assignments in order to be better prepared for the exams. I do not drop any test grades. Make-up exams will only be allowed with permission from the instructor and are a different version comprised of the textbook's test bank- Exceptions could be made at the Professor's discretion. No study guides will be provided although students will be allowed to use one index card on the test. If the material on the index card is typed, only one side of a 3x5 card can be used; if it is hand-written you may use both sides of a 4x6 card (Index card must be turned in with the exam and with your name on it).

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 a summary describing a website they found pertinent to the test material- 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 assignment due dates are by 10pm of the next class meeting after the exam date, and only one extra credit assignment can be turned in per test. The assignment must be submitted via e-mail at dmregalado@odessa.edu.

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Discussion Posts/Replies (DP/DPR): The student will be responsible for posting ten original posts on the discussion board for this course (If a resource other than the textbook is utilized, then the post and/or reply needs 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. 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 (CE/CER): 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)- 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 and 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. 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). You will post your Current Event News Article review (Properly cited) at the designated discussion post thread. Late reviews will be penalized 5% of the final grade for every day that it is late. Below are some items to consider 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: Plagiarism and cheating 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.

Classroom Etiquette: Please turn off all cell phones- DO NOT TEXT (Or hold non-course discussions) during class. If it is a necessity that you keep your cell phone on please put it on vibrate or discuss the matter with me before class. You may eat or drink in class...just keep in mind to be courteous to your fellow students.

Tentative Schedule: Your reading assignments on the specified chapters should be read prior to class. Copies of Powerpoint lectures will not be provided.

January 18 – Introductions & Discuss Syllabus

22 – DP #1 due by 10pm

25 – Chapter 1 "Texas History and Culture," DPR #1 Due by 5pm

29 – DP #2 due by 10pm

February 1 – Chapter 2 "The Texas Constitution in Perspective," DPR #2 due by 5pm

5 – DP #3 due by 10pm

8 – Chapter 3 "Voting and Elections," DPR #3 due by 5pm

15 –**Test 1, Chapters 1-3**

19 – DP #4 & **Extra Credit for Test 1 due by 10pm**

22 – "Chapter 4 "Political Parties," DPR #4 due by 5pm

26 – DP #5 due by 10pm

29 – Chapter 5 "Interests Groups," DPR #5 due by 5pm

March 4 – CE #1 due by 10pm

7 – Chapter 6 "The Legislature: Organization and Structure," CER #1 due by 5pm

14 - Spring Break

18 – DP #6 due by 10pm

21– Chapter 7 "The Legislative Process," DPR #6 due by 5pm

25 – DP #7 due by 10pm

28 – Chapter 8 "The Governor" & Chapter 9 "The Bureaucracy," DPR #7 due by 5pm

April 4 – **Test 2, Chapters 4-9**

8 – CE #2 & **Extra Credit for Test 2 due by 10pm**

11 – Chapter 10 "Texas Judiciary" & Chapter 11 "Law and Due Process," CER #2 due by 5pm

13 – **Last day to drop with a grade of W**

15 – DP #8 due by 10pm

18 – Chapter 10 "Texas Judiciary" & Chapter 11 "Law and Due Process," DPR #8 due by 5pm

22 – DP #9 due by 10pm

25 – Chapter 12 "Taxing and Budgeting" & Chapter 13 "Spending and Services, DPR #9 due by 5pm

29 – DP #10 due by 10pm

May 2 – Chapter 14 "Local Government," DPR #10 due by 5pm

7 – **Final Exam 6:30-9:30pm, Departmental**

8 – **Extra Credit for Final Exam due by 10pm**

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.

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.