Course Number: GOVT 2306.S27

Course Title: Texas Government (Texas Constitution and Topics)

Course Description: Origin and development of the Texas Constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas

Note: Students transferring a government course from out-of-state must enroll in this course to complete the Texas legislative requirement.

Course Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3

Prerequisite: Meet TSI college-readiness standard for English; or equivalent

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
2. Describe 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 political culture of Texas.

Withdrawal Policy: See the current Collin Registration Guide for the last day to withdraw.

Collin College Academic Policies: See the current Collin Student Handbook.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Collin College will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing Course Information reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the ACCESS office, SCC-G200 or 972.881.5898 (V/TTD: 972.881.5950) to arrange for appropriate accommodations. See the current Collin Student Handbook for additional information.

** I have included some important academic dates below**

Collin College 2014 – Spring Academic Dates
August 24 ......................................... Fall Classes Begin
September 8 ...................................... Fall Census Date
October 16 ........................................ Fall Last Day to Withdraw
December 7-13 ................................. Fall Final Exam Week
INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor's Name: Kyleen Stennett  
Office Number: B103  
Office Hours: 30 minutes prior to class or by appointment  
Phone Number: (214) 570-6496 (Daytime)  
Email: kyleen_4@msn.com or kstennett@collin.edu  
Website: iws.collin.edu/kstennett/  
Blackboard: elearning.collin.edu

Class Information: GOVT 2306 – Fall 2015  
Section Number: S27  
Meeting Times: 1:00 – 4:30 pm on Sundays  
Meeting Location: Room B125 (Spring Creek Campus)


Supplies: Scantron and pencil for exams.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to arrive on time and attend class regularly, to notify the instructor if they will be absent and to make arrangements to complete any work missed. Exams are based upon this assumption. Ultimately you will find that regular attendance is essential to a satisfactory grade performance.

**During class, please turn off pagers and cellular phones.**

NOTE: If **FOUR or more classes** are missed, 15 points of your participation grade will automatically be deducted.

Students that have fallen behind and are failing are responsible for officially withdrawing themselves from the course; failure to do so will result in a performance grade of "F". Last day to withdraw with a grade of “W” is **OCTOBER 16, 2015**.

Your grade in this class will be based upon **three examinations** (worth 100 points each), **an oral presentation** (worth 100 points) and **one required lab assignment** (worth 50 points). **Class participation** is worth a total of **30 points** and consists of regular attendance and class involvement. Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>480-430</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>429-382</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>381-334</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>333-286</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 286</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Grades will not be curved)

Exams will be based on both class notes and the text. A review sheet will be provided to help you prepare for exams.
**Academic Ethics:** Every member of the Collin College community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Collin College may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty.

**Scholastic dishonesty** includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one’s own work material that is not one’s own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher’s editions, use of information about exams posted on the Internet or electronic medium, and/or falsifying academic records. While specific examples are listed below, this is not an exhaustive list and scholastic dishonesty may encompass other conduct, including any conduct through electronic or computerized means:

**Plagiarism** is the use of an author’s words or ideas as if they were one’s own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.

**Cheating** is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination; collaborating with another student during an examination without authority; using, buying, selling, soliciting, stealing, or otherwise obtaining course assignments and/or examination questions in advance; copying computer or Internet files; using someone else’s work for assignments as if it were one’s own; or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.

**Collusion** is intentionally or unintentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to, failing to secure academic work; providing a paper or project to another student; providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate about an examination or any other course assignment; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site; and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

In cases where an incident report has been filed for alleged violation of scholastic dishonesty, faculty are requested to delay posting a grade, for the academic work in question, until the Dean of Student’s Office renders an administrative decision of the case. Students found responsible for scholastic dishonesty offenses will receive an authorized disciplinary penalty from the Dean of Students Office. The student may also receive an academic penalty in the course where the scholastic dishonesty took place. The professor will determine the appropriate academic penalty.
Course Calendar:

08/30  Introduction

09/06  The Political Culture, People and Economy of Texas – Chapter 1
      Texas in the Federal System – Chapter 3

09/13  The Texas Constitution – Chapter 2
      The Texas Executive Branch – Chapter 8
      **Oral Presentation**
      **Review

09/20  **BALLOON FESTIVAL – NO CLASS**

09/27  The Texas Legislature – Chapter 7
      The Texas Executive Branch – Chapter 8
      **Oral Presentation**

10/04  EXAM I

10/11  Local Government in Texas – Chapter 10

10/18  Political Parties in Texas – Chapter 4
       **Oral Presentation**

10/25  Elections in Texas – Chapter 5
       **Oral Presentation**

11/01  Interest Groups and Lobbying – Chapter 6
       ***Lab Paper Due****
       **Oral Presentation**
       **Review

11/08  EXAM II

11/15  Public Finance in Texas – Chapter 11
       Public Policy in Texas – Chapter 12

11/22  The Texas Judiciary – Chapter 9
       **Oral Presentation**

11/29  **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS**

12/06  Crime and Corrections Policy – Chapter 13
       **Review

12/13  FINAL EXAM

**I reserve the right to revise the syllabus at any time. I will announce any changes ahead of time in class.
ORAL PRESENTATION

Interest Groups/PACS/Lobbyists (Group Project)
The class will be divided into groups. Each group will pick an Interest Group, PAC or Lobbyist organization (such as Citizens for Tax Justice, Christian Coalition, American Association of Retired Persons-AARP, NRA, Moveon.org, Texans for Lawsuit Reform, Texas Association of Realtors, Texas Medical Association, Texans for Insurance Reform, Texas Trial Lawyers Association).

Instructions:
1) Provide the history of your group. How effective has it been? How does it affect Texas politics?
2) How powerful is your group? How much money does it spend/make?
3) Gather information on the two most pressing issues of your group.
4) Explain, evaluate and debate the information in a presentation to the class.
5) Prepare an outline/description of your presentation and delegation of responsibilities.
6) Be prepared to answer questions from the class.
7) Oral presentations should be approximately 20-40 minutes in length (presentations too long will be penalized).

Suggestions for presentation:
-Speak loudly so that the entire class can hear you
-Try not to read your presentation to the class
-Make eye contact with the audience
-Engage the audience
-PowerPoint slides can be used (not required)

Dates for Oral Presentations:

September 27
October 18
October 25
November 1
November 22
**LAB ASSIGNMENT**

PLEASE NOTE THE DUE DATE ON THE LAB ASSIGNMENT. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR ½ CREDIT ONLY. PAPERS MUST BE TYPED AND DOUBLE-SPACED, USING NO FONT LARGER THAN 14. I will accept labs at any time prior to the due date, but none will be accepted after the last class period before the final exam. Lab assignments will be graded on content, organization and grammar (including spelling). If you have trouble spelling, use a dictionary.

**City Government**

City/Municipal government is an important entity in the federal system of the United States. Cities have their own forms of government and act as a mini-federal government on behalf of their citizens. In fact, cities influence the daily lives of their citizens more than any other level of government. For this assignment, you are to choose a Texas city and get on their website. Complete a thorough investigation of your city and then write a 3 to 4 page essay about your city. Include in your essay the following:

- Legal classification of city (home rule/general law)
- Mission statement of city
- Demographic outline of city
- Age of city and its growth pattern
- City council setup
- Voting patterns
- Revenue sources
- Success of city
- Future plans for city

You must include the web site address(es) where you obtained the information. This assignment is worth a maximum of 50 points and is due no later than, Sunday, **November 1, 2015**.

**NOTE:** Late papers will receive a maximum of ½ credit. Papers will not be accepted after the last day of class prior to the final exam. I will accept papers at any time prior to the due date.