United States Government (GOVT) Syllabus

Course Name

GOVT

United States Government

Course Information

GOVT is a one-semester course.

In this course, you'll learn a lot about systems of government, different parts of the U.S. government, and the functions the government serves. First and foremost, however, you should learn how you can be a good citizen. You'll cover the following topics:

- Foundations of American Government
- The Federal Level of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches
- The State and Local Level of these three branches
- Political Behavior

You should understand that this country is your country, and even though it may seem challenging at times, it's important to a democracy that its citizens participate in its government. The first thing you can do is to educate yourself. Being well-informed and able to think critically is key to being a good citizen. This course will help you be better in both of these areas.

To help you learn one way you can participate in government, this course uses videos from various resources, particularly C-SPAN. C-SPAN stands for Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network, and it's a private non-profit company that broadcasts much of what goes on in the US federal government, including proceedings of the U.S. Supreme Court, senate committee meetings, and more. You can also find a lot of commentary on public affairs. C-SPAN and other course resources will show you how you can educate yourself on issues—everything from controversial federal lawmaking to learning how to register to vote in your local municipality.

As you read from textbook resources and visit other websites, you'll be answering journal questions and taking notes. These will be submitted using the journal tool, and

you'll find links to these journals in each unit. Journaling will help the course material become relevant, and at the same time, you'll be building a useful study and reference tool for unit discussions, unit projects, and the final exam.

Be sure to read the following pages in the Syllabus section of this course to learn more about the online textbook and journals.

- Using the Online Textbook
- Reading, Journals, and Notes - Instructions and Tips
- Alternative Formats of Course Documents

Good luck on your journey through U.S. Government!

Course Delivery Method

Online

Contacting Your Instructor

You may contact your instructor through the Blackboard messaging system. Technical support is available 24/7 at www.k12.ttu.edu.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, you should be able to:

1. identify and explain the key aspects of government—its structure, functions, and powers—at the national, state, and local levels (including government agencies);
2. identify and explain the theories and foundations of government;
3. analyze and evaluate situations that citizens of the U.S. may encounter in order to better understand the functions and limitations of government as well as the nature of being a U.S. citizen;
4. describe ways in which citizens participate in U.S. government and politics;
5. locate and analyze a variety of resources relevant to being a U.S. citizen, from the U.S. Constitution to informative videos; and
6. create projects that reflect mastery of key concepts—concepts related to the development and function of government and to the responsibilities of citizenship.

GOVT addresses the required Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). These can be found at the Texas Education Agency website.

Textbook and Materials

Textbook(s)

The required digital textbook for this course is:

- Richard C. Remy, et al. (2016). *United States Government (Texas Edition)*. (16th ed.). Columbus, OH: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 978-0-02-135791-8

If you wish, you may also purchase an optional print student edition:

- Richard C. Remy, et al. (2016). *United States Government (Texas Edition)*. (16th ed.). Columbus, OH: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 978-0-02-135476-4

The online textbook must be purchased through the TTU K-12 partner bookstore, MBS (see the TTU K-12 website for a link to MBS). Once you make your purchase, you will receive your credentials to the online textbook and resources via email, and it may take 1-2 business days.

Materials

No additional materials are required.

Technical Requirements

- Internet access – preferably high speed (for accessing Blackboard)
- Email
- Word processing software such as Microsoft Word
- Adobe Reader (download from Adobe.com)
- Audio and video capabilities (for watching/listening to course content)
- PDF app (free options available)

Technical Skill Requirements

Be comfortable with the following:

- using a word processor
- Internet search engines and browsers
- creating PDFs (see **Requirements for Creating PDFs** in the Syllabus section of your course)

You will submit your notes and some other assignments in PDF format. If you have multiple pages, those pages will need to be **saved as one file** before uploading. For example, you may have decided to scan drawings you created along with some typewritten notes. All of these pieces may be saved in a single PDF file.

(**Note:** If you're asked to create something like a multimedia presentation, you can attach that presentation in a separate file in whatever format you've been instructed to use. Most of the time it's best to convert a PowerPoint file into a PDF for submission. The PDF instructions are mostly for your personal notes that you'll turn in at the end of each chapter.)

Course Organization

This course consists of six units and a final examination. Each unit contains the following:

- Introduction and Instructions
- Learning Objectives and Curriculum Standards
- Learning Activities (organized into chapter folders)
- Assignments

Each unit includes several activities that present content knowledge. Each lesson also includes multiple graded assignments to ensure that you learn the content that has been presented in the activities. Some of the assignments are automatically-graded quizzes, and some are written assignments or activities that your instructor will grade. Be sure you read all instructions carefully and ask your instructor for help if something is not clear.

Course Outline

Please note that some assignments will be hidden from you when you start the course. As you move through the lessons and complete assignments, more will unlock for you.

Lesson	Topic	Approximate Time for Completion
Unit 1	Foundations of American Government	Three weeks
Unit 2	The Legislative Branch: The Federal Level	Three weeks
Unit 3	The Executive Branch: The Federal Level	Two weeks
Unit 4	The Judicial Branch	Two weeks
Unit 5	State and Local Government	Three weeks
Unit 6	Political Behavior	Three weeks
Final Exam		

Assignment Schedule

Each of the following must be completed to complete the course. Items with an asterisk (*) indicate that these are summative assessments for the course.

Lesson	Weeks	Assignments
1	1-3	Checkpoint 1 (Non-graded) Covers Chapters 1-4. This unit has more journal prompts per lesson than some of the later units. This is to help you get a good foundation on the basics. • Unit 1 Journal Entries and Notes • Unit 1 Mini Quizzes • Unit 1 Video and Worksheet Quizzes • Unit 1 Discussion • *Unit 1 Test • *Unit 1 Project
2	4-6	Covers Chapters 5-7. You skip Chapter 8 for now. • Unit 2 Journal and Notes • Unit 2 Mini Quizzes • Unit 2 Video and Worksheet Quizzes • Unit 2 Discussion • *Unit 2 Test • *Unit 2 Project
3	7-8	Covers Chapters 9-10. You skip Chapter 12 for now. • Unit 3 Journal and Notes • Unit 3 Mini Quizzes • Unit 3 Video and Worksheet Quizzes • Unit 3 Discussion • *Unit 3 Test • *Unit 3 Project Checkpoint 2 (Non-graded)
4	9-10	Covers Chapters 13-16. • Unit 4 Journal and Notes • Unit 4 Mini Quizzes • Unit 4 Video and Worksheet Quizzes • Unit 4 Discussion • *Unit 4 Test • *Unit 4 Project

Lesson	Weeks	Assignments
5	11-13	This unit doesn't follow the order of the textbook. It covers Chapters 8 and 12, as well as parts of Chapter 21. You'll also engage in analysis of real-world issues that might take more time that some other activities in the course. • Unit 5 Journal and Notes • Unit 5 Mini Quizzes • Unit 5 Video and Worksheet Quizzes • Unit 5 Discussion • *Unit 5 Test • *Unit 5 Project
6	14-16	This unit corresponds to Unit 5 in the textbook, with some additions from Unit 6. There is a little more reading in this unit than in some others, so plan your time accordingly. • Unit 6 Journal and Notes • Unit 6 Mini Quizzes • Unit 6 Video and Worksheet Quizzes • Unit 6 Discussion • *Unit 6 Test • *Unit 6 Project Checkpoint 3 (Non-graded)
		Final Exam

Course Credit

The course grade will be calculated as follows:

- 50% coursework average;
- 50% summative assessment average, including the final exam;
- A passing course grade is 70 or higher.

Students must attempt all assignments in the course. The final exam will not be available until all assignments have been accepted and graded by the teacher.

Students who score below 70% on the final exam will be eligible for one re-exam opportunity.

Coursework

The graded assignments within each lesson are formative in nature. This means that they are designed to assist you in applying and demonstrating the lesson concepts, as well as identifying areas in which you need additional review. You may use all the unit's learning activities to assist you as you complete the graded assignments.

Unit Discussion Boards are formative assessments meant to help you start synthesizing the unit information and seeing what other students have to say about various topics. Use them as the **first step** toward reviewing the unit.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are those that allow you to demonstrate mastery of the course objectives.

The unit projects will require you to synthesize your learning into products that will be graded by the instructor. You may use your journals, notes, and any research you must do to complete these projects and submit a polished product.

For unit tests, you will NOT be allowed to use the learning materials. The tests are opportunities for you to show what you have learned by that point in the course. Summative assessments may be proctored using the online proctoring system Proctorio. Information about Proctorio is provided in **Remote Proctoring** in the Syllabus section of your course.

- Summative Assessments **(20% of Course Grade)**
  - Unit 1 Test (86 points)
  - Unit 1 Project (80 points)
  - Unit 2 Test (90 points)
  - Unit 2 Project (65 points)
  - Unit 3 Test (90 points)
  - Unit 3 Project (80 points)
  - Unit 4 Test (90 points)
  - Unit 4 Project (80 points)
  - Unit 5 Test (50 points)
  - Unit 5 Project (65 points)
  - Unit 6 Test (82 points)
  - Unit 6 Project (65 points)
- Summative Final Exam **(30% of Course Grade)**

Course Completion

- Students may not complete the course in less than 30 days.
- All courses expire six months after the enrollment date.

Academic Integrity

It is the aim of the faculty of Texas Tech University to foster a spirit of complete honesty and high standard of integrity. The attempt of students to present as their own any work not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

"Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor) or the attempt to commit such an act.

Student Expectations

You will be expected to log into the Blackboard course regularly to be aware of possible announcements/reminders and to pace your progress in the course.

Students are expected to maintain an online environment conducive to learning, which includes "netiquette" (Internet etiquette). Please review the basic rules for Online Discussion Netiquette. Ensure that your email messages, discussion board postings, and other electronic communications are thoughtful and respectful. Diverse opinions are welcome in this course, and you are expected to demonstrate an open mind and courtesy when responding to the thoughts and ideas of others.

The following are prohibited:

- making offensive remarks in email or the discussion board;
- using inappropriate language or discussing inappropriate topics online;
- spamming;
- hacking;
- using TTU or Blackboard email or discussion boards for commercial purposes;
- using all caps (considered shouting in online communications); and
- cyber-bullying or online harassment of any type.

Inappropriate behavior shall result in consequences ranging from a request to correct the problem, to removal from the course or even the university, depending on the severity of the behavior. Disciplinary actions will be taken according to the TTU K-12 Student Handbook.

Communication

- You can expect a reply from your instructor within 2 business days.
- Use the Blackboard Course Messages tool for sending messages to your instructor.

Submitting Assignments

You will submit all assignments through the Blackboard Assignment Tool, rather than by mail or email.

Technical Difficulties

Getting Help

For student assistance with Blackboard, visit [TTU K-12 Support](#).

Computer Problems

A working computer is necessary for online coursework. Computer problems will not be accepted as a valid reason for failure to complete course activities within the allotted time frame. Identify a second computer, before the course begins, that you can use if you experience computer problems.

Server Problems

When the Blackboard server needs to be taken down for maintenance, the Blackboard administrator will post an announcement in your course informing you of the time and date. If the server experiences unforeseen problems, your course instructor will notify you.

Lost or Corrupted Files

You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external disk or personal computer. In the event of any kind of technology failure (e.g., Blackboard server crash or virus infection, students' own computer problems, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any disputes, the instructor may request or require you to resubmit the files. In some instances, the instructor may need to open another attempt within Blackboard, so communication with your instructor is critical in these circumstances.