

Angelina College
Behavioral and Social Sciences Division
Government 2306 X88172S/X58172S - Texas Government (Texas Constitution and Topics)
Instructional Syllabus: Woodville High School/Chester High School

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION:

- 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Origin and development of the Texas Constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and intergovernmental relations, political participation, the election process, The Texas legislature, the bureaucracy and executive offices, the court system, local and special interest governments, public policy, and the political culture of Texas.
- 2. INTENDED AUDIENCE:** This course will meet the certification requirement for prospective teachers, as required by Texas law. It will also meet requirements for all students seeking an Associate in Arts or Science degree or who plan to transfer to a four year school.
- 3. Instructor: Keith Denby, Adjunct Instructor of Government**

Teaching Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. – 8:40 a.m.

II. INTENDED STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- 1. Core Objectives Required for this Course**
 - 1. Critical Thinking Skills** to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
 - 2. Communication skills** to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
 - 3. Empirical and Quantitative Skills** to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
 - 4. Teamwork** to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
 - 5. Social Responsibility** to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
 - 6. Personal Responsibility** to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making
- 2. Course Learning Outcomes for all Sections (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Lower-Division Academic Course Guide manual)**
 1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitutions and Texas political culture.
 2. Demonstrate knowledge 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 the political culture of Texas.

III. **ASSESSMENT MEASURES:**

1. **Assessment of the Core Objectives:**

1. **Critical Thinking Skills** – Students will answer four (4) questions regarding Critical Thinking skills. Each question will have an appropriate and distinct answer.
2. **Communication Skills** – Students will answer four (4) questions regarding Communications skills. Each question will have an appropriate and distinct answer.
3. **Social Responsibility** – Students will answer four (4) questions regarding Social Responsibility. Each question will have an appropriate and distinct answer.
4. **Personal Responsibility** – Students will answer four (4) questions regarding Personal Responsibility. Each question will have a distinct and appropriate answer.

2. **Assessments for the Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. The student will demonstrate understanding of the origin and development of Texas Government including the historical and political precedents that have led to the current state of events in section I. The Spanish and Mexican Constitutions of Texas, the Republic of Texas Constitution and all of the constitutions of the State of Texas will be covered in Section I in a series of lectures and classroom discussions. There will be assigned reading. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the federal system covered in Section I in a series of lectures and class discussion. The discussion will include Constitutional distribution of powers, power to tax and spend, the interstate commerce clause and other key items. An exam for **section I** will cover the assigned material.
2. The student will analyze participation in Texas politics. Topics will include legal restrictions on voting, the election process, socioeconomic factors affecting voter participation, party competition and other factors that affect the process of voting. **Section II** covers this information through assigned reading and lectures.
3. Also in **section II** the student will understand the relationship of interest groups and Texas politics. This will include regulation of interest groups, techniques used by interest groups, and resources and strengths of interest groups. The student will also demonstrate an understanding of Texas political parties, including party strength, ideology, two-party politics, the one-party era in Texas, and third-party movements in Texas. The student will also gain an understanding of political elections and campaigns in Texas. The discussion will include political primaries, voting rights, absentee and early voting, political campaigns, political consultants, and money in campaigns. All of the previous items will be discussed in Section II. The material for **section II** will be covered on an exam.
4. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Texas Legislature, the Office of the Governor, the State bureaucracy and the Court system of the State. This will be covered in **Section III** in a series of lectures and class participation activities. The material will be covered on an exam.
5. In **section IV** the student will display an understanding of the financing of Texas state government and how it compares to other state. The student will show understanding of state revenue, equity in taxes, local taxes, nontax revenue sources, expenditures and other topics that will be presented to the student in a series of lectures and classroom discussions. In addition, the student will display knowledge of local governments, such as the role of the mayor in various forms of city government and the role of the city

manager in those different types as well. The student will further display knowledge of the methods of electing city officials, including nonpartisan elections. The student must know how urban and rural counties are operated, and the weaknesses of county governments in Texas. Students are required to demonstrate knowledge of how special districts and school districts operate. The student must also demonstrate knowledge of some special district issues, including tuitions and fees and limitations on personal freedom. The material will be covered on an exam.

IV. **INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES:** This course will be taught using a combination of lectures, small group exercises, exams, and article-based reports event reports. Internet research will be required for this course. Exams must **be taken on paper and pencil via Scantron in class.**

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES:

3. Required Textbook and Recommended Readings, Materials, and Equipment

Text: *Government and Politics in the Lone Star State*, 10th Edition, by L. Tucker Gibson, Jr., Clay Robison, and Joanne Connor Green. Pearson Education, Publisher.

4. Course Policies: This course conforms to the policies of Angelina College as stated in the Angelina College Handbook.

1. **Academic Assistance** — If you have a disability (as cited in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) that may affect your participation in this class, you should see Maria Lopez or Steve Hudman in room 200 of the Student Center. At a postsecondary institution, you must self-identify as a person with a disability; Ms. Lopez and Mr. Hudman will assist you with the necessary information to do so. To report any complaints of discrimination related to disability, you should contact Mr. Steve Hudman, Dean of Student Affairs, in Room 101 of the Student Center. You may also contact Dean Hudman by phone at [\(936\) 633-5292](tel:9366335292) or by email shudman@angelina.edu.

1. **Attendance** – Attendance is required by the college and will be take EVERY day. Any student with three (3) consecutive absences WILL be reported to Angelina College for possible dismissal from class; (4) four cumulative absences may be judged as excessive absences from class and the student may be dropped from the class. **It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course. You must officially drop a class or risk receiving an “F” in the course.**

2. Additional Policies Established by the Instructor

- a. **Respect Issues.** Disrespect for the instructor or fellow classmates will not be tolerated.
- b. **Cell phones.** Phones **MUST BE OFF IN CLASS.** This does not mean on vibrate. Any student with a cell phone on in class or texting during class will be asked to exit the class until further notice. Turn off all cell phones before an exam. If a cell phone vibrates or rings during an exam, the student will receive a zero on the exam.
- c. **Late work.** Late work is unacceptable. A broken printer or printer out of ink, etc. does not qualify as reasons for late work. An illness or family event does not automatically allow extra time to turn in an assignment, because ample time is given for work to be completed and turned in for each section. Emergency situations require documentation for late work to be accepted, and

that will be at the discretion of the instructor. Late work will be penalized 20 points for each class period the work is late.

- d. **Tardiness and absenteeism.** Students who are tardy or who have been absent will be admitted to class with a tardy or absent slip provided by the school registrar.
- e. **Plagiarism.** Students are NOT allowed plagiarism in any form. This applies to all work. Each student is responsible for answering questions and all other work in his/her own wording. Duplication of the work of others will result in a ZERO (0) for the work. Any work which requires research also requires documentation. All sources must be documented with both parenthetical referencing (author, date) and sources cited. Copying and Pasting without quotation marks is plagiarism, which is cheating. Work containing cut and paste will not be graded (resulting in a zero on the assignment). If you need a quote (for emphasis only) – make SURE you have provided quotation marks. Failure to do so will result in a zero on the assignment.
- f. **Cheating.** Cheating includes copying the work of classmates on assignments or exams. Cheating includes copying and/or collusion by the work of any other person. Cheating will result in a zero for the assignment/exam and possible failure or expulsion from the course. Plagiarism (cheating) includes copying the work of others without quotation marks and proper citations.
- g. **Computer requirements: The course work requires the use of a computer. Students need access to a computer and reliable internet service. High school concurrent students will need access to library or computer lab computers during the course of the school week.**
- h. **ASSIGNMENTS MAY NOT BE SUBMITTED VIA E-MAIL.**
- i. **The instructor may modify the syllabus by verbally announcing any revisions during class.**

IV. **COURSE OUTLINE:** Description of the Course Activities including due dates, schedule, and deadlines. (See pages 4 & 5)

Spring 2015 Due Dates

The AC testing center is NOT used – **All quizzes/tests are pen and paper during class.** All exams must be proctored by personnel designated by Woodville or Chester ISD. No notes, books, cellphones may be used to take any exam.

Section I: January 16 thru February 6 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)

Exam #1: Chapter One: “*The Social and Economic Environment of Texas Politics*”, Chapter Two: “*The Texas Constitution*”, Chapter Three: “*Texas Government and Politics in the Federal System*”, and Chapter Four: “*Local Government in Texas*”. **Exam date January 30th Value 125 points. This exam covers chapters assigned for Section I. Grades will be available on Tuesday, February 6th.**

Assignment:

1. The Social and Economic Environment of Texas(Chapter 1) Topic: Who were the Native American People of Texas? **Due to me on 1/23/2018 for presentation on 1/25/2018 Group One**

2. Email your report to: kdenby@angelina.edu
3. Each Group will provide me with their presentation of their report via email two days before the specified due date. All organization of the presentation should be the best and most complete that the group can provide. Answer the traditional questions: Who, what, when, how, how many, what kind of, where, etc. When in doubt always opt for providing more information than you think necessary. Your report should take about thirty minutes. Grading will be based on the overall quality of the presentations.

The grading will be based on four principles:

4. First, it must be clear that your group has researched your topic in depth, presenting information to the class that they probably have never known before.
 5. Second, the information must clearly be of high quality and very significant to the overall presentation.
 6. Third, the information must be presented with smooth transitions between each section of the overall presentation. Choppiness such as excessive time between each presenter must be avoided.
 7. Fourth, audio-visuals such as voice-overs, video clips, or audio clips must be synchronized to the presentation in the most professional manner possible. I expect your very best effort on these presentations.
8. January 31st is the official census date. Students who have not taken Exam #1 chapters one, two, three, and four by January 31st will be considered as “Non-attending” and drop proceedings will be begun.

February 19th Woodville/Chester Winter Break begins. February 26th 7:30am classes resume.

Section II: February 7 – March 8 (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8)

Exam #2: Chapter Five: “*The Texas Legislature*”, Chapter Six: “*The Texas Executive*”, Chapter Seven: “*The Texas Bureaucracy and Policy Implementation*”, and Chapter Eight: “*The Judicial System in Texas*”, Exam date March 8th. Value 125 points, or 12.5% of your grade. This exam covers all chapters assigned for Section II. Grades will be available March 15th.

Assignment:

1. Texas Government and Politics in the Federal System(Chapter 3) What are Maquiladoras?
Due to me on 2/06/2018 for presentation on 2/08/2018 Group Two

2. Local Government in Texas (Chapter 4) Describe the Diversity of Texas Counties **Due to me on 2/13/2018 for presentation on 2/15/2018 Group Three**
3. The Texas Legislature (Chapter 5) Describe Contemporary Redistricting Battles in Texas **Due to me by 2/27/2018 for presentation on 3/1/2018 Group Four**

FRIDAY, MARCH 9th is Mid-Semester

March 12th Spring Break for Angelina College begins. March 19th at 7:30am classes resume.

Section III: March 13–April 10 (Chapters 9, 10, 11,12)

1. Exam #3, Chapter Nine: *“Political Socialization, Political Behavior, and Public Opinion”*, Chapter 10: *“The Party System in Texas”*, Chapter 11: *“Elections, Campaigns, and Voting in Texas”*, and Chapter 12: *“The Mass Media in Texas Politics”*, **Exam date April 10th. Value 125 points, or 12.5% of your grade. This exam covers all chapters assigned for Section III. Grades will be available by April 17th.**

Assignment:

1. The Texas Executive (Chapter 6) Who was Ann Richards? **Due to me on 3/6/2018 for presentation on 3/8/2018 Group Five**
2. The Texas Bureaucracy and Policy Implementation (Chapter 7) Describe Legislative Budgetary Control. **Due to me by 3/20/2018 for presentation on 3/22/2018 Group Six**

Monday, April 2nd is the last date to drop or withdraw with a “W”

Section IV: April 10 – MAY 8 (Chapters 13 & 14)

1. Exam #4, Chapter 13: *“Interest Groups and Political Power in Texas,”* and Chapter 14: *“Contemporary Public Policy Issues in Texas”*, **Exam Date May 3, value 125 points, or 12.5% of your grade. This exam covers all chapters assigned for Section IV. Grades will be available by May 8th.**

A review for the final exam will consist of the four exams you have taken. You are to keep the exams as they are returned to you.

The Final Exam must be taken on May 8th and will be worth 300 points, or 30% of your grade.

V. EVALUATION AND GRADING:

Course Organization: The course is divided into four (4) Sections of Study. Each section contains assigned readings, exams and reports. At the end of the course there will be a final exam.

Component details.

1. **There are four major exams worth 125 points each for a total of 500 points. Each exam covers assigned textbook readings.**

2. There is an exam over core learning principles which is worth 50 points.
3. There are classroom reports worth a total of 150 points.
4. The final exam is comprehensive and is worth 300 points. The total for all components is 1,000 points.

Possible points total for semester = 1,000 points. Grades are based on the following points:

A = 89.5 or above; B = 80– 89.4; C = 70 – 79.4; D = 60 – 69.4; F = below 60 points

The final is comprehensive and must be taken in order to receive credit for the course. Failure to take the final exam will result in an “F” in the course.

The instructor may modify the provision of the syllabus to meet individual class needs by informing the class in advance as to the changes being made.

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Course Learning Outcomes for all Sections (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual)

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
2. Demonstrate knowledge 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 government.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the 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 and policies in Texas.

EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS

1. The Judicial System in Texas(Chapter 8) Review an Article on Judicial Activism Due 3/22/2018
2. The Party System in Texas(Chapter 10) Describe the party in the electorate Due 3/29/2018
3. The Mass Media in Texas Politics(Chapter 12) Review an Article on the evolution of Texas newspapers Due 4/5/2018
4. Interest Groups and Political Power in Texas(Chapter 13) Review an Article on Dominant Interest Groups in Texas. Due 4/19/2018
5. Contemporary Public Policy Issues in Texas(Chapter 14) Explain Two Year Budgets in Texas. Due 4/26/2018

6. Contemporary Public Policy Issues in Texas(Chapter 14) Explain a Regressive Tax System. Due 5/3/2018

Each individual will provide me with their presentation of their report via email at kdenby@angelina.edu two days before the specified due date. All organization of the presentation should be the best and most complete that the individual can provide. Grading will be based on the overall quality of the presentations.

The grading will be based on four principles:

First, it must be clear that your group has researched your topic in depth, presenting information to the class that they probably have never known before.

Second, the information must clearly be of high quality and very significant to the overall presentation.

Third, the information must be presented with smooth transitions between each section of the overall presentation. Choppiness such as excessive time between each presenter must be avoided.

Fourth, audio-visuals such as voice-overs, video clips, or audio clips must be synchronized to the presentation in the most professional manner possible.

I expect your very best effort on these presentations.