



**Purpose:** It is the intention of this Administrative-Master Syllabus to provide a general description of the course, outline the required elements of the course and to lay the foundation for course assessment for the improvement of student learning, as specified by the faculty of Wharton County Junior College, regardless of who teaches the course, the timeframe by which it is instructed, or the instructional method by which the course is delivered. It is not intended to restrict the manner by which an individual faculty member teaches the course but to be an administrative tool to aid in the improvement of instruction.

**Course Title** – Texas Government

**Course Prefix and Number** – Govt. 2306

**Department** – Government and Economics

**Division** – Social and Behavioral Science

**Course Type:** (check one)

- Academic General Education Course (from ACGM – but not in WCJC Core)
- Academic WCJC Core Course
- WECM course (This course is a Special Topics or Unique Needs Course: Y  or N )

**Semester Credit Hours # : Lecture Hours # : Lab/Other Hours #**    **3:3:0**

**Equated Pay hours for course -** 3

**Course Catalog 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.

List Lab/ Other Hours
Lab Hours
Clinical Hours
Practicum Hours
Other (list)

**Prerequisites/Co-requisites** – TSI Satisfied in Reading and Writing

**Prepared by** Elizabeth Rexford

**Date** 9-11-13

**Reviewed by Department Head** Elizabeth Rexford

**Date** 9-11-13

**Accuracy verified by Division Chair** Amanda Shelton

**Date** 9-11-13

**Approved by Dean or Vice President of Instruction** GG Hunt

**Date** 9-11-13



**I. Topical Outline** – Each offering of this course must include the following topics (be sure to include information regarding lab, practicum, clinical or other non-lecture instruction):

This course will cover the following areas:

- Area One - Constitutional Foundations:
  - Identify and describe the impact of the economic, social, ethnic, and geographical diversity of the state on the development of the Texas political system.
  - Describe the evolution of the Texas Constitution.
  - Identify and evaluate the key characteristics of the 1876 Constitution with an emphasis on separation of powers and how the document promotes limited government in Texas.
  - Identify and evaluate the nature of the relationship between the U.S. and Texas constitutions and the concept of federalism.
  
- Area Two - Linkage Institutions:

Interest Groups:

  - Define and explain functions of the interest groups.
  - Identify and describe the various tools and techniques of lobbying and the impact of lobbying on all three branches of Texas government.
  - Analyze the impact of interest groups on the public policy process in Texas.

Political Parties:

  - Identify and describe the functions of the temporary and permanent organizations of the political party.
  - Identify significant third parties in Texas, the impact of these parties on the two major parties, and the operation of the Texas political system.

Elections

  - Describe the electoral process in Texas and evaluate the impact of this process on campaigns in Texas.
  - Identify the unique factors of Texas elections and voting.

Media

  - Identify and evaluate the impact of the media on Texas campaigns and elections.
  - Identify and evaluate the impact of the media on Texas public policy.
  
- Area Three - Political Learning/Socialization:
  - Identify and evaluate the importance of political subcultures (including Texas Creed) within the state particularly with regard to the structure of Texas Government and participation.
  - Evaluate how political ideologies are learned.

- Area Four - Political Institutions:
  - Judicial
    - Identify the structure and function of the various components of the Texas judiciary.
    - Identify and explain the methods of judicial selection and replacement in Texas
  - Executive
    - Identify and explain the strengths and weaknesses of the governor of Texas.
    - Identify and explain the components of the Texas Plural Executive.
    - Identify/outline the Texas Executive branch (type of agency, function, and relationship to people)
  - Legislative
    - Identify and analyze the functions of the Texas State Legislature.
    - Identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Texas legislative structure.
    - Evaluate the influence of Texas House and Senate leaders upon operation and policy choices made by the state legislature.
    - Discuss the impact/influence of the executive branch and interest groups on the state legislature.
  
- Area Five – Local Government:
  - Identify and describe the structure of city and county governments.
  - Identify and describe financing for city, county and special districts.
  - Describe the functions/powers of major policy makers and administrators of the city/county.
  - Describe and evaluate the role of special districts in Texas.
  
- Area Six-Public Policy:
  - Budget/Finances
    - Evaluate the biennial budget process in Texas.
    - Identify and evaluate the key sources of revenue in Texas.
    - Identify and evaluate the budget priorities for the state of Texas.
    - Identify and analyze the demographic, ideological, and political influences on the Texas budget.
  - Policy Areas
    - Identify the key administrative agencies and challenges/policy issues those agencies will have to respond to for the following areas: Education, Health and Human Services, Transportation and Energy Policy, Environment, Criminal Justice, Economic Development.

**II. Course Learning Outcomes**

<p align="center"><b>Learning Outcomes</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Methods of Assessment</b></p>
<p><b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.</li> <li>2. Describe the state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.</li> <li>3. Describe the separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of Texas government.</li> <li>5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups and political parties in Texas.</li> <li>6. Analyze the state and local election process.</li> <li>7. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.</li> <li>8. Analyze issues, policies and political culture of Texas.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering Texas history and Texas Constitution. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>2. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering federalism and local government structures and functions. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>3. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering U.S. Constitution, Texas Constitution and the three branches of Texas government. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>4. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering the three branches of government. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>5. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering political participation ( media, public opinion, interest groups and political parties). Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>6. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering political participation, electoral systems and campaigns. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>7. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering political participation, campaigns and elections, and civil rights and liberties. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> <li>8. Instructor generated tests on text chapters covering Texas public policy, civil rights and civil liberties and ideology and political culture. Tests may include multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer or essay questions.</li> </ol> <p>Additionally all objectives are evaluated by instructor generated out of class writing assignments, and/or oral presentations. All outcomes are tested by comprehensive mandatory final exams.</p>

**III. Required Text(s), Optional Text(s) and/or Materials to be Supplied by Student.**

Tannahill, Neal. Texas Government: Policy and Politics. 12<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson Press: Upper Saddle River, NJ.: 2013.

**IV. Suggested Course Maximum - 35**

**V. List any specific spatial or physical requirements beyond a typical classroom required to teach the course.**

None

**VI. Course Requirements/Grading System – Describe any course specific requirements such as research papers or reading assignments and the generalized grading format for the course**

Instructors may use the narrative/lecture method of instruction to impart course content. The narrative method is also useful for setting the stage for class discussions.

Class discussion between students and instructors is encouraged for the purpose of developing in students the ability to speak before others about course content. Class discussions should arise from

the readings that students complete and from points of interest and the interpretation of facts that emerge in class, especially those relevant to students.

Students will be required to complete written work or to prepare oral presentations to further elaborate or explain what has been presented and discussed by the instructor. These requirements are designed to challenge the student to analyze and critique the material presented. The written work may be in the form of essay test topics, book reviews, reports on articles in scholarly journals, or other written assignments as assigned by the instructor. Oral presentations may be designed as debates, informative overviews, or persuasive monologues.

Minimum requirements include the following:

- 1.) Attend class in accordance with college policy and as stipulated by the instructor.
- 2.) Complete appropriate reading assignments made by the instructor
- 3.) Complete appropriate writing assignments based on the readings, classroom presentations and discussion
- 4.) Complete oral presentations (if assigned by instructor)
- 5.) Complete appropriate tests (quizzes, major examinations, and a final examination)

The grading scale used for all tests, papers, and projects will be as follows:

- 90% to 100% = A
- 80% to 89% = B
- 70% to 79% = C
- 60% to 69% = D
- Below 60% = F

Instructors may also use a point system to determine final scores as long as this point system is clearly outlined in the instructor's syllabus. All faculty must give a cumulative final exam that will constitute a minimum of ten percent of the students final grade. Written work will constitute a minimum of 25% of the students grade.

Assessment will be conducted using a variety of methods. Objective questions such as multiple-choice, matching, true/false and fill-in-the blank will be used as will subjective questions which may demand narrative identification, lengthy narrative responses, and also critical thinking. Students will be tested on materials presented in class and are expected to develop listening and note-taking skills. The weight, style, and nature of the specific assessment tool are left to the discretion of the individual instructor, but each instructor must place emphasis on the development of writing and critical thinking skills. Balance in testing to accommodate for varied learning styles is the desired goal.

## VII. Curriculum Checklist

- **Academic General Education Course** (from ACGM – but not in WCJC Core)  
No additional documentation needed

- **Academic WCJC Core Course**  
Attach the Core Curriculum Review Forms

- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Empirical & Quantitative Skills
- Teamwork
- Social Responsibility
- Personal Responsibility

- **WECM Courses**  
If needed, revise the Program SCANS Matrix & Competencies Checklist.



**Core Curriculum Review Form**

Foundational Component Area: **Government/Political Science** Course Prefix & Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_

Core Objective: **Critical Thinking Skills**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

*Student Learning Outcome supporting core objective:*

*For each core objective, there must be at least two different methods of assessment.*

SLO Status	Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Learning Activity	Assessment
The SLO is:	Insert SLO (from Administrative Master Syllabi) below	Provide a brief name and description of the sample learning activity:	Provide a brief name and description of the sample quiz, exam, rubric, assignment, etc. for assessing the objective:
<input type="checkbox"/> Existing <input type="checkbox"/> Revised <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> State Mandated			
<input type="checkbox"/> Existing <input type="checkbox"/> Revised <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> State Mandated			
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Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Core Curriculum Review Form**

Foundational Component Area: **Government/Political Science** Course Prefix & Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_

Core Objective: **Communication Skills**—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication

*Student Learning Outcome supporting core objective:*

*For each core objective, there must be at least two different methods of assessment.*

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Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





**Core Curriculum Review Form**

Foundational Component Area: **Government/Political Science** Course Prefix & Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_

Core Objective: **Social Responsibility**—to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

*Student Learning Outcome supporting core objective:*

*For each core objective, there must be at least two different methods of assessment.*

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Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Core Curriculum Review Form**

Foundational Component Area: **Government/Political Science** Course Prefix & Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_

Core Objective: **Personal Responsibility**—to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

*Student Learning Outcome supporting core objective:*

*For each core objective, there must be at least two different methods of assessment.*

SLO Status	Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	Learning Activity	Assessment
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