

**Angelina College**  
**Behavioral and Social Sciences Division**  
**Government 2306 TX1182S- Texas Government (Texas Constitution and Topics)**  
**Instructional Syllabus: Trinity High School/Angelina College**

**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 the 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 communications.
  - 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 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 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. An exam will cover the assigned material.
3. 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. In addition, the student will 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. An exam will cover the assigned material.
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. The material will be covered on an exam.
5. The student will display an understanding of the financing of Texas state government and how it compares to other states. 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 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 question-answer technique with students providing the answers to a series of questions. The instructor will amplify student answers if necessary. On a bi-weekly basis students will be required send an email to the instructor with the answer to an essay question. Internet research may be required to answer the questions. All exams will be taken in Blackboard.

**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 in room 200 of the Student Center. At a postsecondary institution, you must self-identify as a person with a disability; Mrs. Lopez and/or Dean 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:936-633-5292) or by email at [shudman@angelina.edu](mailto:shudman@angelina.edu).

2. **Attendance** – Attendance is required by the college and will be taken at EVERY class meeting. Any student with three (3) consecutive absences WILL be reported to Angelina College for possible dismissal from class. Four (4) cumulative absences may be judged as excessive absences from class and the student may be dropped from the class at the discretion of the instructor. **It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course if their situation requires it. You must officially drop a class to avoid the risk of receiving an “F” in the course.**

i. **Additional Policies Established by the Instructor**

1. **Respect Issues.** Disrespect for the instructor or fellow classmates will not be tolerated.

2. **Cell phones.** Phones **MUST BE TURNED IN TO THE FACILITATOR DURING EXAMS. AT ALL OTHER TIMES YOUR PHONE SHOULD BE ON VIBRATE DURING CLASS AND SHOULD ONLY BE USED DURING THE REGULAR CLASSROOM SETTING TO RESEARCH ANSWERS TO ASSIGNED QUESTIONS OR TOPICS. NO TEXTING, SNAPCHATting, TWEETING, SKYPEING, FACETIMING**

**OR OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS OTHER THAN THOSE THE INSTRUCTOR ASSIGNS ARE ALLOWED.**

3. **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 on time. Emergency situations require documentation for late work to be accepted, and that will be at the discretion of the instructor.
4. **Tardiness and absenteeism. ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED.** Students who are tardy or who have been absent will be admitted AT THE DISCRETION OF THE FACILITATOR. THREE TARDIES WILL EARN YOU ONE ABSENCE. EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-SPONSORED UIL EVENTS DO NOT COUNT AS ABSENCES BUT ANY MISSED WORK MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE NEXT CLASS MEETING TIME.
5. **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.
6. **Cheating.** Cheating includes copying the work of classmates on assignments or exams and/or copying or colluding on assigned work unless the work is a team assignment. Cheating will result in a zero for the assignment/exam and possible failure or expulsion from the course. **THERE WILL BE NO SECOND CHANCES AND THE WORD OF THE FACILITATOR OR INSTRUCTOR WILL BE FINAL ON THIS MATTER.** Plagiarism (cheating) includes copying the work of others without quotation marks and proper citations.
7. **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 from time-to-time.**
8. **SOME ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRE E-MAIL SUBMISSION.**
9. **The instructor may modify the syllabus by verbally announcing any revisions during class but whenever time permits, written notice via course message will be provided.**

**3. COURSE OUTLINE:** Description of the Course Activities including due dates, schedule, and deadlines.

**Spring 2019 Due Dates**

The AC testing center is NOT used – **All exams or taken in Blackboard.** All exams must be proctored by personnel designated by Trinity ISD. **No notes, books, or cellphones may be used to take any exam.**

**Section I: January 15<sup>th</sup> thru February 1<sup>st</sup> (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 Thursday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. Value: 11% of your semester grade.

Send the answer to the following three questions to me at [kdenby@angelina.edu](mailto:kdenby@angelina.edu) on or before the dates specified.

1. Briefly describe the myth of individualism in Texas. Due Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>.
2. Explain why the administration of Governor Edmund J. Davis was so unpopular. Due Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup>.
3. What was Proposition 12? Explain why it was significant. Due Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**January 31<sup>st</sup> is the official census date. Students who have not taken Exam #1 chapters one, two, three, and four by January 31<sup>st</sup> will be considered as “Non-attending” and drop proceedings may be begun.**

**Section II: February 5<sup>th</sup> thru March 8<sup>th</sup> (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 7<sup>th</sup>. Value: 11% of your semester grade.

Send the answer to the following four questions to me at [kdenby@angelina.edu](mailto:kdenby@angelina.edu) on or before the dates specified.

1. How and why has membership in the Texas Legislature changed in recent decades? Due on Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.
2. Briefly describe the formal qualifications for governor and characteristics one former governor. What prevents many people who are qualified to be governor from running for the office? Due on Friday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.
3. What is meant by “bureaucracy”? What are the characteristics of the bureaucracy as outlined by Max Weber and other scholars? Due on Friday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
4. What is jurisdiction? Explain in terms of original and appellate jurisdiction, civil and criminal cases, and geographic jurisdiction. Is jurisdiction in the Texas judiciary simple and straightforward? Due on Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 8<sup>th</sup> is Mid-Semester**

**March 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. Spring Break for Angelina College and Trinity High School begins. March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am classes resume.**

**Section III: March 11<sup>th</sup> thru April 12<sup>th</sup> (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 **Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup>**. Value: **11% of your semester grade.**

**Assignment:**

1. How do individuals with a college education differ in terms of their political attitudes and opinions from those with less education? Why might a college education produce such differences? Due on Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.
2. Define ticket splitting and briefly explain the role it plays in Texas politics. How is ticket splitting associated with the realignment process? Due on Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.
3. Texas passed a voter identification law that went into effect in 2013. What does the law require of individuals wanting to vote? Why do advocates support the law? On what basis do some people oppose it? Due on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>.
4. What is the Capitol press corps and what has happened to it in recent years? Why might it matter for the nature of politics in Texas? Due on Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.

***Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> is the last date to drop or withdraw with a “W”***

**Section IV: April 15<sup>th</sup> thru MAY 9<sup>th</sup> (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 **April 25<sup>th</sup>**. Value **11% of your semester grade.**

1. What were the views of James Madison (as espoused in *The Federalist Papers*) on factions (interest groups) within the political system? How did he propose dealing with political challenges presented by factions? Due on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>.
2. When and why was the Texas lottery created? Should the lottery be continued in its current form (including how lottery revenue is distributed)? Justify your position. Due on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>.

**A review for the final exam will be posted by Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>.**

**The Final Exam must be taken on May 9<sup>th</sup> and will be worth 30% of your semester grade.**

**4. 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 exams worth 11% each for a total of 44%. Each exam covers assigned textbook readings/discussions as described above.
2. There is an exam over core learning principles which is worth 11% of your semester grade.
3. There are assigned questions which are cumulatively worth 14% of your semester grade.
4. The final exam is comprehensive and is worth 31% of your grade.
5. The total equals 100%.

**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 a failing grade 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.**

### **Government 2306 Texas Government**

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

- i. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
- ii. Demonstrate knowledge of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
- iii. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas government.
- iv. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Texas Government.
- v. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
- vi. Analyze the state and local election process
- vii. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- viii. Analyze issues and policies in Texas.