American & Texas Government: Theory and Politics (GOVT 2305.006—Honors)
Stephen F. Austin State University—Fall 2020
TR 9:30-10:45, F374
Instructor: Dr. Alan Baily
Office: LAN 137
Office Hours: MWF: 10:00-11:00 TR: 2:00-3:00 (via Zoom)
Office Phone: (936) 468-2363
Email address: bailyai@sfasu.edu

I. Course Description and Objectives

Course Description:
“Course includes development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of
the national government, including the legislative, executive and judicial branches,
federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:
In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives
for the political science / government Foundational Component Area may be
assessed.
• Critical Thinking Skills – creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis,
evaluation, and synthesis of information
• Communication Skills – effective development, interpretation and expression
of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
• Social Responsibility – intercultural competence, knowledge of civic
responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and
global communities
• Personal Responsibility – the ability to connect choices, actions, and
consequences to ethical decision-making

Program Learning Outcomes:
This course is a general education core curriculum course and no specific
program learning outcomes for a political science major are addressed in this course.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, you should be able:

• To think critically about the relationship between political behavior and political
institutions, especially the interdependence of behavior and institutions
• To think critically about American and Texas politics, especially the theoretical
foundations of both systems
• To communicate effectively about the foundations of the US and Texas
 Constitutions and about political matters in general
• To explain the role, and influence, of voters, political parties, interest groups, and
media in a democratic political system
• To understand more thoroughly the personal and social rights and responsibilities associated with American citizenship

**Credit-hour Justification:** This three-credit hour face-to-face course requires approximately 150 minutes of classroom time/direct instruction as well as at least six hours of out-of-class reading and studying each week in preparation for exams and completion of writing assignments.

**II. Texts**

The following texts are required in this class; the two required books are available at the university bookstore:

3. *Any Major Daily Newspaper* (and keep up with Texas politics, too!)

**III. Assignments and Grades**

Your grade in this course will be based on:

1. **Examinations:** three section exams, each worth 20% of your final grade; and a comprehensive final exam, worth 20% of your semester grade [80%]
2. **Participation:** worth 20% of your grade altogether [10% reviews & 10% contribution to the constitutional convention exercise]. Take-home review assignments will be posted on D2L.

*Final grade distribution is as follows: A=90-99, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=65-69, F=64 or below*

**IV. Attendance and Classroom Decorum**

Attendance is required; roll will be taken upon occasion. **Students who miss more than three class meetings may face a 5% reduction for each additional missed meeting.** Absences shall be excused for documented emergencies or official university events (also documented) only. **Attendance on Zoom means joining for the entire class meeting with your camera turned on!**

Mutual respect and consideration are indispensable to the success of any group endeavor. In view of this, I demand the highest standard of conduct in our class. To promote respect for yourself and your fellow students, **please silence and put out of sight** all cellphones, laptops, blackberries, pagers, iPods and other mobile electronic communication or entertainment devices. Please do not pass notes or exchange whispers, either! If you must make a call (or a text) during class-time, kindly exit the classroom to do so, and **do not return** (you will be counted absent for the day) **unless** you have an exceptionally serious excuse (e.g. a documented emergency, death in the family, etc.).
Email Policy:

I shall endeavor to respond in a timely manner to all emails addressed to bailyai@sfasu.edu. Please avoid using other email addresses (e.g. D2L email).

I will not reply to the below:

1. Emails not composed in standard written English (an email is not an IM)
2. Emails asking questions the answers to which are available in the syllabus, catalog or course schedule
3. Emails requesting an excused absence or make-up assignment. Unless the emergency is dire, please discuss these matters with me in person
4. Emails requesting a recap or summary of material covered in a missed class meeting.

CoVID-19 Mask Policy:

You must always wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth in this class, and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. If you do not wear a mask and/or do not observe appropriate physical distancing, you will be asked to leave class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions. Information regarding face masks and other physical distancing may be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html

Acceptable Student Behavior:

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

V. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the
components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**VI. Fall 2020 Calendar for GOVT 2305**

This calendar is tentative; as the course instructor I reserve the right to change it. Reading assignments must be completed **by the beginning of class on the day listed**. Written assignments are due at the beginning of class. **No late work** will be accepted without a documented excuse.

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>American Government Ch. 1 (Introduction)</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>9/1</td>
<td>The American Anomaly Ch. 1 (Nation, State &amp; Regime)</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>American Government Ch. 2 (The Founding &amp; the Constitution)</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>9/8</td>
<td>The American Anomaly Ch. 2 (Constitutions)</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>American Government Ch. 3 (Federalism &amp; Separation of Powers)</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>The American Anomaly Ch. 3 (Federalism)</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>The American Anomaly Ch. 4 (Separation of Powers)</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>9/22</td>
<td>Examination One</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>American Government Ch. 5 (The US Congress)</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>9/29</td>
<td>The American Anomaly Ch. 6 (Legislatures)</td>
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VII. Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A–54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.


**VIII. Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).