PSC 141: INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT: THEORY AND POLITICS

Spring 2020

Professor: Kimberly Frugé
E-mail: Kimberly.Frugé@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: T 1-4, R 10-12, or by appointment
Office: Liberal Arts North 110

Course Number: PSC 141.007
Web: d2l.sfasu.edu
Class Hours: MWF 10:00-10:50 am
Class Room: Ferg 371

COURSE DESCRIPTION

From General Bulletin, 2019-2020: Origins and development of American and Texas government systems; federalism; civil liberties and civil rights; and interest groups, political parties and elections. This Course meets the legislative requirements for a course on the Constitutions of the United States and Texas.

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 assigned to Political Science 141 may be assessed.

- 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

Note that the General Education / Core Curriculum Educational Objectives of Critical Thinking and Communication Skills (Written and Visual) in the Foundational Component Area of political science / government are assigned to PSC 142 and are therefore not assessed in PSC 141.

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.
S.I.
Leader: Thomas Martin
Day/Time: Tuesday/Thursday 6-7
Room: TBD

ATTENDANCE

Students should make every effort to attend every class meeting. In the case of an excused absence with proper documentation, extended deadlines or alternate activities will be provided for any graded activities. An acceptable excuse is a doctor’s excuse, a University excuse, or a catastrophic emergency resulting in unavoidable absence. Arrangements to complete alternate activities, such as another version of an exam, must be made within one week of returning to class; otherwise, a zero will be recorded.

To encourage attendance, every student starts with 10 points extra credit to be applied to the final exam. For every class the student misses unexcused, they lose one point. For each exam, the student can attend two SIs to make up for one absence.

TEXT AND MATERIAL

Two textbooks are required for this class:


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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.

Your grade is a weighted average of the following components:

- Exams - 90% (30% each)
- Writing Assignment - 10%

Grading: Numeric grades will be converted to letter grades using the standard scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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EXAMS

There will be four (4) exams given during the semester (three midterm exams and a cumulative final). You are required to take at least three (3) exams. If you choose to take all four, the lowest exam grade will be dropped. The midterm exam will consist of fifty (50) multiple choice questions worth (2) points each, for a total of 100 points. The final exam will consist of 100 questions (50 from previous exams, 50 over new material), worth one (1) point each. Exams will be based off material from both the lecture and the course readings.

- Exam 1: Feb. 14, 2020
- Exam 2: March 18, 2020
- Exam 3: April 8, 2020
- Final Exam: May 4, 2020 10:45 am - 1:15 pm

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

There will be one writing assignment this semester over social responsibility. A rubric will be posted to D2L giving specific instructions on the writing assignment. Papers will be graded based upon the logic of your argument, upon your usage of clear and precise language, and upon your mastery of social responsibility.

The assignment should be:

- Typed
- 12 point Times New Roman font
- 1 inch margins
- Uploaded to D2L Drop Box
# Course Policies

1. **Make-Up Exams:** I have a “no questions asked” early exam policy, which means that any exam can be taken early for any reason. However, only exams missed due to excused absences will be eligible for students to take at a later date. Students who are aware that they will miss an exam or have missed one due to an emergency are responsible for contacting the instructor to arrange a new exam date at least a week before the exam for planned occasions and in a timely manner for emergencies.

2. **Classroom Behavior:** Students should be respectful of others and refrain from behaving in a disruptive manner, including talking/texting on cell phone, speaking out of turn, reading non-class material, entering (leaving) class late (early), watching netflix, etc. When class permits itself to discussion, students should also be courteous to others opinions and backgrounds. Personal attacks or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and/or lifestyle will not be tolerated. If a student fails to follow any of these behavior guidelines they will be asked to leave, and any persistent behavior can result in the removal of that student from the course.

3. **Assignment Review:** If you are concerned about your grade on an assignment, I am happy to review it. However, I require that you 1) wait 24 hours after the assignment has been returned to you to request review, and 2) outline your concerns about the assignment grade via email. Please be aware that I will regrade the entire assignment (not just one portion of it) if you request review, and I reserve the right to raise or lower your grade as a result.

4. **Email Policy:** Please include your first and last name and course information in the subject line of your email. Please treat all email correspondences with your instructor as you would treat any other professional exchange. Accordingly, I expect emails to be respectful and polite, to use correct grammar and complete sentences.

5. **Technology:** I can assure you, you will not find the answers to class discussion in your text, or on facebook, twitter, or instagram. Cell phones and laptops are generally a distraction and detrimental to the classroom experience. They have the tendency to take students away from the lecture and impede the active engagement with students, instructors and/or peers. While I do permit the use of laptops and tablets for note-taking, I encourage you to leave your laptops at home, to take notes with a pen or a pencil and to engage in classroom discussions.

6. **Syllabus Change Policy:** Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (A-9.1):

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.

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 the future the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

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, in 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/.
General Education Core Curriculum

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives listed at the front of this syllabus. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives. PSC 141: American Government: Theory and Politics is a general education core curriculum course and fulfills the Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility general education core curriculum requirements.

During the semester, you will receive an assignment associated with general education core curriculum assessment. When you complete the assignment you will upload the assignment to the “Core Curriculum – Social Responsibility Skills” dropbox that you will find on your account in Brightspace by D2L. This dropbox is for core curriculum assessment only. Your course instructor may provide another set of instructions for submitting this assignment for your course grade.

If you have any questions, please see your instructor or contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at (936) 468-1038 or assessment@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to the Social Responsibility dropbox this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Responsibility</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Not assessed in Spring Semester</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Not assessed in Fall Semester</td>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
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