

Course Syllabus for Government 2306 (2013/Summer II)

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Objective: The purpose of this course is to provide students with a basic and fundamental understanding of Texas government. During the duration of this course, we will cover different aspects of state and local government. This course will also incorporate other disciplines such as history, sociology, philosophy, literature, and economics. All of these aspects are necessary to have a true basic understanding of our government, and how it functions. After the completion of this course, you should have a general knowledge of our state and local government that will prepare you to be a more informed and active citizen.

Textbook: Maxwell, et. al., Texas Politics Today, 15th (2011-2012) edition

Course Outline:

Unit One: Power – Chaps. 2, 6, 8, and 10

Unit Two: Pursuit – Chaps. 1 and 3-5

Unit Three: Exercise – Chaps. 7, 9, and 11-13 The end of this unit will also cover a chapter on local government. (Chapter 14)

Course Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, the student 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
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

Examinations: During this semester there will be 3 unit exams and a comprehensive final. You will be required to have a scantron for each exam. The unit exams will be on the following

dates: July 22nd, July 29th, and August 5th. The final exam will be given on August 15th. There will also be random quizzes administered throughout the course. Cell phones are not allowed to be out during testing!

Examination make-up policy: If you will be unable to attend for an exam, you must let me know in advance. I will then give you further instructions for making up the exam. There will be NO make-ups for missed quizzes.

Grading Policy: Grade distribution will be as follows:

10% - Attendance

60% - Exams (each exam will be worth 20%)

30% - Final exam

Final averages at the end of the semester will be as follows: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, all grades below 60=F. Once a grade is assigned it is FINAL! Please keep this in mind as we go through the semester, and prepared to do your best in advance.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Suspected cheating or plagiarism may result in a reexamination in a controlled environment, a failing grade, or dismissal from the course. As per OC Board Policy the option is with the instructor. In cases of academic dishonesty, the instructor has the authority to impose appropriate scholastic penalties.

Academic Assistance: help with preparing for exams, writing essays, setting up student e-mail, Blackboard, etc., is available at the Student Success Center. Contact them at 335-6878 or <http://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/> The Odessa College Student Success Coaches are there to help you be successful and complete your educational goals.

Drops/withdrawals: The last day to drop/withdraw for this semester is Wednesday August 7, 2013.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory, and absences will have an effect on your final grade. Roll will be taken at every class meeting. If you are unable to attend a class meeting, you are still responsible for the material covered in your absence. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to make sure you are not counted absent.

Extra-credit: If you attend class, take notes, do the assigned reading, and prepare for class properly extra-credit will probably not be necessary. However you can see me for opportunities to do extra-credit, but only for extreme circumstances. I will not grant extra-credit due to apathy on your part.

Special needs: Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. Issues with special needs will be referred to the Office of Disability Services.

Classroom Conduct Policy:

- Class Attendance is expected
- Be on time and stay for the duration of the class
- Stay awake and stay focused
- Do not have personal conversations during lecture, however feel free to participate in class
- Do not work on other classes or personal task during class time
- Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices (texting is also unacceptable)