GOVT 2306 2B1

CREDIT
3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 Lab hours lab)

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Online

PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:

TSI Complete for Reading

COURSE 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.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to

- Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
- Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
- Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government
- Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
- Analyze the state and local election process.
- Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
- Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas

CORE OBJECTIVES MEASURED

- Critical Thinking: To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Communication: To include the effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.

- Personal Responsibility: To include the ability to connect choice, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

Approved: Initials/date

- Social Responsibility: To include demonstration of intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and to engage effectively in regional, national, and/or global communities.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Sarah Wallace

Email: sewallace@lit.edu

Office Phone: (409)247-5046

Office Location: TC 232

Office Hours: Monday 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
              Tuesday 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
              Wednesday 12:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

Texas Government 2.0
Web Version
Commons Open Education Resources
https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/8453

ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is in the student's best interest to log on at least once a day to review lecture notes, complete course assignments, and take exams. I may also offer extra credit that is time sensitive. If a student does not log in, they may miss opportunities. I monitor the amount of time that students spend in Blackboard and the number of logins throughout the week. If a student stops logging in, I will reach out to ensure that nothing has happened which prevented the student from continuing in the course. However, if you are experiencing difficulties, please be proactive and let me know that you need an extension. If a student stops logging or turning in assignments, they are NOT automatically dropped from the course.

DROP POLICY

If you wish to drop a course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process by the specified date as listed in the College Calendar on the Student Success web page. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an "F" in the course.

Without Academic Penalty February 20, 2026
With Academic Penalty April 13, 2026

COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS (Due on this Date)	ASSIGNMENTS (Due on this Date)
Week 1 Jan 20-25	Syllabus Review Class Introductions Texas Demographics	Class PPTS and Videos	Class Introductions 1/26 Syllabus Quiz 1/26 Regions Assignment 1/26
Week 2 Jan 26-Feb 1	The 7 Texas Constitutions	Class PPTS and Videos	Constitution Pop Quiz 2/2 Writing Sample 2/2
Week 3 Feb 2-8	Federalism in Texas Exam 1	Class PPTS and Videos	Section 3 Assignment 2/9 Exam 1 2/9 Email to an Elected Official 2/9
Week 4 Feb 9-15	Local Government in Texas	Class PPTS and Videos	Local Government Assignment 2/16
Week 5 Feb 16-22	Texas Legislature	Class PPTS and Videos	Texas Legislature Assignment 2/23
Week 6 Feb 23-Mar 1	The Texas Executive Branch	Class PPTS and Videos	Executive Pop Quiz 3/2
Week 7 Mar 2-8	The Texas Judicial Branch Exam 2	Class PPTS and Videos	Judicial Activity 3/8 Exam 2 3/8
Spring Break Mar 9-15	L.I.T Spring Break	None	None
Week 8 Mar 16-22	Bureaucracy in Texas & Policy Implementation	Class PPTS and Videos	State Agency 3/23
Week 9 Mar 23-29	Political Socialization, Political Behavior and Public Opinion	Class PPTS and Videos	Section 9 Discussion 3/30
Week 10 Mar 30-Apr 5	Political Parties in Texas	Class PPTS and Videos	Section 10 Assignment 4/6

Week 11 Apr 6-12	Elections & Campaigns in Texas	Class PPTS and Videos	Voting Activity 4/13 Core Assessment Due 4/13
Week 12 Apr 13-19	The Media Exam 3	Class PPTS and Videos	Podcast Review 4/20 Exam 3 4/20
Week 13 Apr 20-26	Interest Groups and Political Opinions in Texas	Class PPTS and Videos	Media Assessment 4/27 Interest Group 4/27
Week 14 Apr 27-May 3	Political Socialization and Presentations	Class PPTS and Videos	P.S. Assignment 5/3
Week 15 May 4-6	Contemporary Issues in Texas	Class PPTS and Videos	Exam 4 5/6

COURSE EVALUATION
Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

Exams 50%
Assignments/Quizzes 30%
Core Assessment 20%

GRADE SCALE
- 90-100   A
- 80-89   B
- 70-79   C
- 60-69   D
- 0-59   F

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
For the latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc., review the Minimum Computer and Equipment Requirements on the LIT Online Experience page. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of online technology and resources.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT
The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is located in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps

foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email specialpopulations@lit.edu. You may also visit the online resource at Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology (lit.edu).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT
It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENT
Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use of these technologies and incorporate AI into classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI/ChatGPT in their courses.

STARFISH
LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION

1. Respectful participation in class discussions is expected. At times, students may have differing viewpoints from those of their classmates. Disagreements lead to critical thinking, scholarly debates, and learning, however, disrespect for the opinions of others will not be tolerated. Please know that just because your opinion may vary from others, it does not mean that their opinion is wrong.

2. It is my policy that I do not accept late work. I also know that there are sometimes unforeseen circumstances that arise where exceptions should be made. Please contact me if something happens, so that arrangements can be made. **THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR HABITUALLY** TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS LATE.

3. Assignments will be graded within one week of submission.

4. Do not drop the course without talking to me first. I may offer extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. I also may be able to offer additional resources to help with areas of concern. Students have dropped in the past when there is a good chance that they would not fail.

5. If a student does not log into Blackboard, stops attending class, or turning in assignments, they **ARE NOT** automatically dropped. Please make sure that you take the appropriate measures to drop the class. Below are the drop dates for the course:

Last Day to Drop **Without** Academic Penalty February 20, 2026
Last Day to Drop **With** Academic Penalty April 13, 2026

6. I check all written assignments for AI generated content using Quilbot or Zero GPT. I reserve the right to fail an assignment if I find it has been either plagiarized or AI generated. This is especially true on discussion posts. I am more interested that you understand the material. You can express this using your own words through discussion posts.

Reasons to not Use AI
~It is cheating if you simply copy and paste an answer form an AI source.
~AI will give the same or a very similar answer to a question which makes it easier to catch.
~ You are missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
~It makes my instructor read the same material over and over again. This will eventually make her go crazy.
7. It is your responsibility to check and make sure that your assignment was submitted correctly. If you notice that your submission was submitted incorrectly then you have 15 minutes from the deadline to email me the submission. After that, it will not be graded. If there is a problem with your submission, you must notify me with one hour.

8. All assignments must be turned in through Blackboard. **Any assignment that is emailed without prior permission will result in a zero.**

9. If you email me and state that you were having an issue with Blackboard at the time an assignment was due, it must be accompanied by a help desk ticket.

10. Unless an assignment says that it is a group project, collaborating with your classmates is not allowed.

11. If you think that something has been graded unfairly you can ask me to review it but please be aware that your grade can go down as well as up after the review.

12. Please email me through Blackboard only. Per FERPA guidelines, I cannot respond to emails other than your LIT account. This guideline protects both of us. Include a clear subject line in all your correspondence.

13. Discussion Posts There must be one original substantive post (200 words) AND at least two substantive replies to your classmates' posts (100 words each post) for each graded forum. Correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and complete sentences must be used. The discussion forum grade will be based on points assigned to measure the quality of both the original post and the two response posts. Anything less than 200 words on your original post and anything less than 100 words on your replies, will receive a zero. No Discussions will be accepted after the deadline! **Discussion Post submitted the day they are due close to the deadline will not receive full credit.**

The same criterion is used in grading your response posts to your classmates' discussion posts. Response posts must contribute something new to the discussion to earn points. In other words, a response consisting solely of "Good post, (classmate's name)!" will receive zero points.

The discussion forum topics will correlate with the reading topics we are covering in the course. The professor views online discussion forums as the equivalent of on-campus classroom discussions, and carefully reads every post to evaluate the quality of its contents. You should therefore make sure to read the assigned material on the forum topic BEFORE submitting your posts.

14. All exams are given using Respondus. It is the student's responsibility to make sure Respondus is downloaded and working on their device. **Make-up test will not be given for failing to prepare to take the test ahead of time.**

15. The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus or the course calendar to handle any unforeseen circumstances.

16. The Core Assessment for GOVT 2306 requires students to conduct an interview an elected official. The interview must be conducted in person or over a meeting app such as Zoom or Skype. No two students can interview the same elected official. Students can find additional information in the Core Assessment folder in Blackboard.