American Government: The Federal System  (GOVT 2305.004)
Stephen F. Austin State University—Fall 2021
TR 11:00-12:15, F372
Instructor: Dr. Alan Baily
Office: LAN 137
Office Hours: MWF: 10:00-11:00 TR: 2:00-3:00 (available via Zoom)
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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 liberties and civil rights." General Bulletin, 2020-2021.

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:

2. 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. **Involvement:** worth 20% of your grade altogether [10% review assignments & 10% class participation]. 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.).
**Zoom Statement (N.B.—class will be streamed only to those with a documented need):**

Class meetings on Zoom (including video, audio, and chat text) will be recorded. Any behavior violations are subject to the Stephen F. Austin Student Code of Conduct. **Please note:** if you are not in the face-to-face classroom on a regularly scheduled class day, the only way to earn a participation grade is to login to Zoom during class and participate actively by following the guidelines below:

**General Zoom Guidelines:**

- Sign in using the provided Zoom link. This is a recurring meeting that will be at the same time on the same days every week. To ensure accurate attendance, you must use your full first name and last name as listed on the class roster. Do not use a nickname or other pseudonym when you log in. Users who do not provide their full names will NOT be admitted to class.

- Turn on your video when possible. It is helpful to be able to see each other, just as in an in-person class. Pointing your camera at the ceiling is not helpful.

- Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps eliminate background noise.

- Use a headset if possible; headphones with a microphone can also improve audio quality.

- Stay focused. Please stay engaged during all class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications. Do not use this as a time to “check in and check out.” Rather, if you want to earn a participation grade for the Zoom class, turn on your video, mute the microphone unless called on, or raise your hand (in the toolbar on the bottom of the screen when you have Zoom running) if you have something relevant to say or a question to ask.

- Be in a quiet, distraction-free spot to log in. Turn off any music, videos, etc. in the background.

- Stay on topic. Use the chat window for questions and comments that are relevant to class. The chat window is not a place for socializing or posting comments that distract from the course activities. If you fill it up with random comments, I will be unable to sort through the information quickly to address students’ real questions/concerns about the course.

- Do not use be disrespectful or use hate speech. Just like in our in-person class, respectful behavior is expected. Do not share anything you would not put up on the projector in class. Consider Zoom a professional environment, and act like you are at a job interview, even when typing in the chat.

I will not allow any disruptive behavior to interfere with my ability to teach or conduct class, or with the ability of your classmates to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, and if you interfere with the learning environment, I will insist that you leave the class; you will also be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. I have full discretion over what is considered unacceptable or inappropriate behavior, but a simple rule of thumb is to use common sense about language, attire, and showing respect and courtesy to others. At the very least, turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during the scheduled class time. If you repeatedly use your cell phone or other electronic devices improperly during
class time, I will take the device until after the class. For further reference, see the Student Code of Conduct, policy 10.4.

**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.

**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

VI. Fall 2021 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.

T  8/24   Welcome. Review Syllabus. Read: American Government Ch. 1
R  8/26   American Government Ch. 1
T  8/31   Federalist #10 and #51 (appendix to textbook, or online)
R  9/2    No Reading
T  9/7    American Government Ch. 3 (Federalism & Separation of Powers)
R  9/9    No Reading
T  9/14   Examination One
R  9/16   American Government Ch. 5 (The US Congress)
T  9/21   American Government Ch. 6 (The Presidency)
R  9/23   American Government Ch. 7 (Federal Bureaucracy)
T  9/28   American Government Ch. 8 (Federal Courts)
R  9/30   No Reading
T  10/5   Film: With all Deliberate Speed
R  10/7   Examination Two
T  10/12  American Government Ch. 9 (Public Opinion & the Media)
R  10/14  No Reading
T  10/19  American Government Ch. 10 (US Elections)
10/21 No Reading
10/26 American Government Ch. 11 (Parties in the USA)
10/28 No Reading
11/2 American Government Ch. 11 (Interest Groups)
11/4 No Reading
11/9 American Government Ch. 4 (Civil Rights and Liberties)
11/11 No Reading
11/16 American Government Ch. 13 (Economic and Social Policy)
11/18 American Government Ch. 14 (Foreign Policy)
11/23 Thanksgiving Holiday
11/25 Thanksgiving Holiday
11/30 No Reading
12/2 Examination Three

Final Examination: Tuesday, December 7th from 10:30 to 12:30

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/.
**IX. Mental Health and Wellness**
SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
SFA Counseling Services  
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices  
Rusk Building, 3rd Floor  
936.468.2401

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic  
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp  
Human Services, Room 202  
936.468.1041

**Crisis Resources:**
Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343  
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)  
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741