

TEXARKANA COLLEGE

Syllabus: Texas Government 2306

Course Number: GOVT 2306

Semester & Year: Fall 2016

Instructor Information:

Name: John Stuart

Office: E - Social Science Building

Telephone: 903-823- 3226

E-mail: John.Stuart@texarkanacollege.edu

Office Hours:

Monday: 8-9:30 a.m.; 11:00-12:00 p.m.

Tuesday: 8-9:30 a.m.

Wednesday: 8-9:30 a.m.; 11:00-12:00 p.m.

Thursday: 8-9:30 a.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: 9781285881324 or 9781133959991.

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.

CLASS SCHEDULE**TEXAS GOVERNMENT 2306**

State and Local Government

Fall 2016

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

J. Stuart – Professor

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

Aug. 23	INTRODUCTION. What is Government?
Aug. 25-30	Begin on Chapter 1, "Texas Culture, & Diversity."
Sept. 1-6	Begin on Chapter 2, "Texas in the Federal System."
Sept. 6-13 Sept. 6	Begin on Chapter 3, "Texas Constitution." <u>Chapter 3 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Sept. 15	<u>TEST I:</u> Chapters 1, 2, & 3
Sept. 20-22 Sept. 22	Begin on Chapter 4, "Voting and Elections." Chapter 4 Terms due.
Sept. 27-29	Begin on Chapter 5, "Political Parties, Factions, & Campaigns."
Sept. 29-Oct.4 Sept. 29	Begin on Chapter 6, "Interest Groups." <u>Chapter 6 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Oct. 6	<u>TEST II:</u> Chapters 4, 5, & 6
Oct. 11-13	Begin on Chapter 7, "The Texas Legislature."
Oct. 13	Chapter 7 Terms due.
Oct. 18-25 Oct. 18	Begin on Chapter 8, "The Texas Executive." <u>Chapter 8 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Oct. 27	<u>TEST III:</u> Chapters 7 & 8
Nov. 1- 3 Nov. 1	Begin on Chapter 9, "The Texas Judiciary." <u>Deadline for Interest Group Review</u>
Nov. 8-15 Nov. 8 Nov. 10	Begin on Chapter 10, "Law and Due Process." <u>Chapter 10 Take-Home Test due.</u> Internet Activity Due.
Nov. 17	<u>TEST IV:</u> Chapters 9 & 10
Nov. 21-25 Nov. 29-Dec.1	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS Begin on Chapter 11, "Local Governments."
Dec. 1	<u>Chapter 11 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Dec. 1-6	Begin on Chapter 12, "Public Policy in Texas."

Attendance/Absentee/Tardy Policy:

Texarkana College's policy allows Professors to withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences. For this class, a student will be considered Tardy/Late after the start of class until fifteen (15) minutes after class begins. Three tardies will count as one absence. The student will be considered absent fifteen (15) minutes after the designated start time of class. If a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she may be considered absent. A student will be dropped from the course if absences exceed four (4) absences as stated by college 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.

All students will sign-in each class day and a record will be kept for each student's attendance during the semester. You are responsible for your own attendance. Also, each student is required to have assignments completed the day that the assignments are due. The Professor reserves the right to drop students after (a) excessive absences, and/or (b) one or more Unit Exams not completed. However, dropping a class that you are failing or in danger of failing is your responsibility.

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 Professor 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 18**.

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 Policy:

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. Professors 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. Professors are not required to allow students to make up work for absences due to other reasons. Make-up policies are listed in each individual Professor's syllabus.

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.

Reminder Class Policies:

Cell phones and beepers must be turned off and not visible in the class unless an emergency situation exists. This situation must be discussed with the Professor prior to class. If a student is caught text-messaging in class, the student will be dropped from the class. If a student's cell phone rings in class, the student will receive a warning and will be dropped from the class after the second offense.

Students should make arrangements with the Professor in advance if they need to leave class before dismissal. There will be a zero tolerance policy for any behavior that is disruptive of classroom learning. This includes ANY use of vulgar language or RUDE BEHAVIOR toward Professor or any other student in the class.

Please Note:

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

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).

"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 1983,
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.

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!!