



WACO, TEXAS

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**COURSE SYLLABUS  
AND  
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**Texas Government (Texas Constitution & Topics)  
GOVT 2306.C12**

**TYLER YOUNG**  
**Note: This is a 16-week course.**

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

### GOVT 2306.C12

#### **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 or credit for INRW 0402.

Recommended: Sophomore standing or completion of HIST 1301 and 1302 recommended.

Corequisite: May be taken before or after GOVT 2306 (or simultaneously).

#### **Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:**

This course will be taught as indicated in the MCC Course Catalog. Therefore, you do not have to have any prior knowledge of government, but the course will be taught as if the student has successfully completed HIST 1301 and 1302. This will not be required, however. Also, students should have basic computer knowledge and skills in order to successfully navigate online.

#### **Instructor Information:**

Instructor Name: Tyler Young

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

Phone Number: (512) 587-3753 (No text messages)

Office/Teacher Conference Hours: By Appointment

#### **Alternate Contact:** (In the event you cannot reach the instructor in a reasonable amount of time)

Name: Larry Salazar

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

MCC Phone: (254)299-8958

Office: MAC 311

#### **Required Text & Materials:**

Title: *Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas*

Authors: Collier, Galatas, and Harrelson-Stephens {hereinafter Collier}

Edition: 6<sup>th</sup>

Publisher: Sage

ISBN: 978-1-544-31626-0

[MCC Bookstore Website](#)

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

Power Point presentations are given in class daily with a narrative from the instructor. Each week students will complete a variety of assignments over a chapter. The class will have three units with a discussion and test for each one. Students are expected to meet the various deadlines for the class.

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

This course is designed to examine the key elements and components of the U.S. political system. We analyze the political and cultural milieu that surrounds the American political process and examine how that has an impact on subsequent policy outcomes. The framework for evaluating our unique federal and state structure considers the external players of the political game who have access and influence over the political decision-making process including: the media, interest groups, lobbyists, and political parties. We examine in detail the role of campaigns and elections in securing a representative government and question whether these external players subvert or enhance the policymaking process. Furthermore, we analyze the civil rights and civil liberties granted to individuals through the Constitution and Supreme Court. Courses in this category focus on consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states. 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.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas system.

6. Analyze the state and local election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.

### **Technical Support:**

For technical support, please do one of the following:

- contact the Information Systems and Services Help Desk at (254) 299-8077
- e-mail the Information Systems and Services Help Desk at [helpdesk@mclennan.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mclennan.edu)
- visit the online link for Brightspace help at the following URL:  
[http://www.mclennan.edu/help/kb/c/11/\\_category](http://www.mclennan.edu/help/kb/c/11/_category)

### **Other Links of Possible Interest:**

- MCC Library: <http://www.mclennan.edu/library>
- Student Support Services: <http://www.mclennan.edu/student-support-services/>

### **Course Outline or Schedule:**

This course outline is subject to change. Instructor will notify students during class and will attempt to make an announcement on Brightspace upon any changes necessary during the course semester. Students are responsible for staying up-to-date with any changes made.

Brief Course Outline:

Orientation Quiz

Introduction Discussion

Unit 1: Foundations

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Texas Constitutions
- Chapter 11: Local Government in Texas

Unit 1 Discussion

Unit 1 Test

Unit 2: Politics

- Chapter 8: Campaigns and Elections, Texas Style
- Chapter 9: Political Parties
- Chapter 10: Organized Interests

Unit 2 Discussion

Unit 2 Test

Unit 3: Institutions

- Chapter 3: Texas Legislature
- Chapter 4: Texas Governors
- Chapter 5: The Plural Executive and Bureaucracy in Texas
- Chapter 6: Texas Judicial System

Unit 3 Discussion

Unit 3 Test

Unit 4: Policy

- Chapter 7: Texas-Sized Justice
- Chapter 12: Fiscal Policy
- Chapter 13: Energy, Environment, Transportation, and Trade Policies; Transforming Texas
- Chapter 14: Social Policy: Education, Health, and Immigration

Final Exam

Tentative Course Outline: All items due by 11:59PM on the date listed

Week	Reading for the Week	Assignments, Quizzes and Exams
January 13-19	Syllabus	Log onto Brightspace/Complete Orientation Quiz Due 1/19 and Introduction Discussion Due 1/22
January 20-26	Collier Chapter 1	Chapter 1 Activities Due 1/29
January 27 – February 2	Collier Chapter 2	Chapter 2 Activities Due 1/29
February 3-9	Collier Chapter 11	Chapter 11 Activities Due 2/4 Unit 1 Discussion Due 2/6 Unit 1 Test Due 2/7
February 10-16	Collier Chapter 8	Chapter 8 Activities Due 2/11
February 17-23	Collier Chapter 9	Chapter 9 Activities Due 2/18
February 24-March 1	Collier Chapter 10	Chapter 10 Activities Due 2/25 Unit 2 Discussion Due 2/27 Unit 2 Test Due 2/28
March 2-8	Collier Chapter 3	Chapter 3 Activities Due 3/3
March 9-15	SPRING BREAK	
March 16-22	Collier Chapter 4	Chapter 4 Activities Due 3/17
March 23-29	Collier Chapter 5	Chapter 5 Activities Due 3/24
March 30-April 5	Collier Chapter 6	Chapter 6 Activities Due 3/31 Unit 3 Discussion Due 4/2 Unit 3 Test Due 4/3
April 6-12	Collier Chapter 7	Chapter 7 Activities Due 4/7
April 13-19	Collier Chapter 12	Chapter 12 Activities Due 4/14
April 20-26	Collier Chapter 13	Chapter 13 Activities Due 4/21
April 27-May 3	Collier Chapter 14	Chapter 14 Activities Due 4/28
May 4-8		Final Exam Due 5/5

**Course Grading Information:**

*Orientation Quiz:* This quiz will review items from the syllabus

*Introduction Discussion:* Please see Brightspace for full instructions to complete this assignment on introducing yourself to the class.

*Chapter Assignments:* During the course of the semester, there will be a number of assignments due weekly for each chapter, these will be worth a varying number of points and include By The Numbers, Video Exercises, Who Are Americans, Who Participates, and chapter quizzes. These are worth 28% of your overall course grade.

*Unit Discussion Posts:* There is a discussion for each of the first three Units; students need to have one original post and two response posts by the deadline. A quality original post is no less than 250 words with no grammatical errors. A response post needs to be thoughtful, respectful and no less than 100 words.

*Unit Tests:* will be delivered online and there will be three throughout the term. Your lowest one will be replaced with what you earn on the Final Exam. Tests will not be restarted for technical errors or in the event of failure to login on the student's part. If one does have a technical issue than that will be the test that grade that is replaced. Notice: it is the instructor's position that a test is replaced in the event of life events and technical difficulties; not to better one's grade although this will likely be the result. It is recommended that tests be taken at a secure location such as the school computer lab. Do not use tablet computers.

*Final Exam:* will be delivered online and will ask questions from all material covered in the class.

**Attendance:** According to MCC policy, students may not miss more than 25% of the required classes. If this occurs, students will be administratively dropped from the course for —non-attendance.

**Grade Breakdown:**

Orientation Quiz	1%	A = 90.00+%
Introduction Disc.	1%	B = 80.00-89.99%
Chapter Assignments	28%	C = 70.00-79.99%
Unit Discussions (3)	20%	D = 60.00-69.99%
Unit Tests (3)	30%	F = Less than 60.00%
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>20%</u>	W or I = as appropriate
Total	100%	

**THE FIRST TIME YOU RECEIVE A GRADE THAT YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH ... GET IN TO SEE ME IMMEDIATELY!**

Too frequently students wait until the end of the semester to try to rectify poor grades received throughout the term. I am here to help, so utilize me. However, once all the grades are said and done there is not much that I can do. But if you get with me earlier in the semester, chances are that grades can be rectified. Remember, there is no stupid question!

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

Late chapter work will not be allowed for any reason.

Make up exams must be completed within a week of original administration and will have a 20% penalty.

The most important stance is to communicate quickly in the event you will be late on any assignments and the best way forward is to plan ahead and complete work early when possible.

## **Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:**

*Attendance:* We will cover a great deal of information in each class lecture, and I use the lectures to emphasize key areas that you should study. Attendance will be taken 10 - 15 minutes after class starts each day. Those students who have not arrived in class and signed the attendance sheet by the time the sheets go out are counted absent for the day. Beginning the second week of class, I will start to send around attendance sheets. It is YOUR responsibility to sign the attendance sheet next to your assigned seat. Everyone must sign up for a seat because it helps me "find you" during class, it is used for attendance, and it is used for returning your graded assignments. Please "scope out" where you would like to sit within the first two days of class. This will comprise ten percent of your total average. Furthermore, given that much of the material for tests is drawn from the lectures, your attendance is essential to do well in this class. Additionally, I will not excuse **ANY** absence unless it is a university excused absence.

Finally, it is in your best interest to attend class. Why? It's simple:

***There is a strong correlation with low semester grades and high absenteeism.***

*Netiquette:* There are several classroom policies regarding behavior in an online course that students should be aware of before proceeding with the class. First, all students should treat the instructor as well as other students with respect, just as they would in a face-to-face section. This might be more important here because it can be hard for others to understand your intent and meaning online. Secondly, students should use complete sentences when using the discussion board. Building proper writing is one of the skills that students should constantly be undertaking in any academic course. As a result, students should not use slang, abbreviations, etc. when writing. On a similar note, students should not write with "text message" styles of writing either. For example, do not use "u" when you mean "you" and the like. Similarly, students should not use all lower case letter or all capital letters. Write as you would if this were an essay for an English class. Finally, students who have complaints about others' disruptive behavior should first talk to me about the problem. I will then speak with the disruptive student privately. Then, if the problem(s) still persist, the classmate who is being disrupted may contact the disruptive student with my permission. If this does not solve the problem, the Division Director of Social Sciences will be contacted immediately. The potential sanctions for persons who disrupt class or their fellow students include (but are not limited to) moving you to a different section, dropping you from the course entirely, to giving you an "F" for the course, at the instructor's discretion. So, please don't interrupt others!

*Technology Requirement:* Everyone must use e-mail, the Internet, Google Classroom, and Brightspace in this course, for a variety of reasons. I have found that this encourages students to communicate with me regarding class materials. You will need your MCC login and password in order to access the course on Brightspace. All students registered for the class have been added. You are responsible for any announcement, assignments, or other information that I distribute on Brightspace. Additionally, I will post your grades on Brightspace so that you can keep track of them easier. Check these regularly (*i.e.* at least once a week) to help ensure sure that all of your grades are accurate. It is much easier to fix a problem early on than at the end of the semester.

**\* [Click Here for the Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's Brightspace](#)**

([www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/teaching-commons/requirements](http://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/teaching-commons/requirements))

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

\* [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.

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

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

### **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).

### **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](http://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/teaching-commons/requirements)  
([www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/teaching-commons/requirements](http://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/teaching-commons/requirements))

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.



## 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](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

**\* [Click Here for more information about Title IX](http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix)**  
**([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.

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.*