**Course Description**

This course is intended to introduce you to the structure, powers, organization, political control, and procedures of Congress. Prerequisites: GOVT 2305 & 2306.

**Course Expectations**

First, you are expected to attend class. I will not take attendance but you will not be allowed to take missed pop-quizzes or turn in homework assignments late if you miss class. Second, you are expected to read the assigned material before class. I cannot stress the importance of this point enough. Failure to read the assigned material before class will result in poor reading pop-quiz grades. Which brings me to my third point – 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.

You should 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.

Please feel free to voice your opinions (as long as you do not intentionally insult your fellow classmates). Opinions generate class discussions and class discussions generate knowledge. This class does not have to be boring but participation is needed to keep it from being so. Therefore, how boring this class is depends on you.

*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).

**Course Grading Policy**

Grades for this course will come from three sources: one exam (40%), homework assignments (40%), pop-quizzes (10%), and simulation (10%).
**Exam:** The exam question(s) will be posted on D2L prior to the class start time (11:00 AM) on the date specified below. You are required to submit your exam to the D2L Dropbox by the start of class (11:00 AM) on the date specified below. I will not accept late exams. If your exam is not submitted to the D2L Dropbox 11:00 AM on the due date, you will receive a zero on the exam. I want to grade your exams blindly, so you are to save your Word document (no PDFs) as your SFA Student ID number. Do not put your name anywhere within the text of your exam. I reserve the right to deduct ten points (one letter grade) from any exam with identifying markers.

The exam question(s) will require you to critically analyze congressional theories and practices and apply this knowledge to the question(s) in essay format. Your essay answers are to be double-spaced, use 12 point, Times New Roman font, have 1” margins on all four sides, no extra space between paragraphs, and be a minimum of five and a maximum of six pages in length. You are expected to reference and properly cite (parenthetical citations) relevant material. You are expected to turn in university quality work! I will count off for spelling and grammar mistakes. Also, I reserve the right to deduct ten points (one letter grade) for each formatting error in your exam essay. You are all adults and it’s time you learned how to follow directions.

Make-up exams shouldn’t be necessary since the exams are week-long, home assignments. However, accommodations may be made in the case of documented illness, documented emergencies, or University related absences. If you have a problem during the exam, it is your responsibility to inform me as to the nature of your problem.

**Simulation:** You will be required to participate in a simulated Congress. You will select a member of the 117th Congress to represent, participate in caucuses, write and introduce legislation, debate legislation, serve on committees, and vote on legislation; some of you will have leadership roles. Unexcused absences on simulation days will count against your role-play grade.

Your simulation grade has two parts: worksheet assignments that you turn in will account for 50% of your simulation grade; and actual in-class simulation role-play will account for 50% of your simulation grade. Note – some worksheet assignments will be done in class; others will require you to work on them outside of class. The outside worksheet assignments are not counted as part of your homework grade and I will not accept late simulation assignments without a documented, excused absence.

Note: I will take attendance during the simulation. If you have unexcused absences during the simulation, you will lose ten (10) points off your simulation grade for each absence.

**Homework Assignments:** You will be given five homework assignments throughout the course of the semester. These assignments will require you to conduct some research, crunch some numbers, and report your findings – same font, margin, etc. rules for the exams apply here. Your papers must be a minimum of two-pages and cannot exceed three pages in length. Homework assignments will be graded for content as well as spelling, grammar, etc. Save your Word documents (no PDFs) as your last name, underscore, first initial. For example, my assignment would be saved as, Payne_L. You will be given one file saving mistake. After that, I will deduct points for not following directions. You will submit your assignments to the proper, D2L
Dropbox. Without documentation of an excused absence on the day homework assignments are due, I will *not* accept late homework.

**Reading Pop-Quizzes:** Throughout the course of this semester, you will be given a number of reading pop-quizzes. These pop-quizzes will be somewhat random but the probability of having a reading pop-quiz is directly related to the amount of reading related discussions in class. If I feel like most students are not reading, I will administer a number of pop-quizzes to generate renewed interest in reading. The quizzes will cover material from previous reading assignments. The questions will require short written answers. If you are absent during a pop quiz, you will be given a different set of questions – but only if you have a legitimate excuse that is dated and time stamped prior to the time class started on day you missed class. Unexcused absences on pop quiz days will result in a zero for that quiz.

**Attendance:** Attendance will not be taken, except during the simulation. That said, I will not allow homework to be turned in if your absences are unexcused. It is your responsibility to inform me of, and provide evidence of, excused absences.

**Required Books**


**Academic Integrity**

*The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity* outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations,
structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course. As such, no EEOs or SLOs are required for this course.

**Additional Points**

- Everything you turn in must be a Word document. No PDFs!
- 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 or I catch you texting 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”)
- Any use of AI will be considered plagiarism and reported to the University.
- 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.
Mental Health

SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support student’s mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services • www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
Health and Wellness Hub (corner of E. College and Raguet) • 936-468-2401

SFASU 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
Tentative Class Schedule

**Week 1**
Aug. 29  General Introduction and Writing for Political Science
Aug. 31  Chapter 1

**Week 2**
Sep. 05  Chapter 2
Sep. 07  Chapter 2  Homework 1 due

**Week 3**
Sep. 12  Chapter 3 (39-57)
Sep. 14  Chapter 4 (88-99)  Homework 2 due

**Week 4**
Sep. 19  Chapter 5 (120-131)
Sep. 21  Chapter 6  Homework 3 due

**Week 5**
Sep. 26  Chapter 7
Sep. 28  Chapter 7  Homework 4 due

**Week 6**
Oct. 03  Chapter 8
Oct. 05  Chapter 8  Homework 5 due

**Week 7**
Oct. 10  Chapter 9 (272-289)
Oct. 12  Chapter 10 (303-319)

**Week 8**
Oct. 17  Chapter 11
Oct. 19  Chapter 12 (356-371)  Member Selection Worksheet due

**Week 9**
Oct. 24  Chapter 13
Oct. 26  Chapter 13  Member Profile Worksheet due

**Week 10**
Oct. 31  Chapter 14
Nov. 02  Chapter 14  Legislative Worksheet due

**Week 11**
Nov. 07  Chapter 15
Nov. 09  Chapter 15  Exam posted
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<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>Party Caucuses Exercise</td>
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<td>Nov. 16</td>
<td>Committee Meeting Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 21</td>
<td>Thanksgiving!</td>
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<td>Nov. 28</td>
<td>Committee Meeting Exercise</td>
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<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>Second Party Caucuses Exercise</td>
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<td>Dec. 05</td>
<td>Floor Debate and Voting Exercise</td>
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<td>Dec. 07</td>
<td>Floor Debate Worksheet due</td>
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**Note:** I may assign additional reading sources throughout the semester.