

McLennan
C O M M U N I T Y
COLLEGE

WACO, TEXAS

COURSE SYLLABUS
AND
INSTRUCTOR PLAN

Texas Government
Texas Govt 2306 05

Professor Ramon

NOTE: This is a 16-week course.

COVID 19 Notice:

McLennan Community College is committed to providing you with every resource you need to reach your academic goals. We are also concerned for your safety. We are working through COVID-19 guidelines to make sure we offer a safe environment for you and our faculty. This will include smaller class sizes to manage social distancing and proper cleaning techniques. You will have the advantage of a physical classroom experience but may also need to work part of the time online as we adjust to limited classroom capacity. This will also allow us the flexibility to move online if so directed by federal, state and/or local COVID 19 guidelines. Faculty and staff are preparing now to ensure that you have the best experience in the midst of these uncertain times.

COURSE NAME

COURSE NUMBER & SECTION NUMBER

Course Description:

This course will cover the 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.

Prerequisites and/or Corequisites:

Prerequisite: Must have passed the reading portion of the TSI Assessment or have credit for INRW 0402. Semester Hours 3 (3 lecture).

To supplement the concepts learned in the course, additional material will be placed on Brightspace. Please ensure to access your Brightspace daily for any assignment or supplemental readings posted. All students have access to the Internet on campus.

Furthermore, it is very important that the student stay abreast of current events through the media particularly the daily paper and the Internet. This will facilitate the student's ability to relate instructed material to current events.

If students are absent, they are responsible for obtaining the missed material. The professor is not responsible for the student's missed material.

Finally, it is required that the student come prepared to class which involves outside class preparation. As a recommendation, for each 1 hour in class, it is recommended that the student arrange 2 – 3 hours of outside preparation time. With a 3 hour course, students should dedicate at least 6 hours a week to course related work. During that time, students should read the required material, complete assignments, prepare reviews, explore current events, meet with the professor for any questions or concerns, and whatever else the student needs in order to be thoroughly equipped and successful in the course.

Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: Professor Andria Ramon

Office Phone Number: 254-299-8906

Office Location: MAC room 315

Office/Teacher Conference Hours:

M/T/W/Th: 10:30 am – 11:00 am, 12:35 pm – 1:00 pm, and 2:25 pm – 3:00 pm.

Friday: 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm virtual and by appointment.

Other Instruction Information:

Although I am in my office during office hours to make certain of availability please contact me in advance to schedule your conference. This assures that your time will be exclusive and uninterrupted.

Email Policy:

McLennan Community College would like to remind you of the policy (<http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/E-XXXI-B.pdf>) regarding college email. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use their McLennan email addresses when conducting college business.

A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails.

Instructional Uses of Email:

Student may communicate with me via my MCC email at aramon@mclennan.edu. Students must provide their full name and course/section number. A response will be provided within 24 to 48 hours.

If students call my office number, they may leave a message with their name and course/section number. However, it will difficult for me to return that phone call. The best way to contact me is via email.

Email on Mobile Devices:

All emails and Brightspace announcements can be viewed via the student's mobile phone. Students should go to their course Brightspace and select their name. Under their name is an area entitled Notifications. Select the email function for announcements and content notifications.

Forwarding Emails:

You may forward the emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may become lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

Required Text & Materials:

Title: Lone Star Politics

Author: Collier, Et al

Edition: 6th

Publisher: Sage Publishing

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ISBN: 9781544390802

MCC Bookstore Website: <http://www.mclennan.edu/bookstore/>

Student Support/Resources:

MCC provides a variety of services to support student success in the classroom and in your academic pursuits to include counseling, tutors, technology help desk, advising, financial aid, etc. A listing of these and the many other services available to our students is available at <http://www.mclennan.edu/campus-resource-guide/>

College personnel recognize that food, housing, and transportation are essential for student success. If you are having trouble securing these resources, we encourage you to contact a success coach by calling (254) 299-8226. Students can visit the Completion Center Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. to meet with a success coach and receive additional resources and support to help reach academic and personal goals. Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) is open 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, without an appointment. The Completion Center and pantry are located on the Second Floor of the Student Services Center (SSC).

MCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund:

Unanticipated expenses, such as car repairs, medical bills, housing, or job loss can affect us all. Should an unexpected expense arise, the MCC Foundation has an emergency grant fund that may be able to assist you. Please go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/scholarships-and-resources/emergencygrant.html> to find out more about the emergency grant. The application can be found [here](https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf) (https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf).

Minimum Technical Skills:

Students should have basic computer skills, knowledge of word processing software, and a basic understanding of how to use search engines and common web browsers.

Backup Plan for Technology:

In the event MCC's technology systems are down, you will be contacted/notified through your MCC student email address. Please note that all assignments and activities will be due on the date specified in the Instructor Plan, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

*** [Click Here for the Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L/Brightspace](https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html)**
(<https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html>)

Click on the link above for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

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A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails.

Instructional Uses of Email:

Faculty members can determine classroom use of email or electronic communications. Faculty should expect and encourage students to check the college email on a regular basis. Faculty should inform students in the course syllabus if another communication method is to be used and of any special or unusual expectations for electronic communications.

If a faculty member prefers not to communicate by email with her/his students, it should be reflected in the course syllabus and information should be provided for the preferred form of communication.

Email on Mobile Devices:

The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails.

Forwarding Emails:

You may forward the emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may become lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

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Course Objectives and/or Competencies:

Courses in this category focus on consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states, with special emphasis on that of Texas. Courses involve the analysis of

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governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.

- **Critical Thinking Skills (CT):** “to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.”
- **Communication Skills (COMM):** “to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.”
- **Social Responsibility (SR):** “to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, 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.”

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. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

Course Outline or Schedule:

Texas Govt 2306 FALL 2020 Calendar

Week	Lesson	Preparation/Items Due
Week 1 – Mon, Aug 24 th – Wed, Aug 26 th	Unit 1 Welcome/Chapter 1 Collier	Introduction, Chapter 1 Log onto to Brightspace Print and Read Reading #1 - Parker
Week 2 – Mon, Aug 31 st – Wed, Sept 2 nd	Texas History	Reading #2 <i>Many a Cause, Many a Conflict: The Texas Revolution</i>

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		Reading #3 Stephen F. Austin Speech
Week 3 – Wed, Sept 9 th	Texas History/The Texas Constitution	Chapter 2 Texas Constitutions
Week 4 – Mon, Sept 14 th – Wed, Sept 16	Texas Constitution Federalism	Quiz #1 – Chapter 2 due Tues, Sept 15th by 11:55 pm Chapter 2 Texas Constitution Federalism
Week 5 – Mon, Sept 21 st – Wed, Sept 23 rd	Test #1 Unit #2 Texas Elections	Test #1 – Mon, Sept 21st Reading #4 – Pulliam Chapter 8
Week 6 Mon, Sept 28 th – Wed, Sept 30 th	Texas Elections	Chapter 8 (cont) Quiz #2 – Chapter 8 Due Tues, Sept 29th before 11:55 pm Advanced Thinker Assignment #1 Due via Brightspace before 11:55 pm Sunday, Oct 4th
Week 7 Mon, Oct 5 th – Wed, Oct 7 th	Texas Political Parties Texas Interest Groups	Chapter 9 & Chapter 10
Week 8 – Mon, Oct 12 th – Wed, Oct 14 th	Test #2	Test #2 Mon, Oct 12th Chapter 3

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Week 9 – Mon, Oct 19 th – Wed, Oct 21 st	Unit #3 Texas Legislature	Chapter 3 Quiz #3 – Chapter 3 Quiz Due before 11:55 pm Sunday, Oct 18th
Week 10 – Mon, Oct 26 th – Wed, Oct 28 th	Texas Governors	Chapter 4 Advanced Thinker Assignment #2 Due before 11:55 pm on Sunday, Nov 1st via Brightspace
Week 11 – Mon, Nov 2 nd – Wed, Nov 4 th	Texas Governors – The Plural Executive & Bureaucracy in Texas	Chapter 4 (cont) & chapter 5
Week 12 – Mon, Nov 9 th – Wed, Nov 11 th	Test #3 Unit #4 Texas Judicial System	Test #3 Mon, Nov 9th Chapter 6
Week 13 – Mon, Nov 16 th – Wed, Nov 18 th	Texas Judicial System	Chapter 7 Quiz #4 - Chapter 6 Quiz Due before 11:55 pm on Sunday, Nov 15th via Brightspace
Week 14 – Mon, Nov 23 rd	Texas Finance and Public Policy	Chapter 12 & Chapter 14
Week 15 – Mon, Nov 30 th – Wed, Dec 3 rd	Local Governments in Texas	Chapter 11

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Week 16 – Final Exam Week	Final Exam	Final Exam week
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*Chapter readings stem from *Lone Star Politics*, the main textbook for the class. Please see THE course Brightspace for a full schedule and readings. The instructor reserves the right to change the course schedule. Students will be notified in case of a change via announcements on Brightspace.

***Each course activity covers the course objectives and competencies assessed in this course.*

Important Course Dates:

Labor Day - Monday, Sept 7th

Last Day for Student Initiated Drops – Monday, Oct 26th

Thanksgiving Break – Wed, Nov 25th

Last Day of Class – Wed, Dec 3rd

Course Grading Information:

Readings:

Other than the required chapter readings, several readings are located on the course Brightspace and will be required for the course. Test questions may stem from the readings. Additional readings may be posted on Brightspace and added to the syllabus.

#1 Parker, Richard, “Lone Star Nation: How Texas Will Transform America”, 2014. Found in Rottinghaus, Brandon J. *Current Debates in the Lone Star State*. Oxford: New York, 2019, pp 43 – 51.

#2 “Texas Revolution: Many a Cause, Many a Conflict” Austin CC. 2010. Web. Found at <http://www.austincc.edu/lpatrick/his1693/causes.html>

#3 Austin, Stephen F. “The Texas Revolution” Speech: delivered in Louisville, Kentucky, in March 1836. Web. Found at http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=554

#4 Pulliam, Mark. “Red State, Blue Cities,” *City Journal*, 2016. Found in Rottinghaus, Brandon J. *Current Debates in the Lone Star State*. Oxford: New York, 2019, pp 89 – 94.

Attendance:

Some points are derived from attendance. Students that attend all classes or have three or less absences will result in the student earning 30 points. More than three absences (that are not part of MCC functions) will result in a 15 point deduction in attendance points (15 points). If the student misses 5 or more times, no attendance points will be earned. Absences will include leaving class early or coming to class more than 5 minutes late. Excused absences are allowed if related to ADA, MCC functions, long-term health concerns, or family funerals. All other absences are counted toward the discussion points.

Chapter/ Reading Quizzes:

Four chapter/reading quizzes will be administered on Brightspace or in class with the lowest grade dropped (or dropped for technical concerns, absences, non-completion). Each quiz is worth 20 points, may only be completed twice, and requires a due date and time limitation. The highest quiz grade will be the recorded grade. Technical difficulties or missed quizzes will limit the number of opportunities to take the quiz. In addition, the quiz questions are taken from a larger pool of questions. Each quiz attempt may introduce previous questions or new questions. Nonetheless, taking the quizzes twice, if allowed, should increase the students overall quiz performance, chapter material retention, and concept comprehension.

- The quizzes are based upon the Collier chapters or specified readings.
- The quiz times are administered based on CST (central standard time).
- Any notice of student's sharing quiz questions or quiz answers will be considered Plagiarism/Cheating. The student will receive an automatic zero and reported to the Integrity Committee. After a second noted plagiarism attempt, the student will be removed from the course and will automatically fail the course.
- If ADA accommodations are necessary, please contact me as soon as possible.
- More details and instructions will be posted on Brightspace

Advanced Thinker Assignment

Baseline Assignment Requirements: For these activities students are to actively analyze, assess, and critique their own thinking in the significant areas of their lives. The assignment requires insight and understanding of the material at deeper levels of thought. Two assignments will be administered throughout the semester. Late assignment are not accepted and are due hard-copy in class unless otherwise indicated.

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- The students will be required to answer specific professor questions concerning a specific topic or article. The assignment requires the student to have a strong understanding of the topic, explain the topic, incorporate the article, possibly answer specific questions, and how the article relates to Texas politics concepts.
- The assignments are worth 30 points each.
- Font: Times New Roman Font style: Black - Regular Font size: 12 Double Space
- Each Assignment must be submitted in class on the day they are due unless otherwise indicated. Assignments cannot be submitted late.
- All requirements for the assignments are located on your Brightspace under Course Documents. For all assignments, any use of undocumented sources is an automatic zero. MLA citation is required. If you require assistance with your assignment, consult with your professor first. All guidelines for plagiarism will be followed. A ZERO will be given to any plagiarism noted or outside assistance noted.

Key Points on Assignments:

- Any sign of plagiarism will be an automatic zero for the paper. Any non-citation of words, ideas, or concepts is considered plagiarism. These incidences will receive a zero.
- Do not copy other student's material. This action falls under the plagiarism/cheating definition and the entire assignment will receive a zero.
- Ballotpedia, Wikipedia, Congresspedia, wikis, or any blogs are not allowed.
- Do not quote entire paper or large section. That is grounds for zero points.
- A rubric for any assignment will be provided with the corresponding requirements.
- Any plagiarism is grounds for a zero on the assignment.
- Failure to complete the required assignments will not allow the student to make an A in the course.

More assignment details will be placed on Brightspace.

Exams:

Four exams, which includes the final exam, are required. Each exam is a multiple-choice exam with 50 – 65 questions (except the Final). Scantron 882E is required for each exam. All exams will cover specific textbook chapters as listed on your schedule, Brightspace readings, class room discussion, lectures, simulations, video presentations, assignments, and test review material.

Exam 1	Chap 1, Texas History, Chap 2, Federalism, and readings
Exam 2	Chap 8, Chap 9, Chap 10, and readings
Exam 3	Chap 3, Chap 4, Chap 5, and readings
Exam 4	Chap 6, Chap 7, Chapter 10, Semester Review questions, and readings

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Total points:

4 Exams - 100 points each	400 Points
2 Assignment – 30 points each	60 Points
3 Quizzes - 20 points each	60 points
Attendance	30 Points
Total Points	= 550 points

At the end of the semester the point range will break down as follows:

90% of 550 points = 550 – 495 points = A

80% of 550 points = 494 – 440 points = B

70% of 550 points = 439 – 385 points = C

60% of 550 points = 384 – 330 points = D

329 points and below = F

PLEASE MEET WITH ME FOR ANY CONCERNS YOU HAVE CONCERNING A GRADE.
I AM HERE TO HELP! THE EARLIER YOU ADDRESS A GRADE THE BETTER.

Late Work, Attendance, and Make Up Work Policies:

In class and during Zoom meetings, a daily roll will be checked and attendance is a must. Regular punctual attendance is required for 75% of all classes. Absence from 25 percent of scheduled lecture will be taken as evidence that a student does not intend to complete the course. Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for all material presented or assigned for the course and will be held accountable for such materials in the determination of course grades. Absences will include leaving class early, coming to class more than 5 minutes late, missing synchronous Zoom meetings, attending Zoom meetings late or leaving early, or not participating in asynchronous meetings. Attendance via Zoom will be explained on the course Brightspace. Discussion Points are based upon attendance with exceptions for ADA students. Please see the attendance points addressed earlier in the syllabus.

Late quizzes:

All quizzes are taken using the course Brightspace. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. The quiz dropped may also include quizzes missed due to absences, quizzes missed due to technical concerns, and quizzes missed due to school activities. No make-up quizzes will be provided.

Late Assignments:

Assignments cannot be submitted late.

Make-up exams:

With a physician's note or with a valid MCC Institutional absence, you may take a make-up exam. Without a physician's note or Institutional Excused Absence, 20 points will be deducted from the original test grade no matter what the reason. (The point is to take the exam when administered or suffer a penalty). The missed exam will be taken immediately upon returning to class with or without an excuse. Final exams MAY NOT be taken late.

With permission and valid reason, students may take an exam early if needed excluding the final.

Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:

“Students are expected to maintain classroom decorum that includes respect for other students and the instructor, prompt and regular attendance, and an attitude that seeks to take full advantage of the education opportunity.”

- If a student violates the student handbook, it is at the instructor's discretion to dismiss that student from the class.
- Remember that politics is being discussed in this course. Many are impassioned about their beliefs. A civil discussion provides for exploration of the information and allows a student to explore and discover their own beliefs. However, I reserve the right to request a disruptive student to leave the course.
- All student plagiarism is reported to the Student Discipline Committee and a zero will be provided for the grade. If more than two plagiarism actions occur, students will fail the course.
- All electronic devices must be silenced when in class. Laptops are allowed; however, if the student is focused on material other than course material, then the student will be asked to close the device and not to bring the device back to class.
- Students may **not** eat in class, TEXT IN CLASS, sleep in class, use disruptive electronic devices, or continue to stand up, moving around in class. All these activities are disruptive to student learning. If these habits continue, a student/instructor meeting will occur. If they still persist, then the student will be dropped from the course.

- Zoom meetings require the same decorum as described above. During a Zoom meeting, students MUST be visible and have their microphones muted unless asking questions or participating in dialogue.

* **[Click Here for the MCC Academic Integrity Statement](#)**

(www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity)

The link above will provide you with information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating.

* **[Click Here for the MCC Attendance/Absences Policy](#)**

(<https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html>)

Click on the link above for the college policies on attendance and absences. Your instructor may have guidelines specific to this course.

Accommodations/ADA Statement

Any student who is a qualified individual with a disability may request reasonable accommodations to assist with providing equal access to educational opportunities. Students should contact the Accommodations Coordinator as soon as possible to provide documentation and make necessary arrangements. Once that process is completed, appropriate verification will be provided to the student and instructor. Please note that instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations to students until appropriate verification has been provided by the Accommodations Coordinator. Instructors should not provide accommodations unless approved by the Accommodations Coordinator. For additional information, please visit mclennan.edu/disability.

Students with questions or who require assistance with disabilities involving physical, classroom, or testing accommodations should contact:

disabilities@mclennan.edu

254-299-8122

Room 319, Student Services Center

* **[Click Here for more information about Title IX](#)**

(www.mclennan.edu/titleix)

We care about your safety, and value an environment where students and instructors can successfully teach and learn together. If you or someone you know experiences unwelcomed behavior, we are here to help. Individuals who would like to report an incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator at

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titleix@mclennan.edu or by calling Dr. Drew Canham (Vice President for Student Success) at 299-8645. Individuals also may contact the MCC Police Department at 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at MCC by calling 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student or employee may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting the following website: <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>.

McLennan's Title IX webpage (<http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix/>) contains more information about definitions, reporting, confidentiality, resources, and what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence or the crimes of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence or domestic violence.

** You will need to access each link separately through your Web browser (for example: Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Chrome, or Safari) to print each link's information.*