

Course: Government 2305, Federal Government

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**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

**Foundational Component Area of Core Curriculum:** 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excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course.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:

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

#### Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCA.

Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information by:

Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information,

Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question,

Analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.

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.

Social Responsibility Skills – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities by:

Demonstrating intercultural competence,

Identifying civic responsibility,

Engaging in regional, national, and global communities.

Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, action, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:

Reading, understanding and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines and requirements set forth in the “Statement of Personal Responsibility of Students” (Attached)

Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making

Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

### **Government 2305 Online Course Syllabus**

Carefully read the entire syllabus below. When you have completed reading the syllabus send me an e-mail (through the course Blackboard e-mail) stating, “I have read the entire syllabus and agree to follow all of its requirements.” Then state your name at the bottom of the e-mail. By sending me an e-mail, you will be held to all the requirements stated in the syllabus. The syllabus agreement is essential for me to know that you understand the rules of this course.

Text: Cal Jillson, *American Government: Political Development and Institutional Change*, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition, Routledge Publishing, ISBN 9-781032-293967.

(You will need to purchase this book either from the SPC Bookstore or buy or rent an e-book online.)

Purpose: The object of the course is to give students a better understanding of American government.

College Policies: 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](https://southplainscollege.edu/syllabus-statements) (southplainscollege.edu)

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.

Methods to Attain Learning Outcomes: The following suggestions will help you better understand the material, and improve your knowledge of American government.

1. Review the learning outcomes located at the bottom of the first page of each chapter
2. Read the chapter carefully, at least twice.
3. Outline the chapter to focus on the authors' organization of the chapter, and discover what they believe to be the most important points in the chapter.
4. Review all graphs and charts.
5. Review all the key terms

Study Guide: A course study guide is provided for you under the Course Content icon located in the top left hand corner of the home page. The study guide will provide study questions for each chapter, to help you better understand the major points in each chapter. While the study guide will not cover every question on the test, it will assist you in answering most of the questions.

Exams and Grading **(Read this section carefully)**

1. Exams: You will have 11 chapter tests. The best 10 chapter tests will be counted towards your grade (your lowest test score will be dropped). Each test will have 25 multiple choice and true/false questions worth 4 points apiece, for a total of 100 points. You must take the test by 11:59 PM on the assigned date. Otherwise, you will receive a **zero** for the test. All tests will be timed, just as if you were in class, so make sure you know the material before you take the test. You will not have time to look for the correct answers in the book. Tests will last 30 minutes. Note carefully: once you click on “Begin” you must complete the test in its entirety. Please be sure to click on the save button after you answer each question. Otherwise, your answer will not be saved and you will receive no credit for that question. If the test is not completed within the allotted time, you will receive a zero for that grade. Please do not wait until the last second to click “Save and Submit” for the test. Students, who have tried this, have found that the computer will not accept their test.

**Computer malfunctions happen. If you have a computer malfunction during a test, it is considered an incomplete test, and I will use your one drop for that test. There are no make-up tests.**

All tests are available on the first day of class. Any test may be taken before the scheduled test date, but no test may be taken after the scheduled test date.

3. Grading:

- a. You will take 11 chapter tests each worth 100 points.
- b. Your grade will be calculated by averaging your 10 best chapter tests (I will drop your lowest chapter test grade)
- c. Grading scale: A = 100-90, B = 89-80, C = 79-70, D = 69-60 & F = below 60
- d. There is no extra credit for this class.

**Chapters for Reading Tests**: You will take the following tests. See your Test Schedule for test dates. **Test may be taken before the assigned test date, but not after.** Anyone failing to take a test by the assigned date will receive a **zero** for that test score.

Chapter 2 – The Revolution and the Constitution  
Chapter 3 – Federalism and the American Political Development  
Chapter 4 – Political Socialization and Public Opinion  
Chapter 7 – Political Parties: Winning the Right to Govern  
Chapter 8 – Voting, Campaigns, and Elections  
Chapter 9 – Congress: Partisanship, Polarization, and Gridlock  
Chapter 10 – The President: Executive Power in a Separation of Powers Regime  
Chapter 12 – The Federal Courts: Activism versus Restraint  
Chapter 13 – Civil Liberties: Ordered Liberty in America  
Chapter 14 – Civil Rights: Where Liberty and Equality Collide  
Chapter 15 – Government, the Economy, and Domestic Policy

**For All Technical Support - [blackboard@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:blackboard@southplainscollege.edu) or call 806-716-2180**  
(They are much better than I am at solving computer problems.)

## **Student Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure all tests have been completed by their due date. Any test not completed by the due date automatically receives a zero. Computer problems or mechanical failures are not considered acceptable for late tests or assignments. You are highly encouraged not to wait until the last minute to complete tests. Technical and personal problems are not considered acceptable excuses for late tests, since you are able to take your tests well in advance of the test date.