Course Description
This 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.

Course Objectives
This course is designed to introduce students to the qualitative and quantitative analysis of U.S. politics. The course will help students develop the capacity to reflect and act upon political and social issues in order to increase meaningful participation in democratic society. The course assignments also help students develop the reading and listening skills needed to succeed beyond college.

Student Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Think critically about American politics, especially the theoretical foundations;
- Discuss the foundations of the US Constitution;
- Identify the three branches of government and their functions;
- Understand how individuals are elected or selected by the people for representation at the various branches;
- Explain the roles and functions of political parties, interest groups, and media in a democratic political system;
- Identify and discuss important trends in American public policies;
- Gain the ability to critically analyze issues facing American government; and
- Understand citizenship in the American political system more completely

General Education Core Curriculum
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

By enrolling in GOVT2305 you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the following requirements to be taught in this course per the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>How the Core Will Be Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Philosophical chairs  \   \ Short answer exams  \   \ Public policy analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Written responses  \   \ Classroom discussion and presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Independent studies  \   \ Exploration of political philosophy  \   \ Public policy focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Responsibility

| To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities. |
| Focus on federalism, voting, three branches, and interest groups |

Required Texts

*Growth of the American Republic*, Second Edition by Earle Michael Young

Pocketbook Constitution

Materials Needed Daily

- Pens/pencils, highlighters
- A variety of ink (optional)
- Large spiral notebook or binder
- Technology access
- Work ethic

Methods of Instruction

I have high expectations for students in this course. My goal is to provide you with the basic tools for a lifetime as a citizen. I also want to help students develop basic analytical and communications skills. Assessments will include reading and outlining/responding, discussions, quizzes, tests, essays, in-class activities, and presentations. Students will complete required reading of assigned chapters with exercises and quiz reviews, conduct case studies, work with teams, and analyze documents. Major assignments will be evaluated using a rubric.

Method of Evaluation:

This course will follow Palestine High School’s grading policy of 10 daily grades recorded each six weeks, accounting for 40% of the period average, and three major grades recorded each six weeks, accounting for 60% of the period average. For grading periods in which there are only five weeks, the number of grades is reduced to 7 daily and 2 major.

Expected Time Requirement for this Course

Approximately five to six hours per week of time spent reading, reviewing, and completing assignments is recommended to complete this course.

Desire2Learn (D2L)

For D2L technical support, contact student support in the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) at d2l@sfasu.edu or 936-468-1919. If you call after regular business hours or on a weekend, please leave a voicemail. For general computer support (not related to D2L), contact the Technical Support Center at 936-468-4357.

Classroom Policies:

Attendance: All students must be in compliance with the attendance laws concerning public schools of Texas. Any work missed can be made up. Students have however many days missed in order to complete and submit the makeup work upon their return. Include your absence date(s) and submission date with your work.

Being absent is not an excuse for missed information or assignments. Contact a classmate (or me) to find out what occurred in class if you are not able to attend. Access or pick up any missed material. Be responsible for all the material discussed in class on the days you were absent—and for the material for the next class period. Plan your absences wisely. For school events: speak to me at an appropriate time about planned absences.

Late Work: Students should strive to turn in work on time. However, for major grades, a 24-hour grace period is provided in which students may turn in late work for a 10-point penalty for each day that it is late. Daily work may be accepted one day late with a 30-point penalty. If I cannot open a digital submission, it is late. Make sure that you “share” it with me.
**Devices:** Texting, looking at a cell phone, etc. while in class is so obviously not acceptable that it goes without writing out. **Phones should be kept in pockets, purses, or backpacks**—unless you are waiting for a notification during a family emergency (please tell me before class begins).

**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 [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf)

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5):** 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.

**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/).

**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/159.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
Course Outline

**Week One**, August 12-13  
Unit One: Political Values and the Constitution  
Chapter 1: What is Government?

**Week Two**, August 16-20  
Chapter 2: What Are America's Original Political Values?  
Chapter 3: What Happened at the Constitutional Convention?  
SFA & D2L open August 23

**Week Three**, August 23-27  
Chapter 4: How Does the Constitution Change?

**Week Four**, August 30-September 3  
Chapter 5: What Are America’s Current Political Ideologies?  
Unit Two: State and Individual Rights  
Chapter 6: How Does Federalism Work?

**Week Five**, September 7-10  
Chapter 7: How Has the National Government Grown in Power over the States?

**Week Six**, September 13-17  
Chapter 8: What Are My First Amendment Rights?  
Chapter 9: How Does the Bill of Rights Protect Me?

**Week Seven**, September 20-24  
Chapter 10: Have Americans Always Enjoyed Equal Rights?

**Week Eight**, September 27-October 1  
US Unit Three: The Three Branches of Government  
Chapter 13: What Are the Powers of Congress?

**Week Nine**, October 4-7  
Chapter 14: How Does a Bill Become a Law?

**Week Ten**, October 12-15  
Chapter 11: What Are the President’s Constitutional Powers?  
Chapter 12: What Are the Keys to a Successful Presidency?

**Week Eleven**, October 18-22  
Chapter 15: What Does the Supreme Court Do?  
Unit Four: Political Process  
Chapter 16: Who Are the American People and What Are Their Political Opinions?

**Week Twelve**, October 25-29  
Chapter 17: How Are American Elections Conducted?  
Chapter 18: How Do You Run for President?

**Week Thirteen**, November 1-5  
Chapter 19: What Do Political Parties Do?

**Week Fourteen**, November 9-12  
Chapter 20: What Is the Role of the News Media in Our Democracy?  
US Unit Five: Public Policy  
Chapter 21: What Do Interest Groups Do?

**Week Fifteen**, November 15-19  
Chapter 22: How Is Public Policy Made and Implemented?  
Chapter 23: What Is the US Economic Policy?

**Thanksgiving Break**: November 22-26

**Week Sixteen**, November 29-December 3  
Chapter 24: How Does the Government Make the Budget?  
Chapter 25: What Is America’s Foreign and Defense Policy?

**Week Seventeen**, December 6-10  
Public policy research  
SFA Finals week/presentations  
SFA Course ends December 10

**Week Eighteen**, December 13-17  
PHS Finals week