



WACO, TEXAS

**COURSE SYLLABUS
AND
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**TEXAS GOVERNMENT
GOVERNMENT – 2306_14 and _07**

ERIK EMBLEM, PH.D.

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 including your safety. We will continue to monitor the evolving situation with COVID 19 and adjust our safety guidelines to make sure we offer a safe environment for you and our faculty. Please make sure to consult your faculty and the MCC website on any changes to these guidelines.

TEXAS GOVERNMENT

GOVT 2306_14

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. Must have passed the reading portion of the TSI or credit for READ 0302.

Prerequisites and/or Corequisites:

There are no prerequisites for GOVT 2306

Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:

This is a reading intensive course. Please be prepared to spend at least six hours a week outside of class to complete your assignments and prepare for quizzes and exams. Your attendance and attention are expected in class.

Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: Dr. Erik S. Emblem, Ph.D.

MCC E-mail: eemblem@mcclennan.edu

Office Phone Number: 299-8917

Office Location: MAC 312

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 11:00a – 12p and Tuesday and Thursday 9:30a to 11a or contact me through email to set up a zoom meeting time.

Required Text & Materials:

Title: ***Jones/Maxwell Texas Politics Today***, (you paid for access to the e-book and online material when you paid your tuition and fees)

Author: Jones, Maxwell, and Crain

Edition: **19th edition**

Publisher: Cengage Learning

ISBN: 9780357506769 (access code for electronic textbook and MindTap)

The cost of the e-textbook and MindTap is included in your tuition and fees.

MCC Bookstore Website - (<http://www.mcclennan.edu/bookstore/>).

Methods of Teaching and Learning:

While lecture and dialogue are the primary teaching methods in this class, students will also learn through projects, readings, video, multimedia, and presentations. Evaluations of learning may include exams, quizzes, project presentations, and essays.

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 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.”

In addition to the above listed competencies, 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.

TEXAS GOVERNMENT

GOVT 2306_14

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:

Below you will find a tentative calendar of subject matter covered in class. A more precise schedule including assignments and due dates is available on Brightspace.

Week One – Introduction to Political Thought

Week Two – Influence of Texas History on Texas Politics

Week Three – “Texas Political Culture and Diversity” (Chapter One)

Week Four – Texas in the Federal System (Chapter Two)

Week Five – The Texas Constitution in Perspective (Chapter Three)

Exam One (LO 1-3)

Week Six: “Voting and Elections” (Chapter Four)

Week Seven: “Political Parties” (Chapter Five)

Week Eight: Interest Groups (Chapter Six)

Exam Two (LO 5-7)

Week Nine: The Texas Legislature (Chapter Seven)

Week Ten: The Executive Branch (Chapter Eight)

Week Eleven: “The Judiciary” (Chapter Nine)

Week Twelve: “Law and Due Process” (Chapter Ten)

Exam Three (LO 3-4)

TEXAS GOVERNMENT

GOVT 2306_14

Week Thirteen: Local Governments (Chapter Eleven)

Week Fourteen: Public Policy in Texas (Chapter Twelve)

Week Fifteen: Texas and the Courts

Weeks Sixteen: **Final Exam (LO 7-8)**

Course Grading Information:

Grades:

10 Class Assignment/Quizzes (400 pts) – I will give twelve assignment/quizzes during the semester. Each assignment is worth 40 points. The material used for each quiz comes from class assignments. I will administer these quizzes at my discretion. I will drop your two lowest assignment scores.

12 Chapters of MindTap Assignments (480 pts) – I expect you to complete an online assignment for each of the twelve chapters in our text. Each chapter's online assignment is worth 40 points.

3 Writing Assignments (500 pts) – Throughout the semester I will assign three writing assignments in which the student will reflect upon or research the topic I assign. Two reflection writing assignments (150 points and 100 points) and one research paper (250 points). Critical thinking, analysis, and independent thought are a must for each assignment. A prompt and rubric for each assignment will be provided on Brightspace.

4 Exams (650 pts) – I will administer four exams. The first three exams are worth 150 points each and the final is worth 200 points. Each exam covers material presented in lectures, the text book, and in reading assignments.

Attendance (150 pts) – Students may receive up to 150 points for attendance. Points will be awarded in the following correlation of absences to points: 0-1 – 150; 2 – 135; 3 – 120; 4 – 105; 5 – 90; 6 – 75; 7 – 60. Each combination of two late arrivals and/or early departures will count as one absence for grade purposes. If you have more than seven absences before the last two weeks of lectures, I may drop you from the class. If you have accumulated more than seven absences following the last two weeks of lectures, you will receive an "F" in the class.

Grade Distribution (on the MCC grade scale):

2180 – 1962 points = A

1961 – 1744 points = B

1743 – 1526 points = C

1525 – 1308 points = D

1307 -- 0 points = F

Late Work, Attendance, and Make Up Work Policies:

I will penalize late work. Unless I have previously granted permission to turn the assignment in late or receive a document from a doctor validating an illness that caused the absence or prevented you from turning the assignment in to me on time, I will penalize the assignments in the following manner:

- Papers turned in the same day, but after class begins will receive a 10% penalty
- Papers turned in between the due date and the next class period will receive a 25% penalty
- Papers turned in a week after the due date will receive a 35% penalty.
- Papers turned in more than a week after the assignment's due date will receive at least a 40% penalty

Class attendance and participation are a must and may be the deciding factor in borderline grades. I may allot extra credit points for exemplary participation and effort. **Students are required to take all exams on the scheduled dates.** However, if an exam must be missed, the student must contact me in advance with a legitimate reason and appropriate documentation. In exceptional situations, I will provide an altered make-up exam. **I will not give make-up quizzes** (I will drop the lowest quiz grade) **or make-up exams.**

TurnItIn:

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.

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. All students are responsible for their own conduct in class and must adhere to the General Conduct Policy located in the college handbook or at

<http://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide-2016-17/> - If a student violates the standards expressed in the student handbook, I may dismiss the student from the class.

With the exception of assistive learning devices, electronic devices (e.g. telephones, mp3 players, etc...) and headphones may not be used while class is in session.

Telephones must be silent and put away. Computers may be only used for note taking—should computers be used for any other purposes during class, the privilege of using a computer in class will be revoked.

I have zero tolerance for plagiarism and/or cheating. I will apply an automatic 0 points to any quiz, test, or exam upon which there is cheating and all plagiarized material will receive 0 points.

*** [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.

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students. Students will be counted absent from class meetings missed, beginning with the first official day of classes. Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for all material presented or assigned for a course and will be held accountable for such materials in the determination of course grades.

** 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.*

McLennan

C O M M U N I T Y

COLLEGE

ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES

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 or want to explore strategies for balancing life and school, we encourage you to contact a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing SuccessCoach@mclennan.edu. Students may visit the Completion Center Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. to schedule a meeting with a Success Coach and receive additional resources and support to help reach academic and personal goals. Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff based on household size. Text (254) 870-7573 to schedule a pantry 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 at 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 notified via 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.

Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace:

Go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html> 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 their 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. If you need assistance with set-up, you may email Helpdesk@mclennan.edu for help.

Forwarding Emails:

You may forward 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 be lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

MCC Academic Integrity Statement:

Go to www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity for information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating.

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. For additional information, please visit www.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

Title IX:

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 or by calling Dr. Drew Canham (Chief of Staff for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion/Title IX) at (254) 299-8645. Individuals also may contact the MCC Police Department at 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at MCC at (254) 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student or employee may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>.

Go to McLennan's Title IX webpage at www.mclennan.edu/titleix/. It 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.

Disclaimer:

The resources and policies listed above are merely for informational purposes and are subject to change without notice or obligation. The College reserves the right to change policies and other requirements in compliance with State and Federal laws. The provisions of this document do not constitute a contract.