GOVT 2306 (9M2)

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

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: Joshua N. Longmire, Ph.D.

Email:

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

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

Attendance Policy

Regular Blackboard interaction is expected of all students; it is essential for success in this course. Conflicting work schedules, appointments, and other activities are *not* acceptable excuses for missed assignments—plan accordingly. You are responsible for completing every assignment on Blackboard; I will not send individual reminders.

This course combines self-paced online work (Blackboard readings, activities, and quizzes grounded in the textbook) with in-class (or synchronous) sessions focused on deeper, critical-thinking discussions. We will generally discuss each chapter in class *after* you have completed it online. If our pace falls out of sync with Blackboard, I may adjust the calendar as needed.

Class Decorum

- Respectful engagement in discussions is mandatory. Civil disagreement sharpens our critical thinking; personal attacks or broad generalizations will not be tolerated.

- Some topics may be sensitive. If a discussion becomes uncomfortable, you are free to step away and return when ready.

- **Privacy Reminder:** Class discussion posts are for enrolled students only. Sharing classmates' posts publicly violates confidentiality and will be reported.

Words of Advice

1. Communication is key—if you're struggling, reach out early.

2. Do not wait until the last minute; each module has a firm due date.

3. All materials unlock on Day 1 but *lock* after the due date.

4. Engage actively in class and online—your participation fuels learning.

5. Academic dishonesty (cheating or plagiarism) incurs serious penalties (0 on the assignment up to an F for the course).

Late Work

- All assignments are due on the date and in the format specified in the syllabus.

- Most Blackboard activities will close at the deadline. A missed deadline normally results in a zero.

- Late submissions incur a *one-letter-grade penalty* (10%) immediately, and an additional letter grade deduction for each subsequent day late.

- Computer or connectivity issues are *not* valid excuses. Maintain backups—use Google Drive, a flash drive, or another reliable method.

Email Protocol

- **Address:** jlongmire@eagle.lit.edu

- Always use your LIT email account or the Blackboard messaging system.

- Include your full name in every message.

- I strive to reply within 24–48 hours on weekdays; emails sent after noon on Friday will be answered by Monday afternoon.

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.

COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS (Due on this Date)
Week 1 Jan 20 – Jan 25	Unit 1: Social & Economic Environment	• Textbook Unit 1: Intro to Texas History & Politics (Lessons 1–11) • Section 1 PowerPoint • Video: Hispanic Contributions • Video: Barbara Jordan	• Introduction Post (Due: Jan 25) • Syllabus Quiz (Due: Jan 25) • Tell me about you! (Due: Jan 25)
Week 2 Jan 26 – Feb 1	Unit 1 (cont.) & Unit 2: Texas Constitution	• Textbook Unit 2: Constitution & Federal System (Lessons 1–11) • Section 2 PowerPoint • Video: Six Flags Over Texas • Checks and Balances Chart	• Assignment #1: Texas Regions (Due: Feb 1) • Constitution Pop Quiz (Due: Feb 1)

Week 3 Feb 2 – Feb 8	Unit 3: Federalism	• Textbook Unit 2: Constitution & Federal System (Lessons 12–13) • Section 3 PowerPoint • Reading: Texas Federalism • Videos: Hurricane Harvey	• Section 3 Federalism Discussion (Due: Feb 8) *(Census Day: Feb 4)* [1]
Week 4 Feb 9 – Feb 15	EXAM 1	• Review Sections 1–3 Materials	• EXAM 1 (Units 1–3) (Due: Feb 15)
Week 5 Feb 16 – Feb 22	Unit 4: Local Government	• Textbook Unit 6: Local Government in Texas (Lessons 1–7) • Section 4 PowerPoint • Supplemental Reading • Video: Houston Ordinance	• Local Government Assignment (Due: Feb 22)
Week 6 Feb 23 – Mar 1	Unit 5: Texas Legislature	• Textbook Unit 3: The Texas Legislature (Lessons 1–8) • Section 5 PowerPoint • Video: Texas Legislature Explained	• Texas Legislature Assignment (Due: Mar 1)
Week 7 Mar 2 – Mar 8	Unit 6: Executive Branch	• Textbook Unit 4: Executive Dept. & Governor (Lessons 1–8) • Section 6 PowerPoint • Video: Ann Richards Speech	• Texas Executive Branch Pop Quiz (Due: Mar 8)
Week 8 Mar 9 – Mar 13	SPRING BREAK	• *No Classes*	• *No Assignments* [2]
Week 9 Mar 16 – Mar 22	Unit 7: Justice System	• Textbook Unit 5: Court System of Texas (Lessons 1–7) • Textbook Unit 12: Criminal Justice System (Lessons 1–8) • Section 7 PowerPoint • Reading: Ruiz v. Estelle • Video: Radical Hospitality	• Section 7 Discussion (Corrections) (Due: Mar 22)
Week 10 Mar 23 – Mar 29	EXAM 2	• Review Units 4–7 Materials	• EXAM 2 (Units 4–7) (Due: Mar 29)
Week 11 Mar 30 – Apr 5	Unit 8: Bureaucracy & Unit 9: Socialization	• Textbook Unit 14: Public Opinion (Lessons 1–3) • Texas Bureaucracy PPT • Gibson Political Socialization Doc • Video: Polarization in Texas	• State Agency Assignment (Due: Apr 5) • Polarization Discussion (Due: Apr 5) *(Good Friday Holiday: Apr 3)*
Week 12 Apr 6 – Apr 12	Unit 10: Political Parties	• Textbook Unit 9: Political Parties in Texas (Lessons 1–8) • Unit 10 PowerPoint • Reading: Two Party System	• *Review Party Materials* (Suggested: Apr 12)
Week 13 Apr 13 – Apr 19	Unit 11: Elections & Voting	• Textbook Unit 7: Voting & Participation (Lessons 1–7) • Textbook Unit 8: Elections & Campaigns (Lessons 1–8)	• Voter Turnout Pamphlet (Due: Apr 19) *(Drop Deadline: Apr 13)*

		• Chapter 11 PowerPoint • Video: How to Vote in Texas	
Week 14 Apr 20 – Apr 26	EXAM 3 & Core Assessment Module	• Review Units 8–11 Materials • Core Assessment Prompt (Contains prompt and instructions from Professor)	• EXAM 3 (Units 8–11) (Due: Apr 26) • Email to an Elected Official (Due: Apr 26)
Week 15 Apr 27 – May 3	Unit 12: Media & Unit 13: Interest Groups	• Textbook Unit 14: Media (Lessons 4–6) • Textbook Unit 10: Interest Groups & Lobbying (Lessons 1–7) • Chapter 12 PowerPoint • Chapter 13 PowerPoint • Video: Top 5 Lobbying Teams	• Podcast Review Discussion (Due: May 3) • Interest Groups Discussion (Due: May 3)
Week 16 May 4 – May 6	Unit 14: Public Policy	• Textbook Unit 11: Public Policy in Texas (Lessons 1–7) • Textbook Unit 13: Financing State Government (Lessons 1–7) • Chapter 14 PowerPoint	• Core Assessment (Due: May 6) • Texas Media Assessment (Due: May 6)
Finals May 7 – May 13	EXAM 4	• Review Units 12–14 Materials	• EXAM 4 (Units 12–14) (Due: May 13)

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

- **Respectful Participation:**
  – Civil discourse is expected at all times. Differing viewpoints foster critical thinking and scholarly debate, but disrespect will not be tolerated.

- **Late Work:**
  – My policy is to **not** accept late assignments. If unforeseen circumstances arise, contact me promptly so we can make arrangements. Habitual lateness is not excused.

- **Grading Turnaround:**
  – Assignments will be graded and returned within one week of submission.

- **Course Drops:**
  – Do not drop the course without consulting me first. I may offer extra credit or additional resources to support your success. If you simply stop logging in or submitting work, you will **not** be automatically dropped—you must initiate the drop yourself by the college's deadline.

- **AI & Plagiarism:**
  – All written work is checked for plagiarism and AI-generated content. I reserve the right to fail any assignment found to be plagiarized or AI-generated, particularly discussion posts. I value your own words and understanding above all.
  – **Why not use AI?**

  1. It constitutes academic dishonesty.

  2. AI outputs tend to be repetitive and easy to detect.

  3. You lose valuable learning opportunities.

  4. It creates unnecessary grading burdens on your instructor.

- **Submission Verification:**
  – You are responsible for confirming your assignment uploaded correctly. If you discover a submission error, email me the correct file within 15 minutes of the deadline. Submissions sent after that window will not be graded.