

TEXARKANA COLLEGE

Syllabus: Texas Government 2306 --- Hybrid Course

Course Number: GOVT 2306

Semester & Year: Spring 2019

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.; 12:30- 1:30 p.m.

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

Wednesday: 8-9:30 a.m.; 12:30- 1:30 p.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 Jones, Maxwell & Crain, 18th edition (2017-2019).

A textbook is a necessary requirement for this course. ISBN: 9781337598033.

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, one Civics Awareness exam, 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 Political Survey -	10 total points
(6) One Internet Activity -	10 total points
(7) One Civics Awareness Exam -	50 total points
(8) One Comprehensive Post-Test -	<u>100 total points</u>
	950 total points

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

Grading Scale:

Grade	
A	950-855 points
B	854-760 points
C	759-665 points
D	664-570 points
F	570-below

TEXAS GOVERNMENT 2306 --- HYBRID COURSE
State and Local Government

Spring 2019

TEXAS POLITICS TODAY by Jones, Maxwell & Crain, 18th edition (2017-2019)
J. Stuart – Professor

Tuesdays 9:30-10:50 a.m.

Jan. 22	INTRODUCTION. What is Government?
Jan. 29	Begin on Chapter 1, "Texas Culture, & Diversity."
Feb. 5	Begin on Chapter 2, "Texas in the Federal System."
Feb. 12	Begin on Chapter 3, "Texas Constitution." <u>Chapter 3 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Feb. 19	Continue on Chapter 3. TEST I: Chapters 1, 2, & 3 Test opens online after class until February 21 (Thursday).
Feb. 26	Begin on Chapter 4, "Voting and Elections." Chapter 4 Terms due. Interest Group Sources due --- Five Issue page handout, National Internet Issue Source, Texas Internet Issue Source.
Mar. 5	Begin on Chapter 5, "Political Parties, Factions, & Campaigns." Begin on Chapter 6, "Interest Groups." <u>Chapter 6 Take-Home Test due.</u>
Mar. 11-15	SPRING BREAK.....
Mar. 19	Continue on Chapter 6. TEST II: Chapters 4, 5, & 6. Test opens online after class until March 21 (Thursday).
Mar. 26	Begin on Chapter 7, "The Texas Legislature." Chapter 7 Terms due.
Apr. 2	Begin on Chapter 8, "The Texas Executive." <u>Chapter 8 Take-Home Test due.</u> <u>Deadline for Interest Group Review</u>

Apr. 9	Continue on Chapter 8. TEST III: Chapters 7 & 8 Test opens online after class until April 11 (Thursday).
Apr. 16	Begin on Chapter 9, "The Texas Judiciary." Begin on Chapter 10, "Law and Due Process." Chapter 10 Take-Home Test due. Internet Activity Due --- Texas Laws.
Apr. 23	Continue on Chapter 10. TEST IV: Chapters 9 & 10. Test opens online after class until April 25 (Thursday).
Apr. 30	Begin on Chapter 11, "Local Governments." Chapter 11 Take-Home Test due. Also, begin on Chapter 12, "Public Policy in Texas." Civics Awareness Exam --- TBA.
May 7	Continue on Chapter 12. Comprehensive Post-Test over Course Learning Objectives. Post-Test opens online after class until May 9 (Thursday).
May 14	FINAL EXAM: Chapters 11 & 12. Tuesday, May 14, TBA.

*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.

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.

TEXAS GOVERNMENT 2306

Major Tests	Points Possible	Your Grade
I	100	
II	100	
III	100	
IV	100	
V	100	
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	
Civics Awareness Exam	50	
Total Points	950	
Extra Points		
Lost Points		

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 **two (2) 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 **April 19.**

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.

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 **two (2) 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 chapter Terms & Names, but there is a time limit for these make-ups. All MAKE-UP Tests (Testing Center) must be completed within three class days after the test is given online (ten points will be deducted automatically from each test unless there is an excused documented absence). For this Hybrid course which meets only on Tuesdays, any late Take-Home tests, chapter Terms & Names, and other assignments will only be accepted on the following Thursday morning, 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 are 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.

TESTS:

Major Unit tests will cover chapters indicated, Study Questions, class notes, chapter terms, and videos. Test items include 50 multiple choice questions on the Unit Exams. There will be four major Unit Exams plus the Final Unit Exam for a total of five Unit Exams which you will complete online from your computer. 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. Also, the Comprehensive Post-Test and the Civics Awareness Exam will be completed online.

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 following Thursday morning, 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, please do not have food or eat in the classroom. Small drinks with lids are acceptable.

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).

Classroom Policies: Etiquette/Classroom Courtesy/Conduct Behavior---

Your classroom experience is not just about passing classes, but preparing for a career in the professional world/work occupation. An employer wants to see a degree or certificate, not because they necessarily are concerned with your knowledge of some of the events from American History, Government, or other academic areas, but that you have proven endurance, organizational skills, and etiquette required to be a productive citizen and a valuable member within society. The following list provides not only a useful set of rules for class conduct, but more importantly lays groundwork for furthering the “professional skill set” for future growth in your work occupation.

The “professional skill set” includes being prepared, organized, operating on schedule, conducting one’s self professionally and cordially, working with others and working independently, meeting new challenges, and perhaps most importantly, **blaming yourself for your failures and recognizing others for your successes**. Successful people have a mindset that reminds them that everything you do and most of what happens to you are a result of **your choices**. We all have unfortunate circumstances, but it is how we handle these problems that set us apart from those who are not successful in the professional world.

The following are classroom policies which are structured with these “hidden rules” of the “professional culture” in mind.

- Class begins promptly. It is your responsibility to arrive before or at the start of class. Remember, you choose your schedule, so do not be late. Tardiness should almost never happen. **If you are late more than once, we will need to have a talk during my office hours --- “make time for this.”** Walking into class late is a major distraction and is disrespectful to those who get to class on time.
Also, if a student leaves and returns during class or leaves the class before the class is over, he/she may be considered absent.
- **Remember, an emergency on your part does not necessarily constitute one on the class or the Professor.** Cars that do not start, children who are sick, a change of work schedule, an inability to wake up in the morning, not having materials for class, a failure to understand the course syllabus, the final exam schedule, and other similar problems should not be brought into the classroom. **If you need exceptions or adjustments, please see me during office hours or schedule an appointment.** I am very willing to work out alternate arrangements with students but I cannot fix these life problems.
- There will be a **zero tolerance policy for any behavior that is disruptive** of classroom learning. This includes use of vulgar language or rude behavior toward any student in the classroom or the Professor.

- Today's professional world expects everyone to be well versed in electronic device usage. While I would prefer no cell/iphone usage during class (and NEVER for talking or texting) , "limited usage" for class purposes such as eBook use will be allowed when permitted by the Professor. This also applies to tablets or laptops. During all other times, cell/iphones must be turned off and put away. If you have a legitimate/emergency reason for your cell/iphone to be out, you will be required to fill out a form and document your legitimate reason (but NEVER for talking or texting). Also, make sure that your iphone does not ring in class --- the student will be dropped from class after the second offense.
- While drinks with lids are acceptable, please **do not eat in class. Eating should be done before or after class.**
- While in the classroom, present means you are alert, prepared, and participating. Sleeping in class is distracting, disrespectful, and counterproductive. If you are going to sleep, stay at home. **If you sleep in class, I will ask you to leave and I will mark you absent for the day.**
- Students should make arrangements with the Professor in advance if they need to leave class before dismissal. However, these should be rare occurrences. Your college work should always be at or near the top of your priority list and rarely should other things override class time.
- Student responsibilities --- Students are expected to be familiar with navigating the Texarkana College Online Website located at <https://tconline.texarkanacollege.edu>
You are an adult learner and as such you are responsible for your own learning. No one else can be a "stand in" for you in the learning process. You will be held accountable for all assigned activities and exams. You must bring your "Study Question Guidebook" to class each day and use it.
- Your college courses are also part of your "work" just like at your workplace. Always put some "effort" into both.
- Classroom courtesy---- Personal courtesy is 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.

Please Note:

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