



WACO, TEXAS

**COURSE SYLLABUS
AND
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**TEXAS GOVERNMENT
GOVT 2306_O082 and _O083**

DR. ERIK EMBLEM

NOTE: This is a 16-week online course.

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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).

This is a reading intensive course. A reasonable level of self-discipline is needed for successful completion of the course. Please be prepared to spend at least six hours a week to complete your assignments and prepare for quizzes and exams. Your participation in daily assignments and in class discussions are expected throughout the semester.

Instructor Information:

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

MCC E-mail: eemblem@mclennan.edu

Office Phone Number: 299-8917 - Office Location: MAC 312

Office Hours: Please feel free to contact me set up a zoom or face to face 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 enhanced edition**

Publisher: Cengage Learning

ISBN: 9780357795927 (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.mclennan.edu/bookstore/>

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Methods of Teaching and Learning:

Reading, participation on the discussion board, and writing are the primary teaching methods in this class. Students will also learn through projects, video, and multimedia. Evaluations of learning may include exams, quizzes, and essays.

The course includes a textbook and other material that will be delivered via the Internet. Students are expected to read the daily reading assignments, view any lecture and or videos, complete the online assignments, respond to the Discussion Board (Db) assignments, write papers, and take the course exams. Students will earn points on each completed assignment. The total points earned during the semester will determine the student's final grade. More information about the grading system is provided later in the syllabus.

Since the course is constructed around online participation, the student must know how to use a computer, a Web browser, and email. The student must be able to create and save documents; send and receive electronic documents; have a general understanding of online technologies; and practice appropriate online behavior.

Email:

I require that you use your MCC email. When you email me (ceemblem@mclennan.edu), please put your course and section number on the subject line (2306_O82 or 2306_O83). It is up to you to make sure that I am receiving your EMAILS and assignments. I will respond to your EMAIL within 24 hours during the week. I will respond to emails received after 5 p.m. (Central Time) on Fridays or during the weekend by the end of the following Monday. If I do not respond inside that time frame, assume that I did not receive your message and email me again or call me (254.299.8917).

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.”

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- **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 Attendance/Participation Guidelines:

If a student is not in attendance in accordance with the policies/guidelines of the class as outlined in the course syllabus as of the course census date, faculty are required to drop students from their class roster prior to certifying the respective class roster. A student’s financial aid will be re-evaluated accordingly and the student will only receive funding for those courses attended as of the course census date.

Before the 60% point of the semester, a student who is absent for 25% or more of a face-to-face or blended course or who miss 25% or more of assigned work for an online course will be

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withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. A student may also request to be withdrawn with a grade of W before the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point of the semester, the student may request to be withdrawn if the student is passing, or be assigned the final grade earned at the end of the semester after grades have been updated to reflect missing work.

You must contact me via email by Friday, August 25, 2023, to let me know that you are intending to engage with the class this semester.

Course Outline or Schedule:

Below you will find a tentative calendar of subject matter covered in class. A more detailed schedule is available on Brightspace.

Week One – Introduction to the Class and Texas History

Week Two – Influence of Texas History on Texas Political Culture

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

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

Exam One (LO 1-3)

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

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

Week Seven: “Political Parties” (Chapter Five)

Week Eight: Interest Groups (Chapter Six)

Week Nine: The Texas Legislature (Chapter Seven)

Week Ten: The Legislative Process

Exam Two (LO 5-7)

Week Eleven: The Executive Branch (Chapter Eight)

Week Twelve: “The Judiciary” (Chapter Nine)

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

Week Fourteen: Local Governments (Chapter Eleven)

Week Fifteen: Public Policy in Texas (Chapter Twelve)

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

Course Grading Information:

17 Reading/MindTap Exercises (1020 pts) – Each unit has Mind Tap activities or quizzes for students to complete (see MindTap link in Brightspace). Each chapter’s activities are worth a total of sixty-points (60) (your scores on chapter activities may add up to less than sixty points). You must complete Mind Tap and Reading assignments by the assigned time. A missed Mind Tap or Reading assignment will result in a grade of zero (0). 38%

Discussion Board (Db) (900 pts) - I will post six Db prompts throughout the semester. You are asked to post your well thought out response to each prompt as well as responses to at least five of your fellow students’ posts (at least 6 posts per prompt). Your posts must show familiarity with the subject addressed in the prompt and appropriate analysis and criticism. Students who do an excellent job of contributing will receive the full 150 possible points. Students whose contributions are less than excellent will receive fewer points. Students who do not provide all 6 postings will lose significant points regardless of their content. Discussion boards may not be made-up after they close. 33%

Courtesy and Respect - I expect students to demonstrate courtesy and respect to all instructors, guests, and fellow students. While honest discussion and debate of topics is expected and encouraged, such interactions should not involve aggressive, derogatory, or hostile behaviors (verbal or otherwise). The instructor reserves the right to act to protect the decorum of the learning environment and the image of MCC.

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1 Writing Assignment (250 pts) –I will assign one research assignment. Critical thinking and personal perspective are a must for the research project. I will give a detailed explanation of the project on Brightspace. The research paper must be submitted through Brightspace. 9%

3 Exams (550 pts) – I will administer three exams. 120 pts exam one; 180 pts exam two; and 250 pts final exam. Each exam may cover material presented in the textbook, assigned readings, videos, and the discussion board. 20%

Grade Distribution:

2720 – 2448 points = A

2447 – 2176 points = B

2175 – 1904 points = C

1903 – 1632 points = D

1631 -- 0 points = F

Time: All times listed are **Central Time**.

I have zero tolerance for plagiarism, AI generations, and/or cheating. I will apply an automatic 0 points to any quiz, test, or exam upon which there is cheating, and all plagiarized/AI material will receive 0 points. Plagiarism may lead to a drop from the class.

Late Work 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 within 24 hours of the due date/time, will receive a 15% penalty
- Papers turned in after 24 hours of the assigned time will receive a 35% penalty
- It is acceptable to submit a paper before the day it is due.

Participation is a must. 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

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documentation. In exceptional situations, I will provide an altered make-up exam. **I rarely allow for make-up of Mind Tap activities** (please contact me early if you are having technical difficulties).

Students will be permitted to make up exams missed due to (1) authorized participation in official College functions, (2) significant personal illness, (3) an illness or a death in the immediate family, or (4) the observance of a religious holy day. The instructor has the prerogative to determine whether a student may make up work missed due to other reasons. The student is responsible to inform the instructor of the reason for an absence and to do so in a timely fashion.

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. If a student violates the standards expressed in the student handbook, I may dismiss the student from the class.

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 and AI generation. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism and AI generation of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.

[Click Here for the MCC Attendance/Absences Policy](https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html)

(<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 additional guidelines specific to this course.

Updated 07/18/2023



ACADEMIC RESOURCES/POLICIES

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 2542998122 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 acting Title IX Coordinator at titleix@mclennan.edu or by calling, Dr. Claudette Jackson, (Accommodations/Title IX) at (254) 299-8465. MCC employees are mandatory reporters and must report incidents immediately to the Title IX Coordinator. Individuals may also contact the MCC Police Department at (254) 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center 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.

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/>

Academic Support and Tutoring is here to help students with all their course-related needs. Specializing in one-on-one tutoring, developing study skills, and effectively writing essays. Academic Support and Tutoring can be found in the Library and main floor of the Learning Commons. This service is available to students in person or through Zoom. You can contact the Academic Support and Tutoring team via Zoom or email (ast@mclennan.edu) by going to our website (<https://www.mclennan.edu/academic-support-and-tutoring/>).

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 either MCC CREW – Campus Resources Education Web by calling (254) 299-8561 or by emailing crew@mclennan.edu or a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing SuccessCoach@mclennan.edu. Both are located in the Completion Center located on the second floor of the Student Services Center (SSC) which is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) provides free food by appointment to students, faculty and staff. To schedule an appointment, go to https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_07byXd7eB8iTqJg. Both the Completion Center and Paulanne's 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.

MCC Academic Integrity Statement:

Go to www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity for information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating. The unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) for classwork can be a violation of the College's General Conduct Policy. Whether AI is authorized in a course and the parameters in which AI can be used in a course will be outlined by each instructor.

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

Go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teachingandlearning/FacultyandStaffCommons/requirements.html> for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

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.

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. For more information about your student email account, go to www.mclennan.edu/studentemail.

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.

You can find help on the McLennan website about connecting your McLennan email account to your mobile device:

- [Email Setup for iPhones and iPads](#)
- [Email Setup for Androids](#)

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.

For more helpful information about technology at MCC, go to [MCC's Tech Support Cheat Sheet](#) or email helpdesk@mclennan.edu.

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.