

GOVT 2306: Texas Government Course Syllabus

Professor Daniel M. Regalado, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: MW: 8-9am; W: 5-6pm; TTh: 10-11:30am & 1:15-2:15pm

Times: W 6-7:20pm/Hybrid **Location:** DH 216 **Credit Hours:** 3

"You always win if you don't give up," Daniel M. Regalado

Objective: Introduction to the history and practice of government at the state and local levels within the state of Texas. Topics include a study of general political theory, the Texas Constitution, structure of Texas government, citizen participation, elections and the general functions of county and municipal governments. I will lecture on the major points of the textbook chapters; the remaining material in the chapters is your responsibility to read and is testable. ICOs 1, 2, & 6.

Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

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.

Text: *Texas Politics Today* (2011-2012 edition) by Maxwell, Crain, and Santos. ISBN # 978-0-495-90948-4 (Previous/Alternate editions may suffice, although please contact the Instructor to verify)

Grading Policy/Scale: A = 630pts and above B = 560-629 pts C = 490-559 pts D = 420-489 pts F = Below 420 pts

Quantity	Description	Points per Item	Total Points
4	Exam	100	400
1	Current Event News Article Review (CE)	1 CE = 80 points 2 Replies (10 points each)= 20 points	100
1	Discussion Posts (DP)	10 Original Posts (10 points each)=100 points 20 Replies (5 points each)= 100 points	200
Total			700

Attendance & Participation: This is a hybrid course that requires face to face attendance and completion of online assignments. Regular attendance and participation is essential to achieving satisfactory progress, therefore it is the student's responsibility to attend class and to keep up with the assigned readings so that participation in class discussions and proper understanding of the material can occur. Attendance is taken every class meeting- If tardiness becomes a problem further action may occur. Please let me know if you require special accommodations.

Course Assistance: If you need technical assistance with the course you can contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-MORE (6673), visit this link: <http://www.odessa.edu/OCGlobal/blackboard/> or go to the "Tools" tab and click "Blackboard Help." If you have a question about the material you may contact me via e-mail, phone, or visit me in my office (E-mail is the best way to contact me and if I have not responded to you within 24 hours it means I did not receive your message so please resend it); You can also check the course chat room (Go to the "Tools" tab, then click "Collaboration," then "Chat Room") to see if I am, or another student is, in it and ask a question that way as well.

Tests & Final Exam: There will be a total of four tests- The tests will consist of multiple choice and identification questions. All exams will cover multiple chapters, and Test 4 is the Final which is a Departmental/Comprehensive version. It is imperative that students complete the reading assignments in order to be better prepared for the exams. I do not drop any test grades. Make-up exams will only be allowed with permission from the instructor and are a different version comprised of the textbook's test bank- Exceptions could be made at the Professor's discretion. No study guides will be provided although students will be allowed to use one index card on the test. If the material on the index card is typed, only one side of a 3x5 card can be used; if it is hand-written you may use both sides of a 4x6 card (Index card must be turned in with the exam and with your name on it).

Extra Credit: In this age of technology it is imperative that college students master the art of internet research, therefore for every exam up to ten extra credit points can be earned if the student submits to me a summary describing a website they found pertinent to the test material- DO NOT use websites such as Wikipedia, Dictionary.com, etc.- Actually research a site related to the material. The assignment should include: 1) URL, 2) date accessed, 3) author and/or organization that maintain the site, and 4) 2-3 sentences on your opinion of the webpage. **The extra credit assignment due dates will be announced, and posted on Blackboard**, and only one extra credit assignment can be turned in per test. The assignment must be posted in the proper Discussion Board thread.

Discussion Posts (DP): The student will be responsible for posting ten original posts and twenty replies on the discussion board for this course (Posts and replies need to be properly cited). Original posts must be at least 250 words in length and should respond to the questions posed for each section. Additionally, all students are required to respond to two of their classmate's original posts- Each reply should be at least 100 words in length and cannot simply be "I agree" or "Great comment" statements- Using your reply twice will not count. When posting/replying, it is ok to disagree with someone's comments (that is what higher education is all about), although please be considerate and polite to your fellow classmates- Rude and derogatory comments will not be tolerated and will result in 0 points for that assignment.

Current Event News Article Review: The student will be responsible for submitting a review on their chosen current event news article pertinent to Texas Government (Current meaning no more than a month old)- Students should e-mail the instructor to have their current event news article approved (When you submit your article for approval I need the title and link). Current Event news articles are at a "First Come First Serve" basis meaning that no two students can complete their review on the same news article- The review will be at least 600 words. The review will be a brief summary but mainly your opinion of a current event news article chosen by the student, and should include possible solutions and consequences that can occur- It will be graded on topic, content, and grammar. You will post your Current Event News Article review (Properly cited) at the designated discussion post thread. Additionally, all students are required to respond to two of their classmate's posts- Each reply should be at least 100 words (Please see comments about replying in the "Discussion Posts" section). Late reviews will be penalized 5% of the final grade for every day that it is late. Below are some items of consideration to help your grade:

- 1) Was your review mostly a summary? If it was it should have been mostly your opinion.
- 2) Was your review at least 600 words in length?
- 3) Did you respond to at least two of your classmate's post? If so, was each at least 100 words?
- 4) Did you submit your assignment on time (Remember, 5% for every day it was late)?
- 5) Did you cite your assignment (Link/Title of Article)?
- 6) Did you proofread (How many typos, etc. did your assignment contain)?
- 7) Did you tie it into policy/government via including possible solutions and consequences?

Scholastic Dishonesty: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and will be handled in accordance to the OC Student Code of Conduct/Board Policy Manual. The Professor has the right to, at his discretion, add or alter any assignments, exams, and or methods.

Classroom Etiquette: Please silence your cell phones- DO NOT TEXT (Or hold non-course discussions) during class. You may eat or drink in class...just keep in mind to be courteous to your fellow students.

Tentative Schedule: Your reading assignments on the specified chapters should be read prior to class. Copies of Powerpoint lectures will not be provided, although there are additional sources via Blackboard. **The OC Course Blackboard page will contain a copy of the syllabus, discussion post threads, and deadline dates.**

Month	Date(s)	Activity
January	23	Introductions & Discuss Syllabus
January	25-May 10	Unit 1 "Texas and Texans," Test 1: Chapters 1-3; Unit 2 "Texas Politics," Test 2: Chapters 4-9, & 14; Unit 3 "Texas Law and Money," Test 3: Chapters 10-13
March	11-16	OC Closed-Spring Break
April	16	Last day to drop with a W
May	13 (Monday)	Final Exam/Test 4, Chapters 1-14, 6-8:30pm Extra Credit for Final Exam due by 10pm

Unit 1: Chapter 1 "Texas History and Culture," Chapter 2 "The Texas Constitution in Perspective," & Chapter 3 "Voting and Elections"

Unit 2: Chapter 4 "Political Parties," Chapter 5 "Interests Groups," Chapter 6 "The Legislature: Organization and Structure," Chapter 7 "The Legislative Process," Chapter 8 "The Governor," Chapter 9 "The Bureaucracy," & Chapter 14 "Local Government"

Unit 3: Chapter 10 "Texas Judiciary," Chapter 11 "Law and Due Process," Chapter 12 "Taxing and Budgeting," & Chapter 13 "Spending and Services"

Special Needs: Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may also call the Office of Disability services at 432-335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

Learning Resource Center (The Library): The Library, known as the Learning Resources Center, provides research assistance via the LRC's catalog (print books, videos, e-books) and databases (journal and magazine articles). Research guides covering specific subject areas, tutorials, and the "Ask a Librarian" service provide additional help.

Student Email: Please access your Odessa College Student E-mail, by following the link to either set up or update your account: <http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/>.

All assignments or correspondence will be submitted using your Odessa College email.

Technical Support: For Blackboard username and password help and for help accessing your online course availability and student email account contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-6878 or online at https://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/helpdesk_form.htm.

Important School Policies: For information regarding student support services, academic dishonesty, disciplinary actions, special accommodations, or students' and instructors' right to academic freedom can be found in the Odessa College Student Handbook.

Success Coaches: The Odessa College Student Success Coaches will help you stay focused and on track to complete your educational goals. If an instructor sees that you might need additional help or success coaching, he or she may submit a Retention Alert or a Starfish Alert. A Student Success Coach will contact you to work toward a solution.

The SEI process for face-to-face and online courses is scheduled for the week of April 28th.