



Clarendon College
Course Number: GOVT 2306
Name of Course: Texas Government

Division of Liberal Arts

Course Name: GOVT2306, Texas State and Local Government

Credit Hours: 3

Semester: Spring 2025

Instructor: Lyndal R. Gillen

Instructor Contact Information: lyndal.gillen@clarendoncollege.edu

The "Messages" feature in Moodle is the main method you should use to contact me. I will make every effort to check the course website daily and respond to your message requests within twenty-four hours.

Office Location: Online

Online Office Hours: 1:00pm-2:00pm Monday—Thursday

Online Course Website: This online course uses Moodle as its online course management program. All instructions, tutorials, exams, and assignments are provided at the course website. All assignments will be submitted there. Due dates for all assignments are listed in the "Course Schedule" at the course website. Most communication between you and your instructor and fellow classmates will be handled in Moodle through the "Messages" feature and discussion forums. You will be able to log into the course website once you have officially registered for the course and once you have been added to the course website. The course website will become available to you by the first day of the semester. If you register late, you will generally have access to the course within 24 hours after you register. To be successful in completing this 3-credit hour course, you should plan to spend between 6-9 hours per week on the course.

The information explaining how to log into your course website can be obtained by going to Clarendon College's home page and clicking on the **Login to Online Classes** button. If you have any difficulty logging in, email our help desk at: administrator@clarendoncollege.edu

Required Enrollment Verification Activity: Students who fail to complete the Syllabus Agreement & Enrollment Verification Activity by the official census date may not be able to continue in the course. This could result in an F for the course and forfeiture of Financial Aid. The census date for this term can be found on the Academic Calendar located at the Inside CC link on Clarendon College's home page.

Online Attendance Policy: Regular attendance is mandatory in all online courses. Specific activities will be identified each week that must be completed for students to be considered "in attendance." Failure to complete these assignments can result in forfeiture of Financial Aid and failure of the class. For this course, I submit an attendance report each Friday morning. If a student is not following the online attendance policy, the student is marked "absent." Students can be placed on academic probation or lose financial aid for chronic non-attendance.

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

Statement of Purpose: This course partially satisfies the Government/Political Science component of the core curriculum and is designed for transfer to a senior college or university.

Required Instructional Materials: Computer access, Adobe Reader, PowerPoint, and Excel.

Textbook: The required course readings will be available through the Open Educational Resources Texas (OERTX) free of charge to the student. All readings may be accessed through the course site.

Method of Instruction: Online instruction will include lectures, PowerPoint/ presentations, and question and answer forums.

Q and A forums will follow a shared inquiry format with reading. Homework will include chapter readings, vocabulary study, short answer questions, and online quizzes.

Core Objectives:

Critical thinking skills (CT) – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information

Communication skills (COM) – to include effective written, oral, and visual communication

Social responsibility (SR) –to include intercultural competency and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Personal responsibility (PR) – to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

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

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution (Assesses SR with Objective Test 1; Assesses CT and COM with Essay 1; and Assesses CT and SR with Final Exam).
2. Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government (Assesses CT with Objective Test 2 and Final Exam)
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas (Assesses with CT Objective Test 2 and Final Exam).
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government (Assesses CT with Objective Test 2 and Final Exam; Assesses CT, COM, and PR with Essay 2; and Assesses PR with Question-and-Answer Forum: Jury Duty—Service and Responsibility.)
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas (Assesses COM, SR and PR with Political Participation Essay; Assesses PR with Objective Test 3; and Assesses PR and SR with Final Exam).
6. Analyze the state and local election process (Assesses CT and PR with Final Exam).
7. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens (Assesses SR and PR with Objective Test 3, Final Exam, and Political Participation Essay).
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas (Assesses SR with Objective Test 4; Assesses CT and COM with Essay 2 and Final Exam).

Grading Policies: The final semester grades will be reported as set in the current catalog:

90 to 100 = A

80 to 89 = B

70 to 79 = C

60 to 69 = D

Below 59 = F

Your assignments' grades and official final grade will be made available through your Student Portal on Clarendon College's website.

Grading Percentages:

Objective Tests = 40%

Essays = 30%

Assignments (Question-and-Answer Forums & Short Answer Questions) = 20%

Final = 10% (NO Exemption)

Rubrics: Both question-and-answer forums and short answer questions will be graded with the following developmental rubric. *Note: These correspond to 100, 90, 80, 70, and 50.*

10-Excellent, thought provoking post with sufficient length and no grammatical or spelling errors
9-Good response with average content and no significant grammatical or spelling errors
8-Shorter post with good content and few significant grammatical or spelling errors
7-Short post or one with fair content with some significant grammatical or spelling errors 5-One or two line response with not much content and significant grammatical or spelling error.
Essays will be graded with an analytic rubric specific to each essay topic. These rubrics will be available in each essay question's planning material.

Makeup Work: A student will not be allowed to submit late assignments, papers, or tests. The final examination is required and must be taken at the assigned time.



College Policies:

Academic Integrity Policy Clarendon College is committed to a philosophy of honesty and academic integrity. It is the responsibility of all members of the Clarendon College community to maintain academic integrity at Clarendon College by refusing to participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty. Any act of academic dishonesty will be regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense.

Academic dishonesty violations include, but are not limited to: (1) obtaining an examination, classroom activity, or laboratory exercise by stealing or collusion; (2) discovering the content of an examination, classroom activity, laboratory exercise, or homework assignment before it is given; (3) observing the work of another during an examination or providing answers to another during the course of an examination; (4) using an unauthorized source of information during an examination, classroom activity, laboratory exercise, or homework assignment ; (5) entering an office, classroom, laboratory, or building to obtain unfair advantage; (6) taking an examination for another person; (7) completing a classroom activity, laboratory exercise, homework assignment, or research paper for another person; (8) altering grade records; (9) using any unauthorized form of an electronic communication device during an examination, classroom activity, or laboratory exercise; and/or, (10) plagiarism. (Plagiarism is defined as the using, stating, offering, or reporting as one's own, an idea, expression, or production of another person's work without proper credit. This includes, but is not limited to, turning in a paper purchased or acquired from any source, written by someone other than the student claiming credit, or stolen from another student.)

Students are responsible for reporting known acts of academic dishonesty to a faculty member, the program coordinator, the associate dean, and/or dean. Any student with knowledge of a violation who fails to report it shall him/herself be in violation and shall be considered to have committed an act of academic dishonesty. Additionally, any student who reports him/herself in violation of this code before it is likely that another might consider this possibility will be understood as repentant and acting in good faith. Though the confession will not excuse the student for the violation, the confession will be considered and the violation should not result in suspension from school except in the most extreme cases.

While academic integrity and honesty are the responsibility of the individual student, each individual faculty member, teaching assistant, and/or laboratory instructor is responsible for classroom management and for maintaining ethical behavior within the classroom and/or laboratory. Faculty who discover or suspect a violation should discuss the matter with the suspected violator(s) and attempt to resolve the case at that point. In cases of convincing evidence, the faculty member should take appropriate action. The faculty member and student should complete a Counseling Sheet regarding the violation. (The Counseling Sheet should contain at a minimum the date and time of the violation, the course, the instructor's name, the student's name, an explanation of the infraction or facts of the case, and the resolution to the incident.) This form should be signed by the student, faculty member, program coordinator, and the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will maintain a file on all violations. If a faculty member prefers to report the case directly to the Dean of Students, it remains his/her prerogative

to do so. Additionally, if the faculty member and the accused student cannot reach a resolution or if the faculty member believes that suspension from school is the only fair sanction, the case should immediately be reported by the faculty member, in writing, to the Dean of Students. If the Dean of Students observes any trends in student behavior which involve more than one violation or act of academic dishonesty, the Dean is responsible for notifying all faculty members involved, for contacting the student(s) involved, and after consultation with the faculty member(s) involved for taking the appropriate action. The Dean of Students is responsible for the timely notification (normally within two weeks) to all parties of an action taken.

Grievance/Appeals

If you have a dispute concerning your grade or policies in this class, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to discuss the matter. Should things remain unresolved, please follow the procedures described in the Clarendon College Student Handbook or College Policy Manual.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: -

<http://www.clarendoncollege.edu/Resources/StudentServices/StudentRightsResponsibilities.pdf>

Withdrawing from (Dropping) the Course: If you decide that you are unable to complete this course or that it will be impossible to complete the course with a passing grade, you may drop the course and receive a "W" on your transcript instead. (The last day to drop a course is available on the Academic Calendar, located at the student link on the Clarendon College website.) Withdrawal from a course is a formal procedure that you must initiate. If you do not go through the formal withdrawal procedure, you will receive whatever grade you have earned.

Whether to drop a class or not requires a lot of thought. According to Texas state law a student is only allowed to drop the same class twice before he/she will be charged triple the tuition amount for taking the class a third time or more. Furthermore, beginning with the Fall 2007 semester, students in Texas may only drop a total of 6 courses throughout their entire undergraduate career. After the 6th dropped class, he/she will no longer be able to withdraw from any classes.

Accommodation Statement

REQUIREMENTS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, any student who feels that he or she may need any special assistance or accommodation because of an impairment or disabling condition should contact the Associate Dean of Enrollment Services at 806-874-4837, janean.reish@clarendoncollege.edu or visit the Clarendon campus at Clarendon College. It is the policy of Clarendon College to provide reasonable accommodation as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Associate Dean of Enrollment Services.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Clarendon College, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

It is the policy of Clarendon College not to discriminate based on gender, age, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, veteran's status, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation. Harassment of a student in class, i.e., a pattern of behavior directed against a particular student with the intent of humiliating or intimidating that student will not be tolerated. The mere expression of one's ideas is not harassment and is fully protected by academic freedom, but personal harassment of individual students is not permitted.



Tentative Course Schedule

The Course Schedule includes all graded activities with their due dates. It also identifies which activities must be completed to be considered in attendance. If due dates change, you will be notified in your email as listed in your profile.

The following information will help you successfully navigate the online course.

Please note that the system will “timeout” after two hours of inactivity. You must log on again. From 7:00 to about 7:05 a.m. and then again from 7:00 to about 7:05 p.m. the online server is being backed up. Anything you are doing on the course page during that time will pause, including taking a quiz. Once the backup is completed, you will be able to pick up where you left off.

Please note the following calendar patterns:

1. All question-and-answer forums, short answer questions, and essays are open from the first day of class until the individual assignment’s due date.
2. Question-and-answer forums are due on Wednesdays.
3. Essays and short answer questions are due on Thursdays.
4. Objective tests open on Wednesdays and close on Fridays.
5. Objective tests and the Final Exam are NOT open until the assigned date found in each unit.
6. All deadlines are 11pm cst/cdt.

All grades may be accessed through the Grades link on the Course Dashboard and in the Clarendon College Student Portal. The grades in the Student Portal are your official grades.

Before beginning the course assignments: *(Complete these activities to be considered “in attendance” for the week Jan. 21-24)*

1. Read the syllabus and take the syllabus quiz.
2. Reply to the EVA question.
3. Participate in the Question-and-Answer Forum: Ice Breaker.
4. Use your Moodle Messenger to contact your instructor.



Unit I:

January 21-24:

View Lecture: *Study Methods and Chapter 1.*

View PowerPoint: *Texas: A Land of Contrast.*

Read Unit 1, Section 1 and view State Historian O’Neil’s two videos. Complete Practice Quiz 1.

January 27-31:

View Lecture: *The Texas Constitution.*

View PowerPoint: *The State Constitution and the American Federal System.*

Read Unit 1, Section 2.

Complete Practice Quiz 2.

Participate in the question-and-answer forum: Similarities and Difference: The Texas Constitution v. the U. S. Constitution. Deadline is 11:00pm, Jan. 29. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

Objective Test 1 opens January 29. The deadline is 11:00pm, Jan. 31.

**Unit II****February 3-7:**

View Lecture: *The Structure of Texas Government.*

View PowerPoint: *The Texas Legislature.*

Read Unit 2, Section 3.

Complete Practice Quiz 3.

Submit short answer responses: Redistricting and Party Politics. Deadline is 11:00pm, Feb. 6. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

February 10-14:

Read Unit 2, Section 4.

View PowerPoint: *The Office of the Governor.*

Read Unit 2, Section 4 Continued.

View PowerPoint: *The Administrative State Agencies.*

Complete Practice Quiz 4.

Participate in the question-and-answer forum: Term Limits in Texas. Deadline is 11:00pm, Feb. 12. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

February 17-21:

Read Unit 2, Section 5.

View PowerPoint: *The Court System in Texas.*

Complete Practice Quiz 5.

Listen to the oral arguments of *U.S v. Martinez-Salazar (2000)*.

Participate in the question-and-answer forum: Jury Duty: Service and Responsibility. Deadline is 11:00pm, Feb. 19. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

February 24-28:

Submit Opinion Essay 1. Essay deadline is 11:00pm, February 27.

Objective Test 2 opens February 26. The deadline is 11:00pm, Feb. 28. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)



Unit III

March 3-7:

View Lecture: *Texas County Government.*

View PowerPoint: *Local Governments in Texas.*

Read Unit 3, Section 6.

Complete Practice Quiz 6.

Participate in the question-and-answer forum: At-Large Election Systems.

Deadline is 11:00pm, March 5. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

March 10-14:

Read Pamphlet: *Texas County Government: The Glue that Holds Texas Together.*

View Texas Association of Counties: *Passports, Marriage Licenses, Birth & Death Certificates.*

Complete Practice Quiz 7.

Objective Test 3 opens March 12. The deadline is 11:00pm, March 14. (Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

Spring Break: March 17-21

Unit IV

March 24-28:

View Lecture: *Financing Public Policy.*

View PowerPoint: *Public Policy in Texas.*

View PowerPoint: *Interest Groups in Texas Politics.*

Read Unit 4, Section 8.

Complete Practice Quiz 8.

Participate in question-and-answer forum: The Iron Triangle of State Agencies, Interest Groups, and Legislative Committees. Deadline is 11:00pm, March 26.

(Complete this activity to be considered "in attendance" for the week.)

March 31-April 4:

View PowerPoint: *Financing State Government.*

Read Unit 4, Section 9.

Complete Practice Quiz 9.

Participate in question-and-answer forum: *State Sales Tax v. Income Tax.*

Deadline is 11:00pm, April 2. (Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)

April 7-11:

Submit Opinion Essay 2. Essay deadline is 11:00pm, April 10.

Objective Test 4 opens April 9. The deadline is 11:00pm, April 11. (Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)



Unit V

April 14-17:

View Lecture: *Overview of Texas Politics.*

View PowerPoint: *Participation in Texas Politics.*

Read Unit 5, Section 10.

Complete Practice Quiz 10.

Participate in question-and-answer forum: *Voter ID.* Deadline is 11:00pm, April 12. (Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)

April 18: Good Friday--School Holiday

April 21-25:

View interview with Governor Ann Richards.

Read Unit 5, Section 11.

View PowerPoint: *Elections and Campaigns in Texas.*

Complete Practice Quiz 11.

View PowerPoint: *Political Parties in Texas.*

Read Unit 5, Section 12.

Complete Practice Quiz 12.

Submit short answers: *Open or closed primary system?* Deadline is 11:00pm, April 24. (Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)

April 28-May 2:

Submit Political Participation Survey & Essay. Essay deadline is 11:00pm, May 1.

Objective Test 5 opens April 30. The deadline is 11:00pm, May 2. (Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)

May 5-9:

Final Exam Review *(Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)*

Final

Final Exam opens May 12. The deadline is 11:00pm, May 13. *(Complete this activity to be considered “in attendance” for the week.)*