

**McLennan**  
C O M M U N I T Y  
**COLLEGE**

WACO, TEXAS

**COURSE SYLLABUS  
AND  
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**GOVT 2306**

**Texas Government: Constitutions & Topics**

**Sections 87 & 88**

**Mike Campenni**

**NOTE: THIS IS A SIXTEEN WEEK COURSE**

**NOTE: THIS IS AN ONLINE CLASS**

**\*\*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

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**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.

**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).

**Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:**

Students taking online class need good time management and self-motivations skills.

**Instructor Information:**

Instructor Name: Mike Campenni

MCC E-mail: [mcampenni@mclennan.edu](mailto:mcampenni@mclennan.edu)

Office Phone Number: 254-299-8941

Office Location: MAC 323

Office/Teacher Conference Hours: Monday thru Friday, 7- 9:00 am; 12:00 noon - 5:00 pm. Other times are available by request.

Other Instruction Information: It is a good idea to call or email to confirm appointments.

**Required Text & Materials:**

Title: **Lone Star Politics**

Author: Collier, Galatas, et al.

Edition: 6th Edition

Publisher: Sage Publishing

ISBN: 9781544390802 (Bound text and E book) or ISBN 9781544365220 (E book only)

**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 am – 5:00 pm to meet 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 pm – 1:00 pm, 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-andresources/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.

**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**

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.

### **Methods of Teaching and Learning:**

This course utilizes online lectures, readings, videos, power points, simulations and charts to deliver content. It then uses fourteen (14) weekly, Chapter Reading Quizzes with ten multiple choice questions each for a total of 140 points; two (2), one week long Discussion Boards worth one hundred points each, one (1) informed opinion essay worth one hundred points and a Final Exam consisting of one hundred multiple choice questions worth one hundred points, to assess content mastery, critical thinking skills, reading comprehension and Communications skills.

### **Course Objectives and/or Competencies:**

Courses in this category focus on consideration of the Texas Constitution. The Course involves the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.

Student activities in this class will facilitate the development of the following competencies and the mastery of the following objectives.

**Competencies:**

- **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 (Course Objectives 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:**

This class consists of 14 chapter units. Essentially, the class starts at the front of the book and goes in the order of the Table of Contents through the first fourteen chapters. There is a list of due dates on the home page CALENDAR and under CONTENT, including tests dates, discussion boards dates, and a paper due date. Each chapter has specific learning objectives, activities, instructional materials and assessments listed.

**Course Grading Information:**

This course uses an aggregate point total. There are 540 total points available in this class. An A will be worth **ABOUT** 90%, a B will be worth **ABOUT** 80% and so forth. I say about because I may use a course or individual curve. Let me take a minute to

explain something about the grades. Because MCC surveys document the wide variety of computers, their capabilities and Internet access of our students, let me emphasize that all of our graded assessments come from the text and your personal online research. The videos and simulations help students understand what they read and help to illustrate the concepts, but that material does not appear in the quizzes or tests, and are not part of the discussion boards or essay.

The 540 total points may be accumulated as follows:

1. Fourteen weekly chapter quizzes, each consisting of ten multiple choice questions with each question worth one point, timed for 30 minutes, and stressing the chapter learning objectives. The tests may be taken once. The exams also help to develop critical thinking skills by requiring students to choose the single best answer to each question. Exams help the student to interact with the material directly. The total points available on these quizzes equal 140 points.
2. There are two Discussion Boards. They are each a week long. They require reading and researching an issue assigned by the instructor to the class. They require the student to think critically about what he/she reads and researches plus what he/she gets through the discussion with his/her classmates. The Discussion Board makes the student interact with his/her fellow students, the material and his/her instructor. It helps students to develop personal and social responsibility in terms of democratic governance. And finally, it helps students to effectively communicate. Each Discussion Board is worth 100 points. The two Discussion Boards are worth a total of 200 points. The Rubric for grading a Discussion Board is as follows:

50% Discussion Board basic procedures:

- a. Reading at least 80% of all Discussion Board posts,
- b. Posting new threads or replies on the 5 days the Discussion Board is open,
- c. Posting a minimum of 10 quality posts over the week of the Discussion Board, remembering that minimum work means a minimum grade such as a C,
- d. Responding directly to comments addressed to you by classmates or the instructor in the Discussion Board;

30% Discussion Board basic requirements:

- a. Displaying accurate information in your posts,
- b. Using accurate information as the basis for critically thinking about the issues,
- c. Effectively communicating in the Discussion Board;

20% Developing and Displaying Personal and Social Responsibility in the DB:

- a. Formulating and displaying personally responsible positions on the subject issues,
- b. Communicating a socially responsible position on the issues.

3. There will be one home work, informed opinion, research essay that is worth 100 points. I expect each student to read and research the assigned topic. Based upon the reading and research, I expect a student to develop and defend an informed opinion on the assigned topic. I expect the student to communicate in his/her essay a personally and socially responsible position. This is not a research paper. It does require reading and research however. I do not care what your opinion is as long as it shows a basic understanding of the issue and displays critical thinking on your part in the development and defense of your opinion. The essay shall consist of a minimum of 2-3 pages (800-1000 words). It will address an issue that will be provided by the instructor. Your essays must be checked for grammar and spelling. If the grammar and spelling are such that I can't understand what you have written, you will be given a failing grade. I expect you to cite sources where applicable. Please follow the MCC policy on Academic Honesty which can be found on the school website. The Rubric for grading the essay is as follows:

- a. 40% Displaying an accurate understanding of the issue,
- b. 40% The Development of a critically thought out position on the issue,
- c. 10% Effectively communicating your position on the issue,
- d. 10% Communicating why your position demonstrates personal and social responsibility.

4. One Comprehensive Final Exam consisting of 100 hundred multiple choice

questions. It is timed for three hours. It comes from all 14 chapters, but mostly from the last seven. Since it comes from the same test banks as

the chapter reading quizzes, you will have seen many of the questions before.

**Late Work, Attendance, and Make Up Work Policies:**

The instructor reserves the right to drop students for lack of attendance which is measured by the timely submission of work in an online class. This class will use the ATTENDANCE feature in Bright Space. If something comes up that prevents the timely completion of assignments, the students should immediately contact the instructor.

I promise to do my best to make this class work for you. I promise to work as hard as you do to get you through it. If you have problems and needs, I will do my best to address and solve them.

The instructor reserves the right to accept late work, or to assign make up work at his own discretion.

**Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:**

This class centers to a large extent on interaction between the student and the course material, the student and the class and the student and the instructor. The student interacts with the material in the course of doing the readings, extra activities and the various assessments. The student interacts with the class through the Discussion Boards and email. And the student interacts with the instructor primarily through the Discussion Boards and through email. I try to exchange emails 2-3 times per week with each student. I expect you to read and respond to my emails. Many of them are about your performance on assessments, sometimes they are inquiries about trends I see and sometimes I am exploring Government with you. Please view the email process with the same commitment that I do.

\* [Click Here for the MCC Academic Integrity Statement](http://www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity)  
([www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity))

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

I expect you to conform to commonly acceptable standards of academic honesty including plagiarism. For a discussion on plagiarism please go to [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org) .One transgression on any assessment will result in a zero



on that assessment. A second transgression in the class will result in an “F” for a Final Grade in the class. Please consult the school “Academic Honesty” policy on the school website for further information.

**[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. In this class we use the timely submission of work to “take” attendance.

**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 from Disability Services 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](http://mclennan.edu/disability).

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

[disabilities@mclennan.edu](mailto:disabilities@mclennan.edu)

254-299-8122

Room 319, Student Services Center

There are some situations that will not normally be considered a disability, which may impact a student’s performance in class. If you have such a problem, please see the instructor to see if we can find a solution that will work for you.

The school does not have a stated policy on providing online disability accommodations at this time. But the instructor of this class promises to do his best to meet your specific needs. Please contact me so that we can attempt to meet your needs in a timely manner. I have endeavored to find transcripts and Close Captioned videos and have alternate videos that are ADA compliant. The publishers of our text have Disability resources that are available for you at no cost. In addition, the ebook has an audio function. Please remember that all assessments are only based upon the text readings

and online research. The information that appears in the videos and simulations are provided to help the student explore the material, but do not appear on the assessments.

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

**([www.mclennan.edu/titleix](http://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 [titleix@mclennan.edu](mailto: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.

**Specific Course Policies For Govt 2306:**

1. Please consult the course **BRIGHTSPACE ANNOUNCEMENTS** page daily for course updates, scheduling changes, lesson materials, essay information, tests and ideas. You can get help with Brightspace problems by contacting me, Academic Support Services and Network Services.
2. MCC has extensive filters and security protocols. Because of this, some email accounts may not work. I will use MCC email to contact you. To access your MCC email, go to the MCC home page at [www.mclennan.edu](http://www.mclennan.edu) and click on the student email icon. To send email to me through the MCC email just click on the EMAIL button in Brightspace. Please place your course and section number on the subject line of all emails. It is up to you to make sure that I am receiving your EMAILS and work product. I will always respond to your EMAIL within a day during the week and two days on a weekend. If I do not respond inside that time frame, assume that I didn't get your message and contact me again or by phone.
3. If you have exceptional circumstances, please consult with the instructor

about your individual case. New regulations make dropping classes very expensive and limited in number. Let me help you through any problems you have in this class. Something which you may consider insurmountable may be fairly easy to fix. **I AM HERE TO HELP YOU SUCCEED.** Remember that the school follows the state mandated **SIX DROP POLICY** (see catalog for an explanation). Again, I'm happy to work with you to make this class work.

4. Any student requiring special accommodations, due to a disabling or other condition, should contact the instructor as soon as possible. I'm here to make the class work for you. I'm happy to work with your special needs.
5. I suggest that you do a chapter by first looking over the Course Objectives. You may wish to print them out. Then you can look over the objectives while you do a first skim of the chapter. Perhaps you could write the page numbers where those objectives are discussed. Next read the chapter for comprehension. I suggest you outline the chapter. Then you should look over the film clips and simulations as they pertain to specific items in the chapter.
6. The newer and better your computer and internet access, the easier you will find it is to take an online class. Similarly, the greater your computer skills the easier you will find it to take an online class. But this class does not require extensive computer skills or the best computer! If you can do email and basic internet searching, you have the skills needed for this class.
6. I suggest that you download free readers from the internet for FIREFOX, WORD, REAL PLAYER, and QUICK Time.
7. You can get help with your technical problems from the instructor and/or the Network Services people. You can reach them from 8 until 5 on weekdays at 254-299-8077.

### **Faculty Bio and Teaching Statement**

Hello! My name is Mike Campenni. I am the instructor for this course. I have been teaching college for over 40 years. I am a tenured, full professor in Government at MCC.

At MCC, I have won a NISOD Outstanding Teacher Award and the school's Minnie Piper state-wide Professor Nomination. Over the years, I have had research published in *Comparative Political Studies*, a book chapter on Public Finance and have presented at multiple American Political Science Association Conventions and the American Public Administration Conventions. In addition, I have presented at regional conferences. I am on the MCC Speakers' Bureau and speak frequently to civic groups. I have served on most of the standing faculty and institutional committees at MCC.

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I have served multiple terms on Faculty Council and have been both the Vice President and President of the Council. I am a member of the Texas Community College Teachers Association and have served as a state wide committee member (Services, Members and Legislative committees). I have served as a Faculty Advisor for the Ranch Club, the Non Traditional Students Club and the Politics Club.

My teaching philosophy is relatively straight forward. My job is to help you learn about government. Everything that I do is aimed towards that end. If I have done a good job, then your grades will reflect that effort. Generally, my lodestar is to do whatever helps the student learn about government. To that end, I'm willing to do whatever is ethical, equitable and possible to make this class work for you. The key is for you to let me know what you need from me to be successful and for us to work hard together.