

**Fall 2024**  
**GOVT 2305-004: Federal Government**  
**Department of Social Sciences**  
**South Plains College**

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Holland  
Course Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00AM  
Course Number: GOVT 2305 (Federal Government)  
Section: 004  
Location: AD 140  
Professor's Office: AD 134  
Email: tholland@southplainscollege.edu  
Office Phone: (806) 716-2972

**Course Description:** This course is a survey of fundamental principles of political science, including the American system of government and the origins and development of the constitutions of the United States. This course satisfies the Legislative requirement for teacher certification.

Credit: 3 lecture hours

Prerequisites: TSI compliance in reading

**Course Purpose:** Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint learners with the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas. Approval Number 45.1002.51.25

**Course Requirements:** To maximize a student's potential to complete this course, he/she should attend all class meetings, complete all homework assignments and examinations in a timely manner, and complete all other projects or papers as assigned in the instructor's specific instructions.

**Course Calendar**

| Week          | Day      | Date   | Lecture Topic                                    |
|---------------|----------|--------|--|
| <b>Week 1</b> | Tuesday  | 27-Aug | Syllabus and Introduction Activities             |
|               | Thursday | 29-Aug | Introduction to Federal Government               |
| <b>Week 2</b> | Tuesday  | 3-Sep  | Federalism in the United States                  |
|               | Thursday | 5-Sep  | Federalism in the United States                  |
| <b>Week 3</b> | Tuesday  | 10-Sep | Origins and Development of the U.S. Constitution |
|               | Thursday | 12-Sep | Origins and Development of the U.S. Constitution |
| <b>Week 4</b> | Tuesday  | 17-Sep | Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and Civic Duties  |
|               | Thursday | 19-Sep | Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and Civic Duties  |

|                |          |                   |   |
|----------------|----------|-------------------|---|
| <b>Week 5</b>  | Tuesday  | 24-Sep            | Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and Civic Duties |
|                | Thursday | 26-Sep            | Exam 1  |
| <b>Week 6</b>  | Tuesday  | 1-Oct             | Congress  |
|                | Thursday | 3-Oct             | Congress  |
| <b>Week 7</b>  | Tuesday  | 8-Oct             | Congress  |
|                | Thursday | 10-Oct            | American Presidency                             |
| <b>Week 8</b>  | Tuesday  | 15-Oct            | American Presidency                             |
|                | Thursday | 17-Oct            | Bureaucracy                                     |
| <b>Week 9</b>  | Tuesday  | 22-Oct            | Judiciary                                       |
|                | Thursday | 24-Oct            | Judiciary                                       |
| <b>Week 10</b> | Tuesday  | 29-Oct            | Exam 2  |
|                | Thursday | 31-Oct            | Campaigns, Elections, and Voting                |
| <b>Week 11</b> | Tuesday  | 5-Nov             | Campaigns, Elections, and Voting                |
|                | Thursday | 7-Nov             | Campaigns, Elections, and Voting                |
| <b>Week 12</b> | Tuesday  | 12-Nov            | Political Parties                               |
|                | Thursday | 14-Nov            | Political Parties                               |
| <b>Week 13</b> | Tuesday  | 19-Nov            | Interest Groups and Public Opinion              |
|                | Thursday | 21-Nov            | Domestic Policy                                 |
| <b>Week 14</b> | Tuesday  | 26-Nov            | Domestic Policy                                 |
|                | Thursday | 28-Nov            | Thanksgiving Break - No Class                   |
| <b>Week 15</b> | Tuesday  | 3-Dec             | Foreign Policy                                  |
|                | Thursday | 5-Dec             | Foreign Policy                                  |
| <b>Week 16</b> | Tuesday  | 10-Dec<br>10:15AM | Final Exam                                      |

\*This is a tentative calendar for topics and we will adjust the schedule as needed to discuss topics longer or for less time as may be necessary. Please note the final exam takes place at a different time than or normal class time.

**Office Hours:** Please attend my regularly scheduled office hours listed below if you have any questions or concerns. My office is located in the Administration Building, room 134. If you cannot attend my office hours you may email me to set up an alternative time or we can discuss your question or concern via email.

| Office Hours     | AD134                           |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Monday</b>    | 1:00PM-3:00PM                   |
| <b>Tuesday</b>   | 1:00PM-3:00PM                   |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | By appointment only             |
| <b>Thursday</b>  | 1:00PM-3:00PM                   |
| <b>Friday</b>    | 10:00AM-12:00PM                 |
| <b>Email</b>     | tholland@southplainscollege.edu |

**Textbook:** We are using a free online textbook through OpenStax. You can access this textbook for free at the URL below.

American Government 2e by Glen Kurtz and Sylvie Waskiewicz  
ISBN: 978-1-951693-38-1

<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

Openstax allows you to read the textbook online at the URL I have provided, or you can download it to your computer as a PDF file.

#### Grading Scale:

| Grade | Percent        |
|-------|----------------|
| A     | 90% or greater |
| B     | 80% to 89.999% |
| C     | 70% to 79.999% |
| D     | 60% to 69.999% |
| F     | Less than 60%  |

#### Grade Distribution:

| Graded Item                  | Percent of Grade |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Exams                        | 60% (20% each)   |
| Quizzes                      | 30% (3% each)    |
| Attendance and Participation | 10%              |
| Total                        | 100%             |

**Exams:** There will be three exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 20% of your total grade and will be completed in class. Each exam will be composed primarily of multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank questions, but there will likely be true/false questions. Exams may include essay questions but I will inform you ahead of time if this option will be used.

**Quizzes:** There will be ten quizzes assigned throughout this course. Each quiz will be worth 3% of your total grade. You will complete each quiz in Blackboard and I will announce in class when each quiz will be due. Quizzes will be composed of primarily multiple-choice questions, but may also include true/false questions, matching questions, and fill-in-the-blank questions.

**Late Work:** I will allow students to complete assignments and quizzes after their due date for half credit. Assignments and quizzes completed after their due date will only be eligible for half credit if they are completed within 7 days of their due date. A student may receive full credit for their assignments and quizzes if they have a reasonable excuse for not completing their coursework on time. A reasonable excuse will be determined at the discretion of the instructor. Late work will not be accepted once Week 15 has begun.

**Attendance Policy:** You are required to regularly attend class and I will take roll at the beginning of each class. Attendance will account for 10 percent of your total grade. Your attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended by the number of class days held throughout the semester. If you are sick or attending an SPC-

sponsored event please email me so that I can mark you as excused. This is important so that I know you are not simply skipping class and your grade is not penalized.

**Illness Policy:** Please do not come to class if you are sick. Regardless of whether it's a cold, COVID-19, or any other common illness, I would prefer you did not come to class so that you do not spread your illness to other students or myself.

**COVID-19 Statement:**

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

If you are positive for COVID-19 please notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at [dedens@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:dedens@southplainscollege.edu) or 806-716-2376. You should isolate for 5 days after which you may return to class if your symptoms are improving and you do not have a fever without the assistance of fever-reducing medications.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this course. South Plains College provides for a wide range of punishments for cheating including failing the assignment, quiz, exam, or course. I will be vigilant against cheating and you will at a minimum fail the assignment, quiz, or exam in which cheating or plagiarism has occurred.

**A.I. Policy:** The use of A.I. technology to create or supplement written work for this class is prohibited. Using A.I. to create or supplement your written work constitutes both cheating and plagiarism in this course. If I suspect a student has used A.I. to create or supplement their written work or an A.I. detection service identifies part or all of the written work to have been generated using A.I., then I will assign the student a zero for the assignment. If a student's written work was incorrectly identified as created or supplemented by A.I. then the student must contact and meet with the instructor within 7 days of their grade posted in Blackboard. The instructor will replace the student's grade if they can demonstrate mastery of the content covered by the assignment. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor if their assignment was incorrectly flagged as using A.I. to create or supplement their written work.

**Extra Credit:** I do not intend to provide any extra credit opportunities in this course. If I provide extra credit it will be announced to the entire class so do not ask me for extra credit.

**Final Grades:** Do not ask me to round up your grade. I will always round to the nearest whole number. My policy for rounding is that any grade that is XX.5 or higher will be rounded up to

the next whole number. Therefore, if you have an 85.5 your grade will be rounded up to an 86. However, if your grade was 85.4, then your grade would remain an 85.

**Gradebook:** You will be able to view all graded exams and assignments in the Gradebook.

**Syllabus Statements:** For Information regarding Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Non-Discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation) Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please use the following link:

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

**Classroom Discussions:** Although this class is primarily lecture-based, you will be encouraged to contribute to classroom discussions on the topic of the day or other relevant political topics which may arise. Given the nature of this course students may express political views contrary to your own and while no one is required to agree with another's political views you are required to be respectful. I encourage you to honestly express your views in this class whenever it is appropriate and relevant but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

**SPC Policy Regarding "Standard English":** All written assignments should be presented using the conventions of Standard Written English. South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English that is typically used in academic, professional, and business contexts. While slang, regional idioms, and formal kinds of self-expression are appropriate in some contexts, they are out of place in academic writing. Writing instructors and professors in courses across the campus expect all students to demonstrate proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take-home essays.

**Electronic Devices:** use of electronic devices for academic purposes is welcome in this class. You may use your laptop or tablet to take notes during class. Abuse of electronic devices for non-academic purposes will result in the banning of electronic devices. Do not use your phone during class. No video or audio recording devices may be used without the consent of the instructor or unless part of an accommodation.

**Classroom Expectations:** The following activities are prohibited in class. Please note that list is not meant to be exhaustive of all prohibited behaviors.

1. Texting, emailing or other correspondence
2. Social media activity or other web browsing
3. Answering or initiating phone calls
4. Watching movies or other videos
5. Smoking, vaping, or chewing tobacco or other illicit substances

**Emails:** Every email must include your name, course and section number so that I can promptly address your question or concern. I will respond to your email within 24 hours. However, I will not respond to emails sent on Saturday or Sunday until the following Monday. Emails sent after normal business hours will not receive a response until the following workday. If Monday, or

any other day is a public holiday for which SPC is closed, then I will not respond to the email until the following workday.

**Course Evaluations:** See the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluating student performance.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties
6. Analyze the election process
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

**Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):**

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCAs

1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information by:
  - a. Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information
  - b. Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question
  - c. Analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.
2. Communication – to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, or visual communication.
  - a. Developing, interpreting, and expressing ideas through written, oral, or visual communication
3. Social Responsibility Skills – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities by:
  - a. Demonstrating intercultural competence
  - b. Identifying civic responsibility
  - c. Engaging in regional, national, and global communities
4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:
  - a. Reading, understanding, and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines, and requirement set forth in the “statement of personal responsibility of students” (attached)
  - b. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
  - c. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

**Course Amendment Statement:** The professor reserves the right to change the terms of the syllabus as circumstances require. Any changes to the syllabus will be posted in Blackboard and announced in class (if the course is face-to-face).

**Syllabus Agreement:** By continuing to complete the course you agree to the terms of this Syllabus. If you do not agree to the terms of the Syllabus you must drop the course.