



## GOVT 2306 - Texas Government Course Syllabus

### Description

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.

**Prerequisites** TSI Reading complete

**Credits** 3

**Lecture Hours** 3

**Lab Hours** 0

**Extended Hours** 0

**Contact Hours** 48

**State Approval Code** 45.1002.51 25

**Instructor Name** Brian Naples

**Semester/Year** Fall 2024

### Meeting Time and Location

GOVT 2306.401 Online—students are expected to spend at least 3-4 hours per week reading, reviewing, and participating in assigned activities for successful completion of this course.

### Alternate Operations During Campus Closure

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Panola College to move to altered operations. During this time, Panola College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online learning management system (CANVAS), online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Panola College's website ([www.panola.edu](http://www.panola.edu)) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, CANVAS for each class for course-specific communication, and Panola College email for important general information.

### Student Basic Needs

Unexpected circumstances may arise, but Panola College offers various resources to support students. If you need mental health services or are facing challenges with transportation, affording class materials and supplies, or accessing food regularly—issues that may impact your class performance—please visit [panola.edu/resources](http://panola.edu/resources).

### Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance of classes and laboratories is required of all students. When a student has been ill or absent from class for approved extracurricular activities, he or she should be allowed, as far as possible, to make up for the missed work. If a student has not actively participated by the census date, they will be dropped by the instructor for non-attendance. This policy applies to courses that are in-person, online, hybrid, and hyflex.

Attendance in online courses is determined by submission of an assignment or participation in an activity. According to federal guidelines, simply logging into a distance learning course without participating in an academic assignment does not constitute attendance. Distance learning is defined as when a majority (more than 50%) of instruction occurs when the instructor and students are in separate physical locations. Students must engage in an academic activity prior to the course census date.

When an instructor feels that a student has been absent to such a degree as to invalidate the learning experience, the instructor may recommend to the Vice President of Instruction that the student be withdrawn from the course. Instructors may seek to withdraw students for non-attendance after they have accumulated the following number of absences:

Fall or spring semesters:

3 or more class meeting times per week - 5 absences

2 class meeting times per week - 3 absences

1 class meeting per week - 2 absences

The student is responsible for seeing that he or she has been officially withdrawn from a class. A student who stops attendance in a class without officially withdrawing from that class will be given a failing grade; consequently, the student must follow official withdrawal procedures in the Admissions/Records Office.

Please note: Health Science and Cosmetology courses may require more stringent attendance policies based on their accreditation agencies. Please see the addendum and/or program handbook for further information concerning attendance.

### **Pregnant/Parenting Policy**

Panola College welcomes pregnant and parenting students as a part of the student body. This institution is committed to providing support and adaptations for a successful educational experience for pregnant and parenting students. Students experiencing a need for accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting will find a Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations Request form in the Student Handbook or may request the form from the course instructor.

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Course Policy**

AI is a helpful tool for research; therefore, it may be used by students for research purposes. However, the goal of this course is for students to gain a particular set of skills and knowledge, as stated in the instructional goals, learning outcomes, and course content of this syllabi. Students who use AI for an easy/quick grade (regardless of the assignment type) rather than the acquisition of skill and knowledge are hindering their academic growth. Consequently, the instructor, whose expertise is the basis for assessing student development, reserves the right to change a student's grade on any work, provably or suspiciously related to AI, which is inconsistent with these goals. In cases of disputed grades, an instructor may require students to repeat their performance on a course assignment in a controlled environment and without the use of AI to demonstrate their true acquisition of course skills and knowledge. The refusal or failure to repeat the performance shall be considered the acceptance of the originally assessed grade.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

**Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation and syntheses of information**

- CT1: Generate and communicate ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information

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

- CS1: Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication

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

- PR1: Evaluate choices and actions and relate consequences to decision-making

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

- SR2: Identify civic responsibility

### **Instructional Goals and Purposes**

The purpose of this course is to serve as an introduction into the American political system.

### **Learning Outcomes**

After studying all materials and resources presented in the course, the student will be able to:

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 the 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 the 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.

### **Course Content**

A general description of lecture/discussion topics included in this course are listed in the Learning Outcomes section of this syllabus.

Students in all sections of this course will learn the following content:

1. Texas Geography, Demographics, and Public Opinion
2. Foundations of Texas Government
3. Federalism and State Governance
4. The Texas Constitution
5. The Texas State Legislature
6. Texas Governors and Executive Branch
7. The Texas Court System
8. Local Government in Texas
9. The Criminal Justice System in Texas
10. Public Policy in Texas
11. The Texas Economy and Fiscal Policy
12. Elections and Campaigns in Texas
13. Political Parties in Texas
14. Voting and Political Participation in Texas
15. Interest Groups and the Media in Texas

### **Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery**

This class will convey the course material through lectures, discussions, primary/secondary documents have guest speakers, instructional videos, and PowerPoint presentations. Reciprocally, students are expected to take notes, listen proactively, ask questions, conduct research, and read the textbook.

*Video and Audio Recordings:* At the instructor's discretion, students are welcome to make audio recordings of the class lectures for their personal study use. They are invited to place their cell phones or other devices on the podium for the recordings at the start of class. The instructor reserves the right to make audio and video recordings of all classes and any personal encounters with students. Class recordings may be used on Canvas or other internet platforms for educational purposes. Personal recordings will be kept private per FERPA and only be used in cases of an appeal/legal defense.

### **Major Assignments/Assessments**

The following items are assigned and assessed during the semester and used to calculate the student's final grade.

#### **Assignments**

1. Exams: Exams will be administered over assigned readings and lecture material. The number and style of the exams may vary based on the instructor and the length of the course. The exams will measure a student's comprehension of the course material.
2. Civic Exercises: Civics exercises, which are a form of service learning, will constitute a portion of the class grade. The purpose of civic exercises is to bring a practical application of the course material into daily life. The full extent of service-learning assignments may be determined by the instructor and vary based on the length of the course.
3. Assignments: Routine work assignments will be administered during the semester. The assignments will cover the course materials, such as readings, lectures, videos, etc. The number and style of assignments will vary based on the length of the semester and the individual instructor. Collectively, the assignments make up a main portion of the final grade as they ensure students are engaged in the course.

4. **Attendance:** This course adheres to the college attendance policy found in the student handbook. Excessive absences "invalidate the learning experience" and may result in a student being withdrawn from the college course and given a failing grade.
5. **Make-up Work:** The instructor has full discretion on the allowance of make-up work for missed assignments, including exams. Make-up work will only be given for serious causes, such as medical emergencies or family death. The instructor may require documentation as proof of the cause and has full discretion on when to schedule make-up work. Students should be aware that internet/power outages typically do not count as a "serious cause" since most work is available for completion for several days.
6. **Extra Credit:** The instructor reserves the right to extend extra credit assignments to the class. Extra credit is not a part of the regular class grade. It is offered solely at the discretion and goodwill of the instructor.

### **Assessments**

1. Students must demonstrate their dedication to being responsible citizens by passing a quiz on the essentials of Texas government.
2. Students must demonstrate their ability to think critically about government by participating in a class discussion on a modern political issue.
3. Students must demonstrate their ability to reasonably communicate ideas about current political issues by writing a letter to an elected official.
4. Students must demonstrate their personal responsibility by regularly attending class throughout the semester.

### **Course Grade**

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

- Exams: 50%
- Civics Exercises: 25%
- Weekly Assignments: 25%
- Attendance: Students must attend/complete 80% of the course to receive a passing grade.

### **Grade Distribution**

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 59 or below

### **Texts Materials, and Supplies**

- All the required materials for this course are provided to the students in Canvas at no cost.

### **Required Readings**

Provided to the students in Canvas learning platform at no cost to the students.

### **Recommended Readings**

- All recommended readings are provided in Canvas at no cost to the students.

### **Other**

- Courses conducted via video conferencing may be recorded and shared for instructional purposes by the instructor.
- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <https://www.panolacollegestore.com>.

- For testing services, use the following link: <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/student-support/academic-testing-center>.
- If any student in this class has special classroom or testing needs because of a physical learning or emotional condition, please contact the ADA Student Coordinator in Support Services located in the Charles C. Matthews Student Center or go to <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/student-support/disability-support-services> for more information.
- Withdrawing from a course is the student's responsibility. Students who do not attend class and who do not withdraw will receive the grade earned for the course.
- Student Handbook: <https://www.panola.edu/> (located on at the bottom under student)