

TEXARKANA COLLEGE

Syllabus: Texas Government 2306

Course Number: GOVT 2306

Semester & Year: Fall 2015

Instructor Information:

Name: John Stuart

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E-mail: John.Stuart@texarkanacollege.edu

Office Hours:

Monday: 8-9:30 a.m.

Tuesday: 8-9:30 a.m.; 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 8-9:30 a.m.

Thursday: 8-9:30 a.m.; 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Friday: 9-11:00 a.m.

Textbook Information:

TEXAS POLITICS TODAY by Maxwell & Crain, 17th edition (2015-2016)

A textbook is a necessary requirement for this course. ISBN: 9781305701083 or 9781285853130..

Also, the **STUDY QUESTION GUIDEBOOK** in the College Bookstore is a requirement for the course.

Student Learning Outcomes for the Course:

This course is designed to increase students' interest and knowledge of how state and local governments operate.

Learning Outcomes/Objectives:

#1: The student will understand the history and political culture of Texas and be familiar with current population data.

#2: The student will understand the foundations, development, and features of the Texas Constitution of 1876 and how it compares to the United States Constitution.

#3: The student will understand the types of elections, the voting process, and campaigns in Texas.

#4: The student will be able to discuss how political parties and interest groups connect people to Texas government.

#5: The student will be able to describe the structure and function of the three branches of government in Texas.

#6: The student will understand the structure, functions, and operations of the institutions of local government in Texas.

Other Learning Outcomes/Objectives are listed in the Study Question Guidebook for the course.

Student Requirements for Completion of the Course:

Requirements for the course include the following:

Five Major Unit tests, five Take-Home tests, two chapter Terms & Names, one Interest Group review, one Internet Activity, one Political survey, and one Comprehensive Post-Test.

Student Assessment:

You have the following possibilities for earning points:

(1) Five Major Unit tests -	500 total points
(2) Five Take-Home tests -	100 total points
(3) Two Chapter Terms & Names -	20 total points
(4) One Interest Group review -	160 total points
(5) One Comprehensive Post-Test	100 total points
(6) One Internet Activity	10 total points
(7) One Political Survey -	<u>10 total points</u>
	900 total points

There will be various ways to obtain Extra Bonus Points during the semester.

Grading Scale:

Grade	
A	900-810 points
B	809-720 points
C	719-630 points
D	629-540 points
F	540-below

CLASS SCHEDULE**TEXAS GOVERNMENT 2306**

State and Local Government

Fall 2015

TEXAS POLITICS TODAY by Maxwell & Crain, 17th edition (2015-2016)

J. Stuart – Professor

Tuesday & Thursday 9:30-10:50 a.m.

Aug. 25	INTRODUCTION. What is Government?
Aug. 27-Sept.1	Begin on Chapter 1, "Texas Culture, & Diversity."
Sept. 3-8	Begin on Chapter 2, "Texas in the Federal System."
Sept. 8-15 Sept. 8	Begin on Chapter 3, "Texas Constitution." <u>Chapter 3 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Sept. 17	<u>TEST I:</u> Chapters 1, 2, & 3
Sept. 22-24 Sept. 24	Begin on Chapter 4, "Voting and Elections." Chapter 4 Terms due.
Sept. 29-Oct.1	Begin on Chapter 5, "Political Parties, Factions, & Campaigns."
Oct. 1-6 Oct. 1	Begin on Chapter 6, "Interest Groups." <u>Chapter 6 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Oct. 8	<u>TEST II:</u> Chapters 4, 5, & 6
Oct. 13-15	Begin on Chapter 7, "The Texas Legislature."
Oct. 15	Chapter 7 Terms due.
Oct. 20-27 Oct. 20	Begin on Chapter 8, "The Texas Executive." <u>Chapter 8 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Oct. 29	<u>TEST III:</u> Chapters 7 & 8
Nov. 3- 5 Nov. 5	Begin on Chapter 9, "The Texas Judiciary." <u>Deadline for Interest Group Review</u>
Nov. 10-17 Nov. 10 Nov. 12	Begin on Chapter 10, "Law and Due Process." <u>Chapter 10 Take-Home Test due.</u> Internet Activity Due.
Nov. 19	<u>TEST IV:</u> Chapters 9 & 10
Nov. 23-27 Dec. 1-3 Dec. 3	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS Begin on Chapter 11, "Local Governments." <u>Chapter 11 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Dec. 3-8	Begin on Chapter 12, "Public Policy in Texas."

Dec. 10	TEST V: Chapters 11 & 12
Dec. 15	FINAL EXAM: Comprehensive Post-Test over course Learning Objectives, Tuesday, December 15, 8:00 a.m.

*PLEASE NOTE: SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO REVISION. ANY CHANGES TO THIS SYLLABUS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS.

If you have any type of disability which requires assistance, please see the Professor as soon as possible during the first week of the semester.

Whenever you miss a class, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to see the Professor during office hours and NOT during class time to get handouts and other information. Also, when you miss an exam, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make arrangements with the Professor for all make-up exams within a three class day period.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday: 8-9:30 a.m.
 Tuesday: 8-9:30 a.m. 12:30-1:30 p.m.
 Wednesday: 8-9:30 a.m.
 Thursday: 8-9:30 a.m.; 12:30-1:30 p.m.
 Friday: 9-11:00 a.m.

If the Professor is not in the office during these hours, please leave a message on the telephone answering machine or with the business & social science secretary, or send an e-mail message to the Professor.

E-Mail Address: John.Stuart@texarkanacollege.edu

College telephone: 903-823-3226.

Attendance/Absentee Policy:

Texarkana College's absentee policy allows instructors to withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences. If a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she may be considered absent. Three tardies constitute one absence. It is the student's responsibility to check the syllabus for each instructor's tardy policy.

Faculty members are not obligated to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments and tests as a result of a student's absence from class. The college institution is required to take attendance and experience demonstrates that regular attendance enhances academic success. As such, students are expected to attend each meeting of their registered courses.

For this course, a student will be dropped from the course if absences exceed four (4) absences. Also, I do notice when you are Tardy/Late or leave class early and this will be recorded. This will affect your discussion/participation grade at the end of the semester. You know what time class starts. Please be here on time. For security purposes, the door to the classroom will be locked. I will close the door approximately five minutes after class/lecture begins. If the door is closed and locked, do not try to come in. If, for any reason, you leave class before it is dismissed, take your books with you. You will not be allowed to come back in class that day.

A student should not stop attending a class without formally withdrawing from the course by the institutions published Last Day for Students to Drop. If a student stops attending class after the published Last Day for Students to Drop, the student may receive a grade of "F" in the class. The instructor will submit the last date of attendance for students receiving a grade of "F" or "W". The last day to drop a course is **NOVEMBER 13.**

Withdrawal from a course(s) may affect a student's current or future financial aid eligibility. Students should consult the Financial Aid Office to learn both short and long term consequences of a withdrawal.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

A student's absence due to school trips and/or school business will not be counted against a student's allowable number of absences. Military duty and absences for Holy Days (FBD LEGAL) are covered in a separate section of the catalog and the student handbook.

These are the only excused absences that are considered by Texarkana College. Responsibility for work missed for any absence is placed on the student. Instructors are required to allow students to make up work missed if the absence is due to military duty* or religious holy days when students follow the correct notification procedures. Instructors are not required to allow students to make up work for absences due to other reasons. Make-up policies are listed in each individual instructor's syllabus.

**Students interested in Health Occupations should check with the division chair prior to entering the program.*

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE ABSENCES

After official registration, the following number of unexcused absences will be the maximum allowable before a student may be dropped from the class. Again, a student will be dropped from this course if absences exceed four (4) absences.

Academic Classes

A COURSE THAT MEETS FOR THE FULL 16-WEEK SEMESTER	
Class or Lab Meets:	An instructor may withdraw a student from a course if absences exceed:
Once a week (Night classes or Friday classes)	2
Twice a week (MW or TR classes)	4
Three times a week (MWF or TRF classes)	6
Four times a week (MTWR classes)	8
	Three tardies count as one absence.

Make-up Policy:

According to the Texarkana College Student Rules and Regulations, all students are encouraged to attend class, especially on the day that exams and assignments are due. Faculty members are not obligated to provide opportunities for students to make-up missed assignments and tests as a result of a student's absence from class. For this course, you may make-up only the first four major/unit tests as well as the Take-Home tests and chapters Terms & Names, but there is a time limit of for these make-ups. All MAKE-UP Tests (Testing Center) must be completed within three class days after the test is given in the classroom (ten points will be deducted automatically from each test unless there is an excused documented absence). Late Take-Home tests and chapter Terms & Names will only be accepted until the beginning of the next class period, with points being deducted for late work. If you foresee an absence, turn assignments in early. All other assignments and class activities for extra bonus points cannot be made-up if you are absent and no credit will be given for these assignments. There are no incompletes or dropping of the lowest test scores.

Please note: It is important for you to realize that there is a direct correlation between class attendance and success in a course. It is your responsibility to get the assignments and any course hand-outs for the next class period when you are absent. You must come by the Professor's office during posted office hours.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Scholastic dishonesty, involving but not limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of records will make the student liable for disciplinary action after being investigated by the Dean of Students. Proven violations of this nature will result in the student being dropped from the class with an "F".

This policy applies campus wide, including TC Testing Center, as well as off-campus classroom or lab sites, including dual credit campuses. This information can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu/PDFFiles/CurrentStudents/studenthandbook.pdf>.

Disability Act Statement:

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Larry Andrews at 903.823.3283, or go by the Recruitment, Advisement, and Retention Department located in the Administration building for personal assistance.

If you have an accommodation letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need for this class. *It is best to request these changes at the beginning if not before the start of class* so there is ample time to make the accommodations..

Financial Aid:

Attention! Dropping this class may affect your funding in a negative way! You could owe money to the college and/or federal government. Please check with the Financial Aid office before making a decision.

Please Note:

This course syllabus is subject to revision. Any changes to this syllabus will be announced in class.

TEXAS GOVERNMENT 2306

Major Tests	Points Possible	Your Grade
I	100	
II	100	
III	100	
IV	100	
V	100	
Final Exam - Comprehensive Post-Test	100	
Take-Home Tests	Points Possible	Your Grade
I – Ch. 3	20	
II – Ch. 6	20	
III – Ch. 8	20	
IV – Ch. 10	20	
V – Ch. 11	20	
Terms & Names	Points Possible	Your Grade
Ch. 4	10	
Ch. 7	10	
Discussion/Participation	Points Possible	Your Grade
Interest Group Review	160	
Political Survey	10	
Internet Activity	10	
Total Points	900	
Extra Points		
Lost Points		

TESTS:

Major tests will cover chapters indicated, Study Questions, class notes, chapter terms, and videos. Test items include multiple choice questions, matching terms, identifications (I.D.'s), and a few short-answer completion questions. You will need five Scan Tron 882 from the College Bookstore. There will be four major tests plus the Final Exam for a total of five major tests. The Study Questions (outlines) will indicate important information in each chapter. These will be covered by test regardless of whether they have been discussed in class.

TAKE-HOME TESTS:

There will be five Take-Home Tests during the semester (20 points each; total of 100 points). Late Take-Home Tests will only be accepted until the beginning of the next class period, with points being deducted for late work. If you foresee an absence, turn the Take-Home Test in early.

GOVERNMENT DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION:

Discussion/Participation points will include looking up some government terms and Study Questions; working on a political survey, and an Interest Group topic project as course requirements this semester. Other information will be provided later for these participation items. The Interest Group project is worth approximately 160 points and the other participation items are worth approximately 40 points; total of 160 points for Discussion/Participation.

Also included as part of classroom discussion/participation will be extra credit points which students can earn based on participation (answering and asking questions), good attendance, good attitude, and promptness at the end of the semester.

DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS:

Each faculty member is his/her own disciplinarian in the classroom. Any student may be subject to being relocated to another desk, or being dropped from this class for disciplinary infractions. This includes such items as unnecessary talking, tardiness, cheating on tests, sleeping in class and during videos, personality and attitude problems which disrupts teaching with detrimental effect upon other students and the class, etc.. Behavior that interferes with the class will be dealt with and the student engaging in the behavior will be asked to leave the class.

Also, no food or drinks in the classroom.

CONFERENCES:

If you find that you are having difficulty with the course, please schedule a conference with the Professor. Do this before it is too late and not toward the end of the semester. Remember the Professor is here to advise and assist you, not to consign you to eternal torment.

EXTRA POINTS:

Attendance- Good attendance indicates a responsible student and can help you at the end of the semester.

Participation- You may earn some extra points by participation in additional and constructive class discussions such as answering and asking questions on the subject/course, having a good attitude, etc.. One or two book article reviews approved by the Professor. See additional page. (5 points each; total of 10 points for the article reviews).

Extra points (10 points maximum) may be acquired by:

Two magazine-article reviews which must be completed by **NOVEMBER 12**.
Read the following selections. First, draft an outline of the entire article which is to be completed by the end of October. Second, write a 4-6 page review (in your own words) of the article. (5 points per article.)

"Why the Business Climate in Texas is Rated No. 1," Texas Business (July 1976)

"The Texas Industrial Commission Peddling the Promise Land," Texas Observer, (Oct. 6, 1978). Study of Texas official policy toward business and industry.

"Oil: The Source," Atlantic Monthly (March 1975).
Insight into the politics of oil in Texas.

"Texas: The Superstate," Newsweek (Dec. 12, 1977).

"The Highway Establishment and How It Grew and Grew and Grew," Texas Monthly (April 1974). Case study of the highway interest group in Texas politics.

"Inside the Austin Funhouse," Atlantic Monthly (March 1975)

"The Real Governor of Texas," Texas Monthly (June 1978)
How a federal judge named Justice wields immense power.

"Raza Desunida," Texas Monthly (Feb. 1977). A look at the Mexican-American party of south Texas.

"The Case Against the Farmers," Texas Monthly (March 1978)
Nobody wants to face up to what the farmers really need.

"The House is not a Home," Texas Monthly (Sept. 1977).
What a freshman in the Texas Legislature finds.

"Big Deal," Texas Monthly (Jan. 1976) Did the Sharpstown scandal really make any difference?

"Inside the Lobby," Texas Monthly (July 1973). Veterans who do more to shape state government than most elected officials.

- "There Ought to be a Law," Texas Monthly (Jan. 1977)
Several laws that ought not to be on the books.
- "Divide and Conquer," Texas Monthly (Jan. 1975)
Five states are better than one; should Texas secede?
- "Ticket to Ride?" Texas Monthly (October 1978)
Will the Republican party continue to exist in Texas?
- "Where's My Line?" Texas Monthly (June 1976)
Is "one man, one vote" (reapportionment) just another numbers racket?
- "Behind the Lines," Texas Monthly (Jan. 1980)
Questions about school desegregation.
- "Mark White's Coming-Out Party," Texas Monthly, May 1983,
p. 138, pp. 236-246.
- "Charlie Brooks' Last Words," Texas Monthly, February 1981,
p. 101. Capital punishment by injection.
- "God's Happy Hour," Texas Monthly, January 1983, p. 92.
Wet-dry elections.
- "The Making of a Congressman," Texas Monthly, January 1983,
p. 114. Urban politics in Texas.
- "Trial by Technicality," Texas Monthly, April 1982, p. 126.
Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.
- "New Priorities for the 68th Legislature," Texas Observer,
p. 7-10. January 28, 1983.
- "Hobby, Bullock Call the Shots," Texas Observer, April 8, 1983
p. 5-7.
- "The Highwaymen Come Riding," Texas Observer, February 25, 1983
p. 5-7. Texas Highway Department and the Legislature.
- "Wading Through the Water Plans, Again," Texas Observer,
December 10, 1982, p. 1, 8-13.
- "The Man With the Plan-Tom Delay," Texas Monthly, August 2004, p. 100, etc.
- "And Justice for Some," Texas Monthly, November 2004, p. 154, etc.
- "Tom Craddick-Speaker," Texas Monthly, February 2005, p. 100, etc.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY:

Texarkana College policy states that no cell phones should be in sight or on in the classroom; all phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and put away at all times in the classroom. If you have a cell phone out in the classroom (even texting under your desktop), you will be asked to leave and you will be dropped from the class. If you have a specific emergency, see the Professor before class to ask for a waiver of this policy. Otherwise, this is your warning. No laptops unless the Professor gives you individual permission.

CLASSROOM COURTESY:

Personal courtesy is a part of this classroom. That means that listening and responding will be consistently and courteously practiced. No student will engage in behavior that suggests a lack of respect for anyone in the class. Behavior that interferes with another student's learning will not be tolerated.

EMAIL:

Texarkana College uses a Texarkana College created and maintained email account for every student. This email account is used for official correspondence, communication to and from faculty and staff, and may be the only email recognized by faculty, staff, and administrators.

COLLEGE COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

Note: You are invited to come by my office during my office hours

- if you are having trouble with the class material;
- if you need additional explanation of concepts;
- if you want an explanation for a grade received;
- if you have a complaint or suggestion; or
- if you would like to discuss your project and findings.

CLASSROOM NORMS: I know this is hard to believe, but some students enter college without knowing what is expected of them in the classroom. However, there are certain behavior expectations placed on you when you enroll in college. These are:

DO'S:

- Do show up on-time
- Do stay for the whole class period
- Do refrain from packing up before class is dismissed
- Do come to class prepared
- Do participate in discussions
- Do show respect for fellow classmates and their ideas.

DON'TS:

- Don't talk among yourselves during class.
- Don't sleep during class.
- Don't read other books during class.
- Don't do work for other classes in this class.
- Don't pop gum in class.
- Don't use profanity in class.
- Don't bring children to class.
- Don't use tobacco products in class.
- All cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and put away at all times in the classroom.
- Cheating on tests or any other assignments will result in the student being dropped from the course with a failing grade.

THE RESPONSIBLE STUDENT- IN THE CLASSROOM AND WORKPLACE

I have learned from past experience that many students really do not understand at times what is expected of them, perhaps not only in college but also in the workplace. The following information describes the classroom expectations as well as the workplace expectations.

Attending college is similar to being employed. Success on the job is achieved only with hard work and effort. This is also true of college. Your employer expects you to be on the job every day and to be on time and prepared to work each day. You are allowed only a specific number of sick days each year after which your pay is "docked." This is also true of college classes. Regular and prompt attendance is essential, and your "sick" days are limited (see syllabus). Excessive absences and tardies will result in a loss of "pay" (dropped from class or lower grade).

Meetings are an essential part of the workplace, and everyone is expected to attend regularly and contribute to the discussion. If you miss an excessive number of meetings and/or do not share vital information, your employment success is in jeopardy. The same holds true for this class. You are not only expected to attend all of our "meetings," but you are expected to contribute to our discussion and analysis of issues. This requires that you come to each class prepared to discuss the assigned material. Failure to do so will put your success in jeopardy and can result in a reduction in your "salary" (grade).

Your employer requires you to submit all reports on time. Failure to do so will endanger your employer's business and your success. The same is true for this class. All "reports" (tests and papers) are due at the scheduled time (see syllabus and other handouts). If, for a justified reason, you will not be able to meet the time schedule, you must notify me, just as you would contact your employer if you needed an extension. However, as in the workplace, such extensions do not come without a cost. Extensions result in a decrease in your "salary" (grade).

Performance reviews occur periodically in the workplace, and your employer determines the degree of your success during these reviews. Such is the case in this class. The "performance reviews" for college classes are quizzes, papers, and exams (see syllabus). These reviews require you to show not only your knowledge of the material, but also your ability to use this knowledge in real-world situations. Your "pay" (grade) depends upon the magnitude of your performance.

If you attend class regularly, participate in class discussions, and submit all materials, well-prepared and in a timely fashion, you have the potential to excel in this class. Remember that the "bottom line" is for you to learn from your education and work experience. Welcome and good luck!!