



# GOVT 2306.881 TR: Texas State Government Online

Course Syllabus: Summer 1 2020

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*"Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed."*

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Office	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
Hours	By Appt	By Appt	By Appt	By Appt	By Appt	By Appt

***This syllabus serves as the documentation for all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.***

*Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.*

**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.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

## **Student 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.

## **Evaluation/Grading Policy:**

Smartbook Assignments	20%
CONNECT Chapter Assignments	20%
Discussions	20%
<u>Unit Tests</u>	<u>40%</u>
TOTAL	100%

#### Explanation of Grading Scale:

A = The letter grade of A represents that, in all areas of evaluation, the student has demonstrated an excellent understanding of the course subject matter and an exemplary ability to effectively communicate it. The student has also excelled in the ability to educate himself/herself. Through all assignments and discussions, the student has consistently demonstrated accurate factual knowledge, analytical skill, interdisciplinary association, and practical application of the subject matter to daily living habits and problems.

B = The letter grade of B represents that, in some areas of evaluation, the student has demonstrated competency of the subject matter. The student could improve in one or all of the following areas: the accuracy of factual recollection, the aptitude to critically analyze a text, an awareness of the association of the subject matter, the communication and consistent application of his/her knowledge.

C = The letter grade of C represents that the student has demonstrated an average knowledge of the basic facts of the subject matter and has demonstrated a rudimentary ability to gain knowledge through his own study. The student requires further education and practice of critical thinking skills. The student also needs to strengthen his/her ability to explain the subject matter clearly and effectively.

D = The letter grade of D represents that the student requires further educational instruction in basic content, application, and communication of the subject matter. The student's factual knowledge and skills in communication and application are adequate for the attainment of a degree at NTCC, but further education is necessary for the mastery of the subject.

F = The letter grade of F represents that the student has not demonstrated an elementary level of knowledge of the subject matter. The student also has not demonstrated the skills or discipline necessary to learn the subject matter.

#### Grading and Evaluation:

A student's grade will be based upon performance in the following areas (including the tests):

1. CONNECT ASSIGNMENTS, Pretests, Posttests, Learnsmart activities and assignments: Each chapter has several assignments that can be accessed within the respective folder for that day. Your grade will be a composite on your performance for all those assignments.
2. Discussion of Political Issues

The discussion is another opportunity to practice critical thinking. Do not merely give your opinion regarding the topic or the statements made in the discussion posts. Do not simply agree with a classmate's position. Critically analyze the article and the posts and explain your opinion by providing well-reasoned arguments for your position.

Each discussion post is due on a certain day. Late posts will not be accepted for credit. A student must contribute at least three substantive posts to each discussion forum. A substantive post consists of analytical questions, intelligent comments, illustrations of pertinent personal experiences, etc. Simple written agreement concerning an issue or repetition of ideas does not count as a substantive post.

Please note the following points:

1. The first substantive post must be your original response to the forum topic, questions, and article (Minimum of 250 words).
2. The second and third substantive post must be responses to other students' posts. In order to receive full credit, all posts must be respectful in tone, thorough (at least 100 words in length), substantive, and written according to the rules of proper English grammar and spelling. No texting.

Failure to abide by these rules will result in academic penalties. No late posts, for any reason, will be accepted for credit.

3. The discussion forum will be graded based on the tone, thoroughness, substantive nature, grammatical quality, and quantity of the student's posts. Each discussion forum will account for 10% of the student's final grade.

### 3. Tests (See below)

#### **Tests/Exams:**

Each Unit will culminate with an online test. The questions may be multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, true/false or short answer. It is anticipated that each test will be 50 questions and students will have one hour to complete. Students need to have a thorough understanding of the material before taking the test. While you may use your textbook, you will simply not have enough time to look for all the answers.

Students need to have reliable internet access as a test will not be restarted because of technical error. It is also recommended that students not wait until the very last moment to take a test as this can cause a great deal of traffic on the server and could slow things down or lead to technical malfunctions.

#### **Assignments:**

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date and time stated. No late work will be accepted for credit and no make-up work will be permitted except for medical emergencies, official college activities, or personal emergency situations. A medical emergency is defined as sickness requiring hospitalization or isolation. All medical emergencies must be verified by a doctor's note. An official college activity is any activity that the college has mandated for students. A personal emergency is limited to death of a relative or unforeseeable and immediate hardship. All excuses for make-up work must be verified by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to schedule make-up work due to a medical or personal emergency. The instructor may permit or deny make-up work.

**Required Instructional Materials:** *The State of Texas: Government, Politics, and Policy* by Sherri Mora, William Ruger and Edward Mihalkanin

Note: You have already paid for this item with your tuition and fees. Please see announcements in the course to get started.

**Publisher:** McGraw-Hill

**ISBN Number:** 9781259548215

**Optional Instructional Materials:** None

**Minimum Technology Requirements:** Reliable high-speed internet and a computer.

**Required Computer Literacy Skills:** None

**Course Structure and Overview:** I have divided the semester into three units; each unit is broken down according to Chapters/Days. Begin every Lesson by opening the appropriate module on Blackboard. Then proceed through each Lesson by clicking on the arrows by the page number in the top right-hand corner of the screen.

**Communications:** NTCC email is the method of contact for this course and students can expect a response within 24 hours during weekdays and by noon on Monday for anything sent after noon on Friday.

**Institutional/Course Policy:****Assignment Requirements:**

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the due date and time stated in the Lectures and Discussion Schedule and Syllabus. Analytical Questions, Discussion Forum posts, Quizzes, the Special Assignment, and the Final Exam are due by 11:59 pm on their scheduled date. No late work will be accepted for credit and no make-up work will be permitted except for medical emergencies, official college activities, or personal emergency situations. A medical emergency is defined as sickness requiring hospitalization or isolation. All medical emergencies must be verified by a doctor's note. An official college activity is any activity that the college has mandated for students. A personal emergency is limited to death of a relative or unforeseeable and immediate hardship. All excuses for make-up work must be verified by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to schedule make-up work due to a medical or personal emergency. The instructor may permit or deny make-up work.

**Attendance Policy:**

Since this course is an online course, the attendance policy is the following: a student must log in at least once a week (7 day period) for the duration of the course. If a student does not sign in for a week (7 day period), the instructor may begin drop procedures for a student. The instructor will keep records of attendance. If the attendance policy is broken, the instructor will examine the reasons for the student's absences, the student's work in the class, and determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in the class. If the student breaks the attendance policy, the instructor may begin withdrawal procedures (up to the college's withdrawal deadline) or may fail the student for the course (after the college's withdrawal deadline has passed).

**NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:**

NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies stated in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

**ADA Statement:**

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special populations page on the NTCC website.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory

information” may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student’s name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

**Tentative Course Timeline (\*note\* instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this timeline at any point in the term):**

June 12: Chapters 1-2, Discussion 1

June 15: Chapters 3-4

June 17: Chapter 5, Discussion 2

June 19: Unit 1 Test

June 22: Chapters 6-7

June 24: Chapters 8-9, Discussion 3

June 26: Chapter 10 and Unit 2 Test

June 30: Chapters 11-12

July 3: Chapter 13, Discussion #4

July 8: Chapter 14, Unit 3 Test