



**Syllabus:** Texas Government

**Course Number:** GOVT 2306

**Professor:** Dr. Candy Stevens Smith

E-mail: [candy.smith@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:candy.smith@texarkanacollege.edu)

**Textbook Information**

*Inside Texas Politics, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* by Brandon Rottinghaus. Oxford University Press, 2023.  
ISBN 9780197672419.

**Class Learning Environment/Policies**

This class will be an intellectually engaging, open, active learning environment. It is the nature of political discourse that people will disagree, but all students will be free to express their opinions in this course and be treated with respect. We learn from listening to others. Keep in mind this is a college class, and appropriate adult behavior is required. In addition to learning subject matter, college is about accepting responsibility, developing communication skills, and practicing professionalism.

Everyone here is an adult. Students are expected to:

- 1) Read the assigned material; this provides background, details, concepts, and terms.
- 2) Listen to lectures and take notes
- 3) Actively participate in class discussion and activities

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
- 2) Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government
- 3) Describe 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 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) Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- 8) Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas

**Computer Requirement Policy**

Students are required to have a computer with Internet access for classes. The computer must be an actual computer – smart phones, iPads, Androids, etc., are not acceptable substitutes because they lack software compatibility necessary to complete all assignments and tests. Financial costs for the necessary equipment and internet access are the responsibility of the student.

Students may be able to purchase a computer through the Texarkana College Bookstore. Systems purchased through the bookstore meet or exceed all requirements, are competitively priced, and may be purchased using financial aid funds. If the system is purchased through another source, it is the student's responsibility to ensure the system meets all requirements.

Computer systems requirements:

Webcam, microphone, and speakers or headphones

Windows 10 or a recent version of Mac OS (minimum Sierra). Windows 10 S mode is not supported  
Hardware capable of running Microsoft Teams (free download) and supports multi-media playback  
Support for Chrome or Microsoft Edge – Note: Firefox, Safari, or other browsers may not work on all TC applications  
Able to run Microsoft Office which will be provided free to TC students  
Adobe Reader or another PDF viewer  
Antivirus software such as Windows Defender or another 3<sup>rd</sup> party anti-virus solution  
Respondus/Lockdown browser must be installed; it is free for TC students through the provided link.

Students should regularly backup content to prevent loss of coursework due to hardware failure. Backup copies of documents and other coursework may be placed on OneDrive cloud storage. OneDrive is included free of charge for all TC students. A list of Internet service providers can be found on the TC website at:

### **Student Assessment and Grading Scale**

Exams – Exams are weighted equally and are worth **50 percent of the final grade**. Exams will include multiple choice, short discussion, and essay questions. Any material from the textbook, assignments, class lectures, and discussions may show up on an exam. If a student misses an exam, the professor will determine if a makeup is allowed upon written email request from the student. Exams are timed and are taken on Moodle with Respondus/Lockdown browser.

Assignments, papers, forums, and quizzes – These components are worth **50 percent of the final grade**.

Grading Scale:

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

### **Attendance and Withdrawal Policy**

Attendance is taken by participation (completing assignments). The last date attended will be listed on the final grade submission and may affect your financial aid. The only excused absences are for military duty and absences for Holy Days and approved Texarkana College trips/business.

### **Academic Integrity**

All work that you present as a student should be your own and completed independently unless otherwise instructed. 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 by the College. This information can be found in the Texarkana College Catalog and Student Handbook at [www.texarkanacollege.edu](http://www.texarkanacollege.edu). **Plagiarism includes using information from an online website without giving credit to the author or the site—in other words, do not Google an assignment question and copy and paste the information into a paper. Any use of AI in a writing assignment is unacceptable.** Cheating will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and possibly an F for the course.

### **Disabilities and Accommodations**

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Contact Tonja Blase, Director of Student Retention, at 903.823.3283, or make an appointment to go to her office located in the academic commons.

If a student qualifies for accommodations from the TC Director of Disability Services indicating that they have a disability that requires academic accommodations, the director will send an email to the professor. **It is best to request these changes either before classes begin or at the beginning of the semester to there is time to make the accommodations.**

TC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The Director of Human Resources handles inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies; 903-823-3017 or [human.resources@texarkanacollege.edu](mailto:human.resources@texarkanacollege.edu)

### **Basic Needs Security**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing enough food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect his/her performance in this course or ability to remain in school is urged to contact Tonya Blasé, Director of Student Retention, at 903-823-3349 for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so; this will enable her to provide resources that she may possess.