

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and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course.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

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.

Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCA.

1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information by:
  - a. Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information,
  - b. Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question,
  - c. Analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.
2. 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.
3. Social Responsibility Skills – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities by:
  - a. Demonstrating intercultural competence,
  - b. Identifying civic responsibility,
  - c. Engaging in regional, national, and global communities.
4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, action, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:
  - a. Reading, understanding and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines and requirements set forth in the “Statement of Personal Responsibility of Students” (Attached)
  - b. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
  - c. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

Government 2305 (3:3:0)

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

GOVERNMENT

SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION

DIVISION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE

Fall 2017

LARRY NORRIS

Larry Norris, Associate Professor of Government

OFFICE: Student Services building (SS) - #118

OFFICE HOURS: Monday/Wednesday 7:00-9:30 am, Friday 7:00-10:00 am

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### GOVERNMENT 2305 GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

Government 2305, as taught at South Plains College is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint the learner with the history, theory, and evolution of American democracy through a survey of the institutions and processes that comprise it. Theories, models, and observation will be utilized to demonstrate the scientific study of political phenomena. Further, the course meets statutory requirements as set forth by the state of Texas.

Textbook:

We the People: An Introduction to American Government 12th Edition (ISBN: 9781260110517) – Thomas E. Patterson

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

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate an understanding 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.

### GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Three major exams will be conducted during the semester. Exams will adhere to the format outlined by the instructor. The first two major exams will be worth 100 points each and the last exam (taken the final lecture week of the semester) will count as 50 points. Failure to take the last exam will result in the grade of “F” for the course. Each exam will contain a “critical thinking” writing component.

2. Two Reading Exams will be administered during the course of the semester. Each reading exam will count as 25 points for a total of 50 points. **Absolutely no make-ups on reading exams!** Failure to take the reading exam on the scheduled day and time will result in the grade of “0” for that particular exam. There are no exceptions to this policy.

### ARRIVING AT FINAL COURSE GRADE

Exam	Grade
1	100
2	100
Reading Exams (2) 25 pts. each	50
Final Exam	50
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	300/3 = 100

### GRADING SCALE

90 – 100 = A  
80 – 89 = B  
70 – 79 = C  
60 – 69 = D  
Below 60 = F

### ATTENDANCE POLICY (Read Carefully!)

College policy regarding attendance can be located within the school catalog. An attendance roster will be circulated at the beginning of each class period for the student to sign. It is the student's responsibility to make sure his/her name is registered on the roster. Failure to sign the roster, for whatever the reason, will result in the student being counted absent for that class period. The instructor's attendance policy will be the following (no exceptions):

M/W classes – on the fifth (5) absence the student will be dropped with an X.

\*I suggest you closely monitor your attendance. If you quit attending the class it is your responsibility to complete the "drop". If I drop you from the class it will be with an X.

### TARDY POLICY (Read Carefully!)

Being late for class is unacceptable for any reason. Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom setting and will not be tolerated. **Do Not** enter the classroom after the door is closed. A STUDENT WHO ENTERS THE CLASSROOM AFTER THE DOOR IS CLOSED WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE DROPPED FROM THE COURSE WITH AN "X." If you cannot arrive on time for a particular class, you may sit in on another class. In addition, the student is not allowed, for any reason, to leave the class early.

### Personal Responsibility:

Each student will be provided a handout entitled "Course Syllabus Agreement". The student will read/ comprehend the statement; then sign/date the handout.

### Social Responsibility:

There will be a "Social Responsibility" component to the course. Social Responsibility will adhere to the format outlined by the instructor

### MAKE-UP POLICY FOR MAJOR EXAMS

Missing the two major exams is strongly discouraged. A student will only be allowed to take a make-up exam if he/she has a legitimate excuse for missing the major exam. The only two legitimate excuses recognized by the instructor are sickness and a death in the family. The student must present the instructor a doctor's note to prove sickness; or provide an obituary concerning a death in the family. Otherwise, the student will receive a "0" for that particular exam. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this policy.

### CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and all electronic devices will be turned off (silent) upon entering the classroom. They will remain turned off, put away and out of my sight until the class is dismissed each day. Failure to comply with this policy will lead to dismissal from class and an automatic absence for that day.

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

### Course Outline

Unit I	Introduction
	<u>U.S. Constitution/Federalism</u> – Chapters 2 and 3
	<u>U.S. Congress</u> - Chapter 11
	<u>The Presidency</u> – Chapter 12
	EXAM I
Unit II	<u>The Federal Judiciary</u> -Chapter 14
	<u>Civil Liberties</u> – Chapter 4
	<u>Equal Rights</u> – Chapter 5
	EXAM II
Unit III	<u>Mass Media/Political Parties/Political Participation</u> - Chapters 10, 8
	<u>Campaigns and Elections</u> – Chapter 7
	<u>Policy: Foreign and Economic</u> – Chapters 15 and 17
	Conclusion
	LAST EXAM

ADA Statement:

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Reese Center (Building 8) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the SPC policy at:

[http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human\\_resources/policy\\_procedure/hhc.php](http://www.southplainscollege.edu/human_resources/policy_procedure/hhc.php)

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.