COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2015

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:
GOVT 2305 – Federal Government

INSTRUCTOR: F. Lewis
OFFICE: W-320
OFFICE HOURS: 10:10 – 11:05 (M-W-F) &
12:15 – 1:00 (M-W-F)
OFFICE TEL: 364-4745
INSTRUCTOR EMAIL ADDRESS: fklewis@tstc.edu

COURSE (CATALOG) DESCRIPTION:
Origin and development of the U.S. 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.

MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
This course is divided into four parts:
1. Foundations of Government
2. Institutions of Government
3. Political Behavior
4. Public Policy
• There will be a test after each part. The tests mostly are not comprehensive and generally
  will cover only the chapters and other items discussed in each section. You are expected
to read the material before class discussion begins.
  o Tests will usually be given on Thursday or Friday in the Lab in W-224. In classes
    over 40 in size, students also will be scheduled for tests on the preceding Tuesday
    or Wednesday. Specific dates for finals will be announced in advance.
  o Be prepared to show student ID.
  o No cell phones allowed during testing.
  o Tests will be open book/open notes/open handouts. Screens will be limited to
    Moodle. Use of Google or other search engines is not allowed.
      ▪ You will be limited to 60 minutes of test-taking time for a 30-question
        test. Shorter tests will have reduced test-taking times.
      ▪ You are expected to have studied for the test as if it is closed book.
        Looking up all, most, or even many answers may cause you to run out of
        time and do poorly on an open book test. [It is not my job to provide you
        with lots of time to take the test just because it is open book.]
  o If your book is on a portable device (other than your cell phone) then be prepared
    to show it to the Lab Manager before starting your test. During the test only the
    “book” may be open on your portable screen. If you do not have your “book” on
    your portable device then that device should not be open.
In addition to the tests, there will be one researched paper on a domestic, economic, foreign, or military policy that needs to be changed. This paper will count the same as a test.

- Your paper should have the following four labeled level 1 headings with additional level 2 headings as shown below:
  - **Title of Paper** (level 1 heading)
  - **Introduction** (level 2 heading)
    - Include a short explanation of the policy/issue
    - Include any definitions needed
    - *(usually 1 paragraph)*
  - **Statement of the Problem** (level 2 heading)
    - A concise description of the problem.
    - *(usually 1 sentence)*
  - **History or Background** of the issue (level 1 heading)
    - How we got to where we are today
    - *(usually 1 to 3 pages)*
  - **Possible Choices** that could be made (level 1 heading)
    - Discuss the results that adopting each choice could produce in a new paragraph starting each choice with a level 2 heading that labels the choice.
      - You may not like a choice but it should still be shown and discussed.
      - One choice might be no change at all to the present policy.
      - Most policies should have at least three choices including no change.
      - If you have one paragraph labeled *Pros* and one paragraph labels *Cons* then you did not get this section right!
    - *(usually 1 to 3 pages)*
  - **Conclusion** (level 1 heading)
    - summarize
    - include your recommended outcome or action
    - *(usually 1 paragraph)*
  - The paper must have at least five pages of content
    - Do not count title page, abstract page, or references page. Also, do not count pictures, graphs, etc. No a picture is not worth a thousand words.
    - Adequate in-text parenthetical citations are expected.
    - The paper should be free of grammatical and spelling errors.

- Be sure to have a:
  - Title page *(include an author’s note with the course number and section)*
  - Abstract page *(remember key words at the bottom)*
  - References page

- At least five sources are needed for references.

- **Use APA format.** For APA information see [http://owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu)

- Students are expected to turn in two hard copies (printed out copies) of the report. *(No emails accepted!!)*
Students are expected to keep up with national events. On designated weeks and when class is not held (not individual student illnesses or other individual absence) because of the instructor’s absence, students are expected to hand in a short (one paragraph) summary of a newspaper or Internet news article along with a copy of the article. (No crime or accident reports.)

- This report will be due at the next class meeting. If not handed in during class, it may be left in W-224 in a box designated for Mr. Lewis’s reports.
- No emails accepted.
- NO emails accepted.
- DO NOT send emails of articles or summaries!

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:
1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the 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 in the political system.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

CORE OBJECTIVES:
1. Critical Thinking (CT) – Students will engage in creative and/or innovative thinking, inquiring analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, organizing concepts, and constructing solutions.
2. Communication Skills (CS) – Students will demonstrate effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
3. Social Responsibility (SR) – Students will demonstrate intercultural competency and civic knowledge by engaging effectively in local, regional, national and global communities.
4. Personal Responsibility (PR) – Students will demonstrate the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

MAJOR COURSE LECTURE, TOPICS DESCRIPTION/REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED READINGS/ELECTRONIC RESOURCES TO VIEW:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week (beginning)</th>
<th>Topic/Lecture/Event</th>
<th>Measurable Activity</th>
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| 1 (Jan 12)      | Introduction to the Course Foundations of Government                               | Discussion and Observation:
<p>|                 | Read: The Constitution and Federalism – Chapters 2 and 3                           | - Explaining the origin and                                                        |</p>
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<td>development of democracy in the U.S. (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)**</td>
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| 2 (Jan 19)      | Holiday (Monday) Foundations of Government continued | Discussion and Observation:  
  • Demonstrating knowledge of the Federal System  
  • Describing separation of powers and checks and balances (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 3 (Jan 26)      | Foundations of Government continued | **Test I covering:**  
  • Explanation of the origin and development of democracy in the U.S.  
  • Demonstration of knowledge of the Federal System  
  • Description of the separation of powers and checks and balances (Core Objectives: CT/CS)** |
| 4 (Feb 2)       | Institutions of Government Read: Congress, Presidency, Bureaucracy and Judiciary – Chapters 12, 13, 14, and 15 | Discussion and Observation:  
  • Demonstrating knowledge of the Federal system (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 5 (Feb 9)       | Institutions of Government continued | Discussion and Observation:  
  • Describing separation of powers and checks and balances |
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<td>• Demonstrating knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Federal government (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)**</td>
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| 6 (Feb 16)       | Institutions of Government continued | **Test II covering:**  
|                  |                     | • Demonstration of the knowledge of the Federal system  
|                  |                     | • Description of the separation of powers and checks and balances  
|                  |                     | • Demonstration of knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the Federal government (Core Objectives: CT/CS)** |
| 7 (Feb 22)       | Political Behavior  | Discussion and Observation:  
|                  | Read: Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, Politics and Public Opinion, Interest Groups, Political Parties, Elections and Campaigns, Media, Technology – Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 | • Evaluating the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 8 (Mar 2)        | Political Behavior continued | Discussion and Observation:  
<p>|                  |                     | • Evaluating the role |
| 9 (Mar 9)        | Political Behavior continued |</p>
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|                  |                     | of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system  
|                  |                     | • Analyzing the election process  
|                  |                     | (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 10 (Mar 16)      | Spring Break (Monday through Friday) |                     |
| 11 (Mar 23)      | Political Behavior continued | Discussion and Observation:  
|                  |                     | • Describing the rights and responsibilities of citizens  
|                  |                     | (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 12 (Mar 30)      | Political Behavior continued  
|                  | Holiday (Friday)     | Test III covering:  
|                  |                     | • Evaluation of the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system  
|                  |                     | • Analysis of the election process  
|                  |                     | • Description of the rights and responsibilities of citizens  
|                  |                     | (Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 13 (Apr 6)       | Public Policy  
|                  | Read: Economic, Domestic and Foreign – Chapters 16, 17, and 18 | Research Paper Due (at end of week):  
<p>|                  |                     | Paper should reflect a critical analysis of the background and choices involved with your topic and the presentation of your opinion on the best solution derived from your chosen issue/policy. |</p>
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| 14 (Apr 13)      | Public Policy       | Discussion and Observation:  
• Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics  
(Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |
| 15 (Apr 20)      | Public Policy       | Last day to take a make-up test is April 24. |
| 16 (Apr 27)      | Public Policy       | Test IV covering:  
• Analysis of issues and policies in U.S. politics  
(Core Objectives: CT/CS/SR/PR)** |

* = To take a make-up test, students must know course number and specific chapter numbers.  
** = Core Objectives are: CT = Critical Thinking; CS = Communication Skills; SR = Social Responsibility; and PR = Personal Responsibility.

REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS:
- New textbook available from the TSTC Bookstore:
  o ISBN: 9781259623844
- The old textbook also may be used (but is not generally available from bookstores):
  o ISBN: 978-0-07-759703-0
- The new and old textbooks are identical.
- It is anticipated that in Summer or Fall 2015 we will switch to the 4th edition.

GRADING CRITERIA:
The following are the weights for the course grade:  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 79</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 59</td>
<td>F</td>
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ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT: If you have a documented disability which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as the instructor has outlined, and/or if you need special accommodations due to a disability, please contact (956) 364-4520 or visit the Support Services.
Office in the Consolidated Student Services Center as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

CLASS POLICIES:

Class Participation Policy:
- Tests: Make-ups will be given during designated days and times in W-224. You will be expected to take the make-up tests on your own time. You must know the chapters for each test. You may take a make-up test as early as one-week after the scheduled test day.
  
  Other testing rules:
  - Make-ups will be available starting one week after the test date. The last day to take a make-up is shown in the calendar above. Note that there are no make-up days scheduled for the final exam. Please plan accordingly for weddings, out-of-town trips, vacations, work schedules, etc.
  - Be prepared to show student ID.
  - It is strongly suggested you make prior arrangements or check with the Lab Manager to take a make-up test. Lab time schedules are set by the Lab Manager in W-224. Do not wait until the last day or minute to take a make-up test as the lab may not be available. Your failure to get into the Lab in a timely manner is not my problem.
  - No cell phones allowed during testing.
  - Tests will be open book/open notes/open handouts, but screens will be limited to Moodle. Use of Google, Yahoo, or other search engines is not allowed.
  - If your book is on a portable device (other than your cell phone) then be prepared to show it to the Lab Manager before starting your test. During the test only the “book” may be open on your portable screen. If you do not have your “book” on your portable device then that device should not be open.
- Summaries: Any news summary is due on the designated day or at the next class meeting for an instructor absence. Alternatively, they may be turned into W-224. No emails.

Copyright Statement

The materials used in the course [textbooks, handouts, media files (podcast, MP3, Videos, RSS (Feeds), and all instructional resources on the colleges Learning Management System (Moodle)] are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and are only to be used for instructional use, activities associated with, and for the duration of the course. All materials generated for this course, which includes but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and any additional materials.

These materials may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act. These materials may not be reproduced, displayed, modified or distributed without the express prior written permission of the copyright holder or TSTC. For further information contact your instructor.
Communicating with your instructor (MyMail E-mail System)

All official college E-mail to students is sent through MyMail, the official student e-mail system at TSTC Harlingen. When communicating with instructors and/or employees of the college, you are required to use your TSTC MyMail student e-mail address. If you choose to forward your e-mail to another account, please be advised that you must respond from the MyMail account.

Threats:

TSTC Harlingen faculty, staff, and students are asked to report all threats, perceived or real, immediately to College Police located in the Auxiliary Building. If the threat is imminent, the College Police emergency phone line at 364-4234 or 9-911 should be called. College Police will then coordinate the proper response in accordance with State and federal laws and TSTC System/College rules and regulations.

NOTE: Any changes to this syllabus will be provided in writing to the student and updated on all posted locations (HB 2504, course Moodle sites, building offices, etc.).

Withdrawal: The last day to withdraw from this course with a W is April 2, 2015.

TUTORING:

The Supplemental Instruction & Tutoring Program at TSTC offers free tutoring and academic support services to help you achieve your academic and career goals. You can access the most up-to-date Supplemental Instruction & Tutoring Schedule, as well as MyTSTC Video Tutor Library, by using your smart phone to scan over the QR code below or visiting our webpage at: http://www.tstc.edu/harlingenoss/situtoringprogram

For more information, please contact the Office of Student Success at 956.364.4163 or the Supplemental Instruction & Tutoring Program at 956.364.4170.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of an educational institution. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructor, and or TSTC Harlingen, Student Handbook: Code of Student Conduct. Academic Dishonesty includes but is not necessarily limited to the following:
A. Cheating or knowingly assisting another student in committing an act of cheating or other academic dishonesty.

B. **Plagiarism** occurs when one presents work which is taken from another person who is not given due credit.

   a) You are providing information that your reader may use in seeking further knowledge on your topic, or on a subtopic or peripheral topic that you have treated only briefly.
   b) You are providing a means whereby another person may verify the accuracy of your use of sources.
   c) Copying files from a student’s disk and submitting to yours is another example.

Intellectual honesty is fundamental to scholarship. Accordingly, the College views plagiarism or cheating of any kind in academic work as among the most serious offenses that a student can commit. Academic dishonesty can result in a grade of **F** or **0** for the particular test or assignment involved. A student wishing to contest this ruling must do so within one (1) week after return of graded papers.

**Emergency/Safety Requirement:**

In the event of an emergency, students should familiarize themselves with building and classrooms emergency exits/evacuation routes and be able to locate the nearest fire extinguisher. When an emergency alarm is activated, students should immediately leave the classroom, exit the building, and go to a designated safe area until clearance is given to go back into the building. Students should also register and be familiar with the Emergency Notification System.

**Special note:**

**Only GOVT 2305 (Federal Government) and 2306 (Texas Government) are being offered by public colleges and universities statewide beginning in Fall 2013.**

Please note that GOVT 2301 and 2302 (Government 1 and 2) were recommended for deletion by a state faculty work group. As of Fall 2013, GOVT 2301 and 2302 have been deleted from the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) and are no longer available for formula funding at state colleges and universities.