

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

WACO, TEXAS

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**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**AND**  
**INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**Texas Government (Texas Constitution & Topics)**  
**GOVT\_2306\_21\_2023SP**

**John Williams**

**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 at <https://www.mclennan.edu/crisis-management/coronavirus-updates/index.html> on any changes to these guidelines.

**Course Description:**

Origin and development of the Texas Constitution, structure, and powers of the state government, including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the state and local election process, public policy, civil liberties, and civil rights.

**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).

**Instructor Information:**

Instructor Name: John Williams

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

Office Phone Number: 254-299-8938

Office Location: MAC 334

Office/Teacher Conference Hours: MW: 11:20am-12:30pm; TTH: 9:30am-10:30am; or by appointment.

Other Instruction Information: In emergencies if Instructor isn't available contact the advisor below.

Advisor: Larry Salazar

Office Phone: 254-299-8958

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

**Required Text & Materials:**

Title: Texas Politics Today

Author: Jones, Crain, Flores, Wlezien, and Davis

Edition: 19<sup>th</sup> Edition

Publisher: Cengage

ISBN: 978-0-357-50672-1

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

**Methods of Teaching and Learning:**

This course will rely primarily on the assigned text. However, other related materials may be used to supplement the approved course material. Generally speaking, class time will be divided between class discussion and course lecture. The discussions will include not only prescribed readings, but outside current events happening at the local, state, and federal levels, and other appropriate professional published materials, as well. Exams, quizzes, and assigned projects will be used to assess learning and

comprehension. Furthermore, participation in class discussions is a critical part of the classroom experience. Therefore, final grades will incorporate points for participation.

**Course Objectives and/or Competencies:**

This course will focus on the Texas Constitution. The course will involve the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations. Ultimately, this course is designed to help students develop an adequate comprehension of the following:

- **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.”

**Course Outline or Schedule:**

This is a Face-to-Face course and students are expected to stay on pace to complete the assigned readings before the topics are discussed in class or posted on discussion boards. Also, students will be required to complete all assignments in accordance with the established due date. If there’s a change in schedule, students will be notified through Brightspace and/or e-mail.

**Week 1: 1/10/2023 & 1/12/2023**

- Introductions and Course Orientation
- Chapter 1 – Texas Political Culture and Diversity

**Week 2: 1/17/2023 & 1/19/2023**

- Chapter 1 – Texas Political Culture and Diversity
- Chapter 2 – Texas in the Federal System
- Discussion Board – Online

**Week 3: 1/24/2023 & 1/26/2023**

- Quiz 1
- Chapter 2 – Texas in the Federal System
- Chapter 3 – The Texas Constitution in Perspective

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**Week 4: 1/31/2023 & 2/2/2023**

- Chapter 3 – The Texas Constitution in Perspective
- Exam 1 Review
- Discussion Board – Online

**Week 5: 2/7/2023 & 2/09/2023**

- Exam 1
- Chapter 4 – Voting and Elections

**Week 6: 2/14/2023 & 2/16/2023**

- Chapter 4 – Voting and Elections
- Chapter 5 – Political Parties
- Discussion Board – Online

**Week 7: 2/21/2023 & 2/23/2023**

- Quiz 2
- Project Assignment 1 Due
- Chapter 5 – Political Parties
- Chapter 6 – Interest Groups
- Discussion Board – Online

**Week 8: 2/28/2023 & 3/02/2023**

- Chapter 6 – Interest Groups
- Chapter 7 – The Legislature
- Discussion Board – Online

**Week 9: 3/07/2023 & 3/09/2023**

- Spring Break

**Week 10: 3/14/2023 & 3/16/2023**

- Chapter 7 – The Legislature
- Chapter 8 – The Executive
- Discussion Board - Online

Discussion Board - Online

**Week 11: 3/21/2023 & 3/23/2023**

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- Quiz 3
- Chapter 8 – The Executive
- Chapter 9 – The Judiciary
- Discussion Board - Online

Week 12: **3/28/2023 & 3/30/2023**

- Chapter 9 – The Judiciary
- Chapter 10 – Law, Due Process, and Criminal Justice Policy
- Discussion Board - Online

Week 13: **4/04/2023 & 4/06/2023**

- Project Assignment 2 Due 4/04/2023
- Chapter 10 – Law, Due Process, and Criminal Justice Policy
- Chapter 11 – Local Government
- Discussion Board - Online

Week 14: **4/11/2023 & 4/13/2023**

- Chapter 11 – Local Government
- Discussion Board - Online

Week 15: **4/18/2023 & 4/20/2023**

- Chapter 12 – Public Policy in Texas
- Discussion Board - Online

Week 16: **4/25/2023 & 4/27/2023**

- Chapter 12 – Public Policy in Texas
- Exam Review

Week 17: **5/01/2023 – 5/05/2023 Finals Week**

- Final Exam

### **Course Grading Information:**

Grades can be found in the Brightspace grade book. Students are responsible for keeping track of their progress throughout the semester. Students are expected to do their own, original work. Cheating and plagiarism is entirely unacceptable. Should you get caught cheating or turn in plagiarized work, the appropriate MCC sanctions will be pursued.

As summarized below, course grades will be divided into five areas worth a total of 530 points.

Specifically, **Class Participation** points will be awarded to students based on in class attendance; participation in all zoom meetings assigned; discussion board assignments completed, and completion of all assignments and assessments given in lieu of physical classroom attendance. As it is a requirement to attend class, a reduction of 10% per session missed will be assessed against the class participation score should students attend fewer than 80% of the scheduled meeting dates.

1. Class Participation – 100 points.
2. There will be **TWO** exams consisting of both multiple-choice and short essay answers – 200 points.
3. **Two** written assignments – 200 points.
4. **THREE** quizzes. – 30 points.

Grading Scale:

100 - 90%	A (530-477)
89 - 80%	B (476-424)
79 - 70%	C (423-371)
69 - 60%	D (370-318)
Below 60%	F (317-0)

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Attendance will be recognized as in-class attendance and participation in all zoom meetings assigned, as well as completion of discussion board activities assigned in lieu of face to face and zoom meetings. Failure to attend class will result in a mark against your attendance, and ultimately will result in a reduction in class participation points should you attend less than 80% of these activities, unless otherwise approved.

**Late Work and Make Up Policy:**

In-class quizzes must be taken during the time in which the activity is scheduled. If approved, make up for a missed quiz must be completed no later than the agreed upon retake date. Students will receive zero points if the quiz isn't taken within this timeframe. Students will be required to take exams and complete all other assignments as scheduled. If circumstances prevent you from completing an exam or assignment on time, the situation must be properly documented and a request for an exception submitted immediately upon knowledge of the situation, but no later than one week after the exam or assignment. Upon approval of an exception, students will have one week after approval to take the test or complete their assignment without penalty. Should the student not be able to complete the test or assignment within one week of approval, the following penalty will apply:

Two weeks after approved exception – 20% reduction in score.

Three weeks after approved exception – 30% reduction in score.

Any time after the above exceptions, student will receive a 0% for the activity.

**Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:**

Students are expected to respect the opinions of others and conduct themselves appropriately, as classroom discussions may oftentimes deal with sensitive matters. Students are expected to read the assigned materials **before class** and come prepared to discuss the issues identified in the readings.

Students are also expected to attend and be on time for each class session, and be aware of current events, which will be a basis for additional classroom discussion.

**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 additional guidelines specific to this course.

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Updated 11/04/2022

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## **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](http://www.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

### **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](mailto:titleix@mclennan.edu) or by calling, Dr. Claudette Jackson, (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion/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/](http://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 from 7:30 am - 6:00 pm Monday through Thursday and 7:30 am - 5:00 pm on Friday. You can contact the Academic Support and Tutoring team via Zoom (<https://mclennan.zoom.us/j/2542998500>) or email ([ast@mclennan.edu](mailto:ast@mclennan.edu)) during the above mentioned times.

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](mailto:crew@mclennan.edu) or a Success Coach by calling (254) 299-8226 or emailing [SuccessCoach@mclennan.edu](mailto: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](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](https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf).

### **MCC Academic Integrity Statement:**

Go to [www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity) for information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating.

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

Go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty-andStaffCommons/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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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.