INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2021 (8.23.21 – 12.10.21)

Instructor: Lee W. Payne
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Office: Liberal Arts North 138
Department: Government

Office Hours:
T/Th: 10-11AM & 2-3PM
W: 12:00 - 1:00 (online)
Telephone: (936) 468-2183

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

Requirements of the Course
First, you are expected to come to class. Second, you are expected to read the assigned material before class. Third, you are expected to discuss the assigned readings in class. By “discuss” I mean to engage in active, in-depth, conversations with your classmates and me over the assigned readings. Finally, you are expected to stay informed on current political events by reading the paper, watching the news, browsing political websites, etc. It is sometimes easier to understand political concepts and theories when you can relate them to current political activities. Therefore, we will discuss current events in class as well.

On Liberty: Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion – “[T]he peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is that it is robbing the human race … . If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth produced by its collision with error” (76).

Please feel free to voice your opinions. Opinions generate class discussions and class discussions generate knowledge and understanding.

Required Books

Note: Outside readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

Grading Policy
Grades for this course will come from four exams, worth 25% each.
Examinations: Examinations will consist of 50 multiple choice questions worth two (2) points each. The exams will only cover the material in each segment. You will not come to class to take the exams;
they will be posted on D2L. The day of the exam, it will open at 12:30 PM and close at 1:45 PM. You will have 75 minutes to take each exam. Exams will cover reading, lecture, and movie material. You are responsible for each of these. Tentative exam dates are noted below.

Make-up exams will be given only in the case of documented illness, documented emergencies, or University related absences. Make-up exams may be more difficult than scheduled exams (e.g., essay). If you miss an exam, it is your responsibility to inform me as to the nature of your absence. If the absence is excused, we will schedule a time to take the make-up exam. No exams will be given early.

Attendance: Attendance will not be taken.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in many 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

Course Hour Credit Justification

In compliance with SFA Policy 5.4, you are expected to spend 150 minutes each week attending class. In addition, you should spend 300 minutes each week in preparation for class. This time included reading and reviewing material from your assigned readings, as well as reviewing notes from class, working on class assignments, and engaging in research related to your research project. During weeks in which you will meet one-on-one with your professor, you are expected to spend more time engaged in research and writing on your major research project.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes

In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for political science/government Foundational Component Area may be assessed in this course.

- 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. No specific program learning outcomes for a political science major are addressed in this course.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will:
- Better understand how government affects their lives;
- Have learned about federal political systems;
- Understand the structure and functions of the three branches of the federal government (Legislative, Executive, and Judicial) and the bureaucracy;
- Gain greater interest in contemporary political issues;
- Become knowledgeable about public policies (domestic and foreign);
- Develop the ability to critically analyze information;
- Understand the role of public opinion, political parties, interest groups, campaigns and elections, and the media in American politics.

**Additional Points**

- Be on time! If you arrive late for class, *quietly* take a seat at the back of the room.
- Be polite! Do not talk over your classmates or me.
- Turn off your cell phones. If your cell phone goes off in class, you will be required to perform an embarrassing task in front of the class (hint: learn the words and motions to “I’m a Little Teapot”). If you are texting, your cell phone is on and chances are you are not paying attention in class. Therefore, texting is a punishable offense. If caught, you will be required to sing something in front of the class.
- I reserve the right to eject any student who violates these or other rules.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy:** 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/).

**Tentative Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>KTR Chapter 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>KTR Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>KTR Chapters 2 &amp; 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 3</td>
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**TEST 1**  **Thursday, September 16th**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>KTR Chapter 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>KTR Chapters 4 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 12</td>
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**TEST 2**  **Thursday, October 14th**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>KTR Chapter 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>KTR Chapters 6 &amp; 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>KTR Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>KTR Chapter 9</td>
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**TEST 3**  **Thursday, November 11th**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>KTR Chapters 10 &amp; 13</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Thanksgiving!!!!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>KTR Chapters 11 &amp; 14</td>
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**Test 4**  **Thursday, December 9 – 10:30-11:45**
Course Syllabus Appendix

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 GOVT 2305: Federal Government you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the Core Curriculum / General Education Objectives of Communication Skills (Visual and Written), Critical Thinking, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.

During the semester, you will receive assignments that fulfills both the requirements of this course and the needs of Stephen F. Austin State University’s Core Curriculum Assessment Plan with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. If you have any questions, please see your Instructor or the Office of Student Learning and Institutional Assessment at (936) 468-1130.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives associated with this course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Titles</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>1) Class Discussions</td>
<td>12.10.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information</td>
<td>1) Exams</td>
<td>12.10.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities</td>
<td>1) Exams</td>
<td>12.10.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making</td>
<td>1) Exams</td>
<td>12.10.21</td>
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