GOVT 2306- TEXAS GOVERNMENT

GOVT 2306- Texas Government (3-3-0)

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. Prerequisite: Must be TSI complete in Reading and English or concurrently enrolled in EIRW 0200/ENGL 1301 F, Sp, Su. (4510025125)

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Phone: 903-983-8230
Office Hours: Please see the syllabus for this specific semester (available on Blackboard)
Email: jstanglin@kilgore.edu

Course Rationale: One of the measures of good citizenship is a basic knowledge of and involvement in our political system. This basic introduction to the Texas political system will provide the student with an understanding of and an appreciation for citizen participation. This course partially satisfies the Government requirement for A.A., A.A.T. and A.S. degrees at Kilgore College.

Welcome to GOVT 2306--State and Local Government! You are going to learn a lot this semester about the two levels of government that are closest to the people—state government and local government. Through this process, you will learn more about yourself, your classmates, and the world around you, and my hope is that you’ll have fun doing it. Please read this syllabus carefully before beginning the course.

Required Text


Student Learning Outcomes: GOVT 2306- State and Local Government

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
2. Describe 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. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will the objective be addressed?</th>
<th>How will the objective be assessed?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>-students will read articles on relevant government and political issues supplied by the instructor and ascertain thesis and supporting evidence. The department will provide a wide-ranging list of suggested acceptable readers, websites, academic journals, etc from which instructors can draw materials. -students will be required to test their capabilities on three articles approved by the department, common to each section of GOVT 2306 taught at Kilgore College, with multiple choice questions created by the department based on these articles either administered as part of a quiz or exam throughout the semester on three different occasion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of information</td>
<td>-students will read either the same articles as they do for inquiry, or three new articles (instructor discretion) and employ “CLUES” method to analyze the article. Instructors will present a lesson on using the “CLUES” method of analysis prior to readings. -students will be required to test their capabilities on the three articles that are used for inquiry, again common to all sections of GOVT 2306 at Kilgore College, with common department created multiple choice questions on three quizzes or exams throughout the semester.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through</td>
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</table>
-written communication

students will attend a city council meeting, commissioner’s court meeting, school board meeting as a condition of the course and write a paper on their experience

based on “CLUES” method of critical thinking taught for critical thinking, students will use their abilities garnered from applying this method of thinking to evaluate one of important decision/issue relevant to course content. The department will provide a list of suggested acceptable topics.

-Paper will be evaluated based on a rubric developed by the department

-oral communication

-visual communication

Social Responsibility

Intercultural competence

Knowledge of civic responsibility

students will learn about primary and general elections, voter turnout, voter registration requirements and how to register, teach the effects of voter turnout on Texas government and politics

multiple choice questions testing student knowledge of material will be administered on at least two exams, one of which MUST be the final exam

Ability to engage effectively in regional communities

students will attend a city council meeting, commissioner’s court meeting, school board meeting as a condition of the course and write a paper on their experience

-Paper will be evaluated based on a rubric developed by the department

-national communities

-global communities

Personal Responsibility

ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

based on “CLUES” method of critical thinking taught for critical thinking, students will use their abilities garnered from applying this method of thinking to evaluate, in a paper, one important decision/issue relevant to course content. The department will provide a list of suggested acceptable topics.

-Paper will be evaluated based on a rubric developed by the department
• **Critical Thinking Skills** - to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

• **Communication Skills** - to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication

• **Personal Responsibility** - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

• **Social Responsibility**: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

### Course Information

#### Grading Scale

Grades will be awarded according to the following scale:

- A = 90% and above
- B = 80% – 89%
- C = 70% – 79%
- D = 60% – 69%
- F = 59% and below

Final Grades will be determined according to success in each of the following. See the syllabus for your specific semester how much each item is worth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Exams</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Final Exam</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Meeting Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Quizzes</td>
<td>3%</td>
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#### Grading

**Exams**

There will be exams covering a specified amount of chapters. All exams will follow roughly the same format—30-50 multiple choice questions.

To help you prepare for each test, I will provide a study guide.

**Students who miss an exam for any reason other than a school-sponsored event are required to write a research paper on a topic of my choosing.** The paper must be a minimum of 1,000 words and contain a minimum of six sources. The paper will count the same as a test. You are not allowed to miss more than one test.

There are no make-ups given for the final, regardless of why the exam was missed.
Class Participation and Attendance

Because I care how well you do in this course, I have an attendance and participation policy: studies show that students who attend classes regularly and actively pay attention in class typically do better than those students who attend sporadically and/or “zone out” while in class.

So, you are expected to attend this class on a regular basis and actively engage with the instructor and others. For each absence beyond the allotted amount, I will deduct 20 points from your attendance grade, and I also reserve the right to drop you from the course. Please note that I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so choose your absences wisely!

Maximum allowed absences for chance at full participation credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Frequency</th>
<th>Maximum Absences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three-days-a-week course</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-days-a week course</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-day a week course</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini course</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer course</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

I will take roll at the beginning of class. If you come in after this, you are tardy. Two “tardies” equal one absence.

If you miss class, please arrange to copy your notes from a classmate. I do not give out my lecture notes.

Beyond simply showing up to class, you should come prepared. Being prepared means that you have read the assigned material and are ready to discuss it. Active participation is not only vital to your success in the class, but it enhances the classroom experience for everyone. Such participation provides an opportunity for the class to interact with each other and the instructor, which produces the best environment conducive to learning. If you are called upon and fail to give an adequate response, it can adversely affect your participation grade.

If you have missed over the allotted amount of classes, you will lose participation points, regardless of how much you have spoken up or otherwise participated.

Please note that just coming to class does not guarantee full credit for participation. Here are some things that will cause you to lose participation points:

- excessive talking
- falling asleep
- Looking at or otherwise being engaged with your cell phone
- not taking notes
- giving a response indicating that you haven’t completed the reading
Extra Credit

One extra-credit project is available. See syllabus for this semester for details.

Drop Policy

It is your responsibility to drop a course or withdraw from the college; failure to do so will result in receiving a performance grade, usually a grade of —F. The last day to drop/withdraw with a grade of “W” is when approximately 75% of the course is over. The exact date will be on the syllabus for that specific semester.

Civility Statement

Students are expected to assist in maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning. Inappropriate or distractive behavior is prohibited in order to assure that everyone has an opportunity to gain from time spent in the course. Should a disruptive incident occur, the faculty member in charge may remove the student. Students have the right to appeal through the student complaint process.

Electronic Devices Policy

No electronic devices are allowed in class. This includes, but is not limited to, laptops, tablets, and cell phones. You may record the lectures with my permission.

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Political Culture, People, and Economy of Texas</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>The Texas Constitution</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Texas in the Federal System</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Political Parties in Texas</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Elections in Texas</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Interest Groups and Lobbying</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>The Texas Legislature</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>The Texas Executive Branch</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>The Texas Judiciary</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Public Finance in Texas</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Public Policy in Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Public Policy in Texas</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Crime and Corrections Policy in Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Crime and Corrections Policy in Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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The Instructor reserves the right to make modifications in content and schedule as necessary to promote the best education possible within prevailing conditions affecting this course. Each year,
students will be given an opportunity to evaluate the instructor and the course. Approved evaluation forms are provided by the Office of Institutional Research, which is also responsible for their analysis.

College-Wide Policies

Attendance Policy
Kilgore College expects punctuality and regular class attendance. An absence is defined as a student's not being in class for any reason. An instructor may drop students when their lack of attendance prohibits them from meeting the course Student Learning Outcomes or when students accumulate excessive absences. "Excessive absences" is defined as the equivalent of two weeks instruction in a 16-week semester or at least 12.5% of the total hours of instruction in any term. Some workforce programs may have more stringent attendance requirements due to applicable external requirements and/or competencies; therefore, students in workforce programs should check with their instructor regarding the specific number of absences allowed. Students will be dropped for nonattendance per Federal Financial Aid requirements.

Religious Day Absence
In accordance with Texas Education Code 51.911, a student may request and be granted an absence from classes on a religious holy day provided the student follows college procedures for seeking such authorization. It is the student's responsibility to make satisfactory arrangements with instructors prior to the absence for completing makeup work. The procedure governing an absence on a religious holy day is outlined in the Kilgore College Student Handbook.

Policy on Make Up Work
Effective communication between students and their instructor is essential. Students are responsible for initiating any make up work regardless of the cause of the absence. Students absent on official college business are entitled to make up any and all missed work without any penalty attached. However, students should notify their instructors in advance of the absence and should schedule any make-up assignments before the absence. If the student does not submit makeup work by the prearranged time, the student forfeits the right for further make-up of that assignment.

For a student whose absence is not official college business, the individual instructor will judge if the student is eligible to make up work. In all cases, the instructor will determine the time for making up work and the nature of the make-up work. Whenever possible, students should discuss their impending absence with the instructor and schedule the make-up work prior to the absence.

Student Grievance
If a student wishes to pursue through the administrative structure some action that has been taken that significantly impacts him or her in a negative way, he or she needs to complete a Student Grievance Form available from the offices of department or division support specialists. This procedure applies to both instructional and non-instructional issues.
Statement on Academic Honesty

Kilgore College expects students to do their own work. The department will not tolerate academic dishonesty, including plagiarism (submitting someone else's work as your own). The following information concerning academic dishonesty is taken from the Student Handbook section found under "Categories of Misconduct" and reads as follows:

Misconduct for which students are subject to discipline falls into the following categories:

A. Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to the following:
1. Academic dishonesty including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism.
   a. The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to (1) acquiring information for specifically assigned projects, working with one or more persons on an exam that is to be taken as an individual, or observing work from another individual's exam; (2) providing information on an exam that is to be done individually or giving out the exam or content prior to the exam time.
   b. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to (1) failing to credit sources used in a work product in an attempt to pass off the work as one's own; (2) attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from individuals or from other sources, including the internet.
   c. Misconduct also includes conspiracy to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Additional information is found under "Student Disciplinary Procedures."

B. Matters of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty matters may first be considered by the faculty member who may recommend penalties such as withdrawal from the course, failing the course, reduction or changing of a grade in the course, a test, assignment, or in other academic work; denial of a degree and/or performing additional academic work not required by other students in the course. Acceptance of the faculty member's recommended penalties by the student shall make the penalties final and constitutes a waiver of further administrative procedures. If the student does not accept the decision of the faculty member, he/she may have the case heard by the appropriate department chair, dean and Vice President of Instruction for review. If the student is ultimately found not to have been involved in academic dishonesty, the instructor shall not base his/her evaluation of the student on the alleged but unproven dishonesty.

If the student is ultimately found to have violated matters of academic dishonesty, the appropriate disciplinary sanction shall be implemented. Any student who believes that a grade has been inequitably awarded should refer to the academic grade change procedures.

ADA Statement
Kilgore College is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you choose to request accommodations for a documented disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course, you must first register with the Office of Disability Services. Please note that classroom accommodations cannot be provided prior to your instructor’s receipt of an accommodation letter from the Office of Disability Services. For more information about accommodations, please contact the Disability Services office on the second floor of the Devall Student Center: (903) 983-8206.