

Statement of the SPC Social Science Department's  
Government/Political Science Division for  
GOVT 2305 Common Course Syllabus  
*(As required by the Texas Legislature and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and approved by Texas Higher  
Education Coordinating Board and SPC)*

Department: Social Sciences

Discipline: Government

Course Number: GOVERNMENT 2305

Course Title: Federal Government (Federal Constitution and Topics)

Credit: 3 Lecture, 0 Lab

Satisfies a core curriculum requirement? Yes, Social Science and ALL Undergraduate Degrees

Prerequisites: TSI compliance in Reading

Available Formats: Conventional, INET, ITV

Campus: Levelland, Reese, ATC, Plainview

Textbook: Varies according to instructor Refer to each instructor's instructions for textbook requirements.

Course Specific Instructions: Each instructor will attach his/her course with specific instructions.

Course Description: This course is a survey of fundamental principles of political science, including the American system of government and the origins and development of the constitutions of the United States. This course satisfies the Legislative requirements for teacher certification.

Course Purpose: Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint the learner with the origin and development of the US Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas.

Approval Number: 45.1002.51 25

Course Requirements: To maximize a student's potential to complete this course, he/she should attend all class meetings, complete all homework assignments and examinations in a timely manner, and complete all other projects or papers as assigned in the instructor's specific instructions.

Course Evaluation: See the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluating student performance.

Attendance Policy: Whenever absences become excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course. Each instructor will have additional information about attendance on his/her course information sheet.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Students who have completed this course will be expected to:

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of our federal system.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. Politics.

Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCA.

1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information by:
  1. Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information
  2. Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question,
  3. Analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.
2. Communication – to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral or visual communication by: Developing, interpreting, and expressing ideas through written, oral, or visual communication.
3. Social Responsibility Skills – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively I regional, national, and global communities by:
  1. Demonstrating intercultural competence,
  2. Identifying civic responsibility,
  3. Engaging in regional, national, and global communities.
4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, action, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:
  1. Reading, understanding and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines and requirements set forth in the "Statement of Personal Responsibility of Students" (Attached)
  2. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
  3. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

## Government 2305 Instructor Syllabus

### Course Description

This course is a survey of the fundamental principles of political science, including the American system of government and the origins and development of the constitutions of the United States. This course satisfies the legislative requirements for teacher certification.

### Instructor Information

- **Name:** Professor: Britt Bearden
- **Email:** bbearden@southplainscollege.edu
- **Office:** Lubbock Downtown Center 1016B
- **Office Hours:** M/W: 9:00AM – 9:30AM and 12:15PM – 1:00PM | T/TH: 12:15PM – 2:30PM | F: 8:00AM – 9:00AM
- **Optional Textbook:** We The People, Core Edition 14<sup>th</sup> Edition | Authors: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert | Publisher: Norton | ISBN: 978-1-324-03494-0
- If you are having issues financially with purchasing this book, the 13<sup>th</sup> edition is acceptable.

### Course Grade and Assignments

- **Syllabus Quiz | 1965 Alabama Literacy Test Quiz = 5%**
- **Attendance = 5%**
- **Exams = 40%**
- **Discussions = 30%**
- **Preliminary Essay Assignment = 5%**
- **Essay = 15%**

### Syllabus Quiz

- **Time:** 60 minutes
- **Attempts:** Unlimited
- **Questions:** 2 questions
- **Purpose:** Ensure you read, understood, and agree to the syllabus

## 1965 Alabama Literacy Test Quiz

- Time: 60 minutes
- Attempts: Unlimited
- Questions: 10 questions
- **Purpose:** Earn easy points and have tangible experience with a form of voter suppression from U.S. history

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend class regularly and be prepared to participate in discussion

- If you arrive more than 10 minutes late you will be counted absent.
- If you leave early without telling me beforehand, you will be counted absent.
- If you sleep during class, you will be counted absent.
- If you are on your phone or not paying attention, you will be counted absent.

## Exams

- Number of Assignments: 3 exams including the final exam
- Questions: 50 multiple choice

If you miss an exam (not the final) and do not have proper documentation, you will be able to take a retake the exam for half credit. Students will have to schedule a time during my office hours. There are no exceptions.

## Discussions Postings

**Purpose:** develop your ability to write in Academic English and test knowledge on chapters that did not have quizzes assigned to them.

Number of Assignments: 3 Discussions

## Basic Instructions:

- Discussion Post Length: 400 words
- **A full rubric and instructions can be found in Blackboard.**

## Preliminary Essay Assignment

**Purpose:** to help you on your essay and receive feedback on your topic and thesis before you begin writing your final essay.

### Basic Instructions:

- Choose a relevant topic
- Craft a thesis statement
- Find at least 5 sources you can use in your essay
- **An example, rubric, and further instructions can be found on Blackboard**

## Essay

**Purpose:** display your knowledge and research skills by writing an academic essay about a topic of your choosing relating to United States government. You can either choose to write an expository or argumentative essay.

It is important to write in third person and try NOT to editorialize.

### Basic Instructions:

- Double spaced
- 12 point font
- Times New Roman
- 1 inch margins
- at least 1200 words in length (that is NOT including headers, footers, citations, etc.)
- Uses citations (APA or MLA)
- **A full rubric and instructions can be found at the end on Blackboard.**

**Note:** Expect written assignments to be graded within a business week of the due date.

## Course Requirements, Expectations, and Policies

### Late Work Policy and Technology Problems

I do not accept late work.

If for some reason the professor or the Blackboard server has made a mistake, you will not be penalized.

Always start early and finish early to avoid problems.

### Technology

**No cell phone, Apple Watch, iPod, headphones etc. usage during class.**

If you are expecting a call or need to leave early, notify me immediately or before class and I will make an exception for you.

Students may use a laptop computer during class but are not permitted to instant message others, check social network updates, email, etc. The usage of the laptop computers is meant for taking notes and considered a privilege, not a right, given to you by me and can be taken away at any time.

**If you use ANY electronic device during an exam, your exam will automatically be taken up and you will be given a zero.**

### Extra Credit

I do not offer extra credit.

### Drop Policy

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records.

Other than that, it is your responsibility to drop the course.

### Disruption of Classroom Environment

Your professor will not tolerate any disruption of the classroom environment. This includes any problems your facilitator encounters with you AND hateful/disrespectful remarks made in the classroom, on discussion postings, email, or chat. I will drop you from the course for such violations.

## Emailing Your Professor

I require students to send a professional email when contacting me. If you send an unprofessional email to me, I will respond asking you to retype your email.

When emailing, please include what course you are enrolled in (Example: GOVT 2305.156).

**DO NOT attempt to communicate with me through Blackboard. I only communicate through email, preferably your SPC email.**

**Unless there are unforeseen circumstances, you can expect me to reply to emails within 24 hours. If I do not, don't be afraid to email me again or forward your message to me.**

## Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resources

There are now websites that will actually generate semi-unique material that somewhat resembles original material. Since the technology is available to create this content, technology is also available to detect this content.

Make no mistake, this is plagiarism. I am not asking AI to write a paper, I am asking you, the student, to create this content.

If you submit work that is not your own, original material, it will be considered plagiarism and receive a grade of zero. The incident will also be detailed to the Dean of Students for disciplinary actions.

Keep in mind some grammar software (Grammarly) is flagged as AI. I suggest not using these programs to avoid confusion.

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is the taking of credit for something that is not the work of the owner. It is cheating and will not be tolerated. See the General Catalog for more information on plagiarism. Cheating or dishonesty of any type in this course will result in the student being dropped from this course with an "F."

## Academic English

South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English typically used in academic, professional, and business contexts. While slang, regional idioms, and informal kinds of self-expression are appropriate in some contexts, they are out of place in academic writing.

**South Plains College Statements:**

For information regarding Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Non-Discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation) Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please use the following link: [Syllabus Statements \(southplainscollege.edu\)](https://southplainscollege.edu).

## Course Schedule and Readings

### Section 1:

|               | <b>Class Lectures and Readings</b>   | <b>Assignments Due</b>                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Week 1</b> | Syllabus                             | None  |
| <b>Week 2</b> | Chapter 2: Founding and Constitution | None  |
| <b>Week 3</b> | Chapter 12: Congress                 | Syllabus Quiz<br>Alabama Literacy Test Quiz |
| <b>Week 4</b> | Chapter 13: The Presidency           | None  |
| <b>Week 5</b> | <b>EXAM 1</b>                        | <b>EXAM 1</b>                               |

### Section 2:

|                | <b>Class Lectures and Readings</b> | <b>Assignments Due</b>                       |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Week 6</b>  | Chapter 4: Civil Liberties         | None   |
| <b>Week 7</b>  | Chapter 4: Civil Liberties         | None   |
| <b>Week 8</b>  | Chapter 5: Civil Rights            | Discussion 1<br>Preliminary Essay Assignment |
| <b>Week 9</b>  | Chapter 5: Civil Rights            | None   |
| <b>Week 10</b> | <b>EXAM 2</b>                      | <b>EXAM 2</b>                                |



**Section 3:**

|                              | <b>Class Lectures and Readings</b>   | <b>Assignments Due</b>    |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Week 11</b>               | Chapter 9: Political Parties   | Discussion 2              |
| <b>Week 12</b>               | Chapter 9: Political Parties   | None                      |
| <b>Week 13</b>               | Chapter 8: Voting and Participation<br><br>Chapter 10: Campaigns and Elections | None                      |
| <b>Week 14</b>               | Chapter 8: Voting and Participation<br><br>Chapter 10: Campaigns and Elections |                           |
| <b>Week 15</b>               | Chapter 1: Political Culture<br><br>Chapter 6: Public Opinion                  | Discussion 3<br><br>Essay |
| <b>Week 16 / Finals Week</b> | FINAL EXAM   | FINAL EXAM                |

## Concise Calendar and Due Dates

- Syllabus Quiz: **Due February 2<sup>nd</sup> by 5:00PM**
- 1965 Literacy Test Quiz: **Due February 2<sup>nd</sup> by 5:00PM**
- Exam 1: **February 15<sup>th</sup>**
- Discussion 1: **Due March 8<sup>th</sup> by 5:00PM**
- Preliminary Essay Assignment: **Due March 8<sup>th</sup> by 5:00PM**
- **SPRING BREAK: March 11<sup>th</sup> – March 15<sup>th</sup>**
- Exam 2: **March 28<sup>th</sup>**
- Discussion 2: **Due April 5<sup>th</sup> by 5:00PM**
- **Last Day to Drop: April 25<sup>th</sup>**
- Discussion 3: **Due May 3<sup>rd</sup> by 5:00PM**
- Essay: **Due May 3<sup>rd</sup> by 5:00PM**
- Final Exam: **May 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM**