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)

Instructor: Jeff Stanglin, J.D.
Office: OM 208
Phone: 903-983-8230
Office Hours: Please see the syllabus for this specific semester (provided on Blackboard)
Email: Please email me through course email only

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.
Computer and Internet Access
Because this is an online course, students must have access to a computer with reliable internet capabilities. **Technological failure is NEVER an excuse for failure to turn in an assignment or complete a test.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>How will the objective be addressed?</th>
<th>How will the objective be assessed?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
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<td>Inquiry</td>
<td>-students will read articles on relevant government and political issues supplied by the instructor and ascertain thesis and supporting evidence&lt;br&gt;The department will provide a wide-ranging list of suggested acceptable readers, websites, academic journals, etc from which instructors can draw materials.</td>
<td>-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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<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”</td>
<td>-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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**Communication**<br>Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through
| **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

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| **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.

- Unit Exams: 42%
- Comprehensive Final Exam: 14%
- Local Government Meeting Paper: 10%
- Research Paper: 21%
- Class Participation: 10%
- Article Quizzes: 3%

#### Format

- There is a checklist of tasks that you must complete for each chapter. I am providing this checklist as a means for you to stay focused and disciplined throughout the term. Adhering to this checklist should maximize your chances of success in the course. See the checklist in the syllabus for your specific semester.

#### Exams

- There will be three exams and one comprehensive final. **Please note the dates on which the exams are available. You must take the exam during these days.** All exams will follow the same format—up to 50 multiple-choice questions.

To help you prepare for each exam, I will provide you with a study guide. I highly recommend that you use the study guides in preparation for the exams.

You may be required to take the unit exams at either the Testing Center in Kilgore, the Testing Center in Longview, or through ProctorU.
There are no make-ups given for any test that is missed—no exceptions. You are provided plenty of time to take each exam (days in fact) and regardless of your circumstances, you should be able to take each test on time.

**Extra Credit**

One extra-credit project is available. See the 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 —Fl. The last day to drop/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.

**Course Outline**

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<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Political Culture, People, and Economy of Texas</th>
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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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<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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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Crime and Corrections Policy in Texas</td>
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<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:**

Academic dishonesty including but not limited to **cheating** and **plagiarism**.

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.

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.

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.