GOVT 2306 – 9S1

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

MODE OF INSTRUCTION
Online

PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:
TSI Complete in 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:

1. Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
2. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
4. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
5. Analyze the state and local election process.
6. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
7. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor:	Adan Arriaga, J.D.
Email:	aarriaga@eagle.lit.edu
Office Phone:	(409) 247-5138
Office Location:	Lonnie Howard Technology Center (Room 206)
Office Hours:	Monday, Wednesday 10:00 AM – 2: 00 PM Tuesday, Thursday 1:00 PM – 2: 00 PM

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS
Texas Government 2.0
Web Version

Approved: Initials/date

Commons Open Education Resources
https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/8453

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Consistent attendance and active participation are essential to your success in this course, whether it is conducted in person, online, or in a hybrid format.

You are expected to attend all scheduled sessions, engage with course materials, contribute to discussions, and complete all assignments. For online and hybrid courses, this includes regular log-ins to Blackboard and participation in discussion boards.

Attendance and participation will be monitored throughout the semester. If your in-class attendance or online engagement declines significantly or stops, the instructor will contact you to discuss your progress and offer support. **An academic intervention will be initiated if a student accumulates three absences from in-person class or fails to access the Blackboard platform for a continuous period of seven days in online or hybrid classes.**

If you anticipate an absence or disruption in participation, notify the instructor in advance when possible. Ongoing lack of attendance may lead to additional academic intervention.

DROP POLICY
If you wish to drop a course, you are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process. If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an "F" in the course.

COURSE CALENDAR (DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

UNIT	DUE DATE	TOPIC & ASSIGNMENTS	READINGS
UNIT 1 **Foundations of Texas Government** Jan 20 – Feb 13	Jan 20	Course Introduction & Syllabus Syllabus Quiz **VIEW CORE ASSESSMENT**	Syllabus Core Assessment Instructions
	Jan 28	1.1 Brief Overview of Texas & It's History *Quiz 1.1* *Discussion 1.1*	- Pre-Columbian Texas "We're Still Here" - Six Flags Over Texas - Independence For Texas - The Mexican-American War - Texas In the Civil War - Reconstruction
	Jan 30	1.2 Texas Regions & Culture *Assignment 1.2*	- Elazar's Cultural Classification - Texas Regions - Texas Urban Triangle

	Feb 4	1.3 The Texas Constitution *Quiz 1.3* *Journal 1.3*	• The Texas State Constitution & The American Federal System • The Evolution of the Texas State Constitution • Constitutions of Texas • The Texas Constitution of 1876
	Feb 6	1.4 Federalism *Quiz 1.4*	• Federalism: A Division of Powers • The Evolution of Federalism • Texas State and Local Politics
	Feb 11	**CORE ASSESSMENT, ELECTED OFFICIALS LIST DUE**	None
	Feb 13	**UNIT 1 Exam**	None
UNIT 2 **The Structure of Texas Government** **Feb 16 – Mar 20**	Feb 18	2.1 Local Government *Assignment 2.1* *Quiz 2.1*	• Local Government in Texas • The Relationship Between Local, State, and National Government • Municipal (City) Government
	Feb 20	2.2 Texas Legislature *Quiz 2.2*	• Texas State and Local Politics • The Evolution of Federalism • Federalism: A Division of Powers
	Feb 25	2.3 The Texas Executive *Quiz 2.3*	• Texas' Governor and Executive Branch • Background • The Qualifications and Roles of the Texas Governor • The Interplay Between the Legislature and Executive • The Informal Powers of the Executive Branch • The Plural Executive
	Feb 27	2.4 The Texas Court System *Quiz 2.4* *Assignment 2.4* **CORE ASSESSMENT, EMAIL TO ELECTED OFFICIAL DUE**	• The Texas Court System • Sources and Hierarchy of Law in Texas • The Structure of the Texas Court System • Texas' Civil and Criminal Justice Processes • Judicial Selection Processes in Texas

	Mar 6	2.5 The Texas Bureaucracy *Quiz 2.5* *Journal 2.5*	• Structure of Texas Bureaucracy • Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) • Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) • Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) • Public Utility Commission of Texas • Problems & Policy • Legislative Control of the Bureaucracy
	Mar 20	**UNIT 2 Exam**	None
UNIT 3 **Political Processes & Participation** **Mar 23 – Apr 10**	Mar 25	3.1 Political Socialization *Quiz 3.1* *Journal 3.1*	• Definition • Agents of Socialization • Political Participation
	Mar 27	3.2 Political Parties in Texas *Quiz 3.2* *Assignment 3.2*	• Political Parties in Texas • Political Parties: Background and Structure • Political Parties in Texas • Party Identification • Third-Party Movements in Texas • Candidate and Delegate Selection Processes in Texas
	Apr 1	3.3 Voter Turnout in Texas *Quiz 3.3* *Discussion 3.3* **CORE ASSESSMENT: INTERVIEW PACKET DUE**	• Voting and Political Participation in Texas • Voting in Texas • The History of Voting in Texas • Voter Turnout and Political Participation in Texas • Political Participation
	Apr 10	**UNIT 3 Exam**	None
UNIT 4 **Public Policy & Civil Life** **Apr 13 – Apr 29**	Apr 15	4.1 Mass Media in Texas Politics *Assignment 4.1* *Quiz 4.1*	• Public Opinion and the Media in Texas • Public Opinion • Measuring Public Opinion in Texas • The Media
	Apr 17	4.2 Interest Groups and Political Power in Texas *Assignment 4.2* *Quiz 4.2*	• Interest Groups and Lobbying in Texas • Interest Groups in Texas • Interest Group Typologies • How Interest Groups Influence Texas Government • Interest Group Regulation in Texas

		4.3 Contemporary Political Issues in Texas	• Introduction: Public Policy in Texas
	Apr 22	*Quiz 4.3*	• What is Public Policy? • Making Public Policy in Texas • Key Policy Areas in Texas • Influencing Policy Decisions in Texas
	Apr 29	**UNIT 4 Exam**	None
CORE ASSESSEMENT DUE	May 6	**CORE ASSESSMENT** **FINAL PRESENTATION DUE**	None
OPTIONAL FINAL EXAM	TBA	**Final Exam Review** **Q&A**	None
	TBA	**Finals Week**	None

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

Tests	50%
Core Assessment	20%
Quizzes/Assignments/Discussions	30%

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

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc. can be online at https://lit.edu/online-learning/online-learning-minimum-computer-requirements. 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

DUE DATES AND LATE WORK
All deadlines are listed in the course schedule. Students must plan accordingly. Late work is not accepted unless a documented emergency or exigent circumstance occurs. Extension requests must be submitted in writing within **48 hours** with documentation. Approval of extensions is at the instructor's discretion.

DUAL CREDIT STUDENTS This course follows the LIT academic calendar, not the high school schedule. High school events, testing, or activities are not valid reasons for late or missing work.

TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITY
Students are responsible for having all required technology. This includes downloading and maintaining Respondus LockDown Browser before any exam. Failure to install or configure required software does not excuse missed work.

All technical issues, including Blackboard access, LockDown Browser errors, passwords, device problems, or connectivity, must be directed to LIT Help Desk or Blackboard Support. The instructor does not provide technical troubleshooting.

Technical difficulties of any kind, including internet outages, device failure, software errors, or user error, are not valid excuses for missing deadlines. Students must troubleshoot promptly and seek appropriate support.

DUAL CREDIT STUDENTS School issued devices, including Chromebooks, are the responsibility of the high school and its IT department. Device limitations or restrictions do not exempt students from LIT requirements.

WORK SUBMISSION
Online courses submit all work through Blackboard. In person courses submit work during class. Hybrid courses may use both. This policy applies to all coursework, including exams. Technical issues during submission must be reported within 30 minutes.

GRADING
Most assignments are graded within one week. Students will be notified of delays.

COMMUNICATION
All communication must occur through Blackboard. Messages are answered within 24 hours on weekdays. Weekend messages are answered on the next business day. If Blackboard is unavailable, students may use their official LIT email. Assignments may not be submitted by email.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Students must follow the LIT Academic Integrity Policy. All work must be original. Prohibited actions include plagiarism, cheating, collusion, and fabrication. Violations result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the course. All coursework must be completed individually unless collaboration is permitted. Free tutoring and academic support are available.

EXAM POLICY
Exams are open note unless stated otherwise. Only your own handwritten or typed notes may be used. Quizzes are closed resource. Notes may be reviewed by the instructor or proctor.

Shared, copied, or AI generated notes are not allowed. Unauthorized materials violate the Academic Integrity Policy.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY AND ETHICAL USE
AI tools may be used only for support tasks such as brainstorming or outlining. AI may not replace your own analysis or writing. All AI use must be acknowledged and cited.

ETHICAL AI USE INCLUDES:
• transparency about how AI was used
• verifying accuracy of AI generated information
• ensuring originality of your work
• protecting personal or sensitive information
• never using AI on exams, quizzes, or independent work
Students must consult the instructor before using AI on any assignment. Misuse or undisclosed use may be treated as academic misconduct.

CITATION POLICY
All sources, including print, digital, human, and AI, must be cited. Students must use a consistent citation style such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. Missing or improper citations may constitute academic misconduct.

CLASS ETIQUETTE
This course may involve complex topics and diverse viewpoints. Students are expected to maintain a respectful, constructive, and professional learning environment. Disruptive behavior, disrespectful language, or actions that interfere with instruction will be addressed according to the LIT Student Code of Conduct.

EXTRA CREDIT
Extra credit is not offered. Students may take the optional final exam to replace their lowest exam score. Any policy regarding dropped scores applies equally to all students.

FERPA & STUDENT PRIVACY POLICY
FERPA protects the privacy of student education records **under 20 U.S.C. § 1232g** and **34 C.F.R. Part 99**. Once enrolled at LIT, all FERPA rights belong to the student, including dual credit students.

The instructor will not share grades, attendance, performance information, or any other student records with parents, guardians, counselors, facilitators, or outside individuals without the student's written consent through an official LIT release form. All communication about academic progress will occur directly with the student.

Dual Credit Students High school personnel do not have automatic access to LIT student information. Any counselor or facilitator with questions must contact the **LIT Dual Credit**

Department first. The instructor will not respond to outside inquiries unless directed through the proper LIT channels.

Students are responsible for monitoring their own academic standing and communicating directly with the instructor regarding course concerns.

CORE ASSESSMENT OUTREACH POLICY
Students must independently contact elected officials **only by professional email** and keep full documentation of all attempts. **Five unreplied emails** are required before any instructor assistance will be considered. Instructor involvement is limited to guidance and will **not** include contacting officials. Students are fully responsible for selecting officials, managing communication, and meeting deadlines. **Failure to follow this policy may prevent completion of the Core Assessment.**

MODIFICATION CLAUSE
The instructor may modify the syllabus or schedule as needed. Students will be notified of any changes.