Summer 2024
GOVT 2305.004: Federal Government

Professor: Dr. Spencer L Willardson
Office: Liberal Arts North 136
Email: Spencer.Willardson@sfasu.edu
Class Meets: M-Th 10:15-12:10 Ferguson Liberal Arts 377
Office Hours: By Appointment

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.

Course Hour Justification
This 3-credit hour face-to-face course requires approximately 320 minutes of classroom time/direct instruction as well as at least 15-20 hours of out of class reading and studying each week in preparation for exams and completion of writing assignments.

General Education Core Curriculum Objective
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
Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States. (Critical Thinking)
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system. (Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility)
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice. (Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility)
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government. (Social Responsibility)
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system. (Critical Thinking, Communication Skills)
6. Analyze the election process. (Social Responsibility)

**Required Text**

*Keeping the Republic, Ninth Brief Edition* by Christine Barbour and Gerald Wright. (Available at the Bookstore)

(Note: I don’t have a preference to which format of this book that you purchase (digital, hard copy, loose-leaf, etc). If you purchase the *Sage Vantage* option with your textbook, you will have access to additional study resources. They are **not** required for class, but they may be useful/helpful in your exam preparations.)

**A note on Reading**

This course relies on your individual reading and work to be successful. As noted above, you are expected to spend around 5 hours **each week** outside of class studying. That study will largely consist of reading the textbook and learning the concepts from it. Lectures (twice a week) reinforce the information that you are learning from the textbook. I *strongly recommend* that you read the assigned chapters before lectures are scheduled for that topic so that you will know what questions to ask and what you need help understanding. That helps us to use lecture time most effectively.

**Grading**

Grades will be based on three exams (2 midterm and 1 final) and two writing assignments. Grades will be assigned based on the following grade scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a mastery of the subject and the attendant skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89.9%</td>
<td>Student demonstrates an above-average understanding of subject and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79.9%</td>
<td>Student demonstrates an average understanding of subject and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.9%</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a below-average understanding of subject and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;=59.9%</td>
<td>Student failed to adequately understand subject materials and skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated: May 2024
Students will be graded based on the following items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm 1</td>
<td>12 June</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm 2</td>
<td>25 June</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federalist Paper Assignment</td>
<td>10 June</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Assignment</td>
<td>20 June</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>3 July</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description of Assignments in Class**

**Midterm Exams**

Each midterm exam will last for the length of class. Students will answer a mix of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and long answer questions. The short answer questions require about 1 paragraph (5-6 clear sentences) to answer. Students will also be asked to answer 1-2 long question (3-4 paragraphs required to answer fully). I will give you more information on these questions prior to the first exam.

**Note on Writing Assignments**

The purpose of these writing assignments is to help students to think about the academic concepts we are learning about how politics work and how the American government was set up and to apply that to how things work. I am interested in how you make clear connections between what is happening and the way the system is set up.

**Federalist Paper Assignment**

In this assignment, I want you to engage with the primary document of the founding of the United States – the Constitution – and with some of the original attempts to help people understand that text. You will write a short essay that identifies which of the Federalist Papers you read, what sections of the Constitution it applies to, and how reading the F.P. helped you to understand the Constitution OR how it helps you to understand a present-day political issue. The paper will be 1 single spaced typed page long, will follow all the rules of a good paper, and will be the original work of the student. You can find the Federalist Papers here: https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/full-text. The Assignment is due on D2L at 5:00 p.m. on 10 June 2024.

**News Assignment**

In this assignment, you will pick an issue from the news (within 1 month of the assignment being due, i.e. on or after 20 May 2024). You will write a brief summary of what is happening (1 paragraph) and then relate the news to one of the core topics from the class using references to concepts from the book and other academic or reliable sources. The assignment will be due on D2L on 20 June 2024. It should be 1 single spaced typed page long and follow the rules for a good paper. This includes the proper use of citations both in the body of the paper and references at the end of the paper for all outside information used.
Participation

You cannot participate if you are not present. I am interested in positive participation. You don’t always need to say something to participate, but you do need to be engaged. You will be docked points for “negative participation.” Behaviors such as coming to class late, having side conversations, sleeping, or speaking with other students rudely, will be noted and you will lose participation points.

Final Exam

The final exam will be comprehensive. It will mainly cover the new information that we cover in class after Midterm 2. However, I will ask questions on the exam that cover the entire scope of information that we learned in class.

Weekly Schedule

This is an intensive summer course. We are covering a full semester’s worth of material in 5 weeks. You will average 3 chapters of reading per week. You must read in order to do well. You should read the chapters before class. Lectures and class time are to help you put the information together and to answer questions that you have. Reading and individual study is where you will learn the bulk of the material. You will fall behind in the class if you are not reading and preparing before class each day.

Additional Information

I am here to help you to learn. You are responsible for your learning, and I am responsible for helping you to learn however I can. Please take advantage of my office hours. If you cannot make it to regular office hours, I will make an appointment with you. If you have questions, please ask them. If you are struggling with a concept in class, please let me know as soon as possible. If you are feeling overwhelmed or backed up, please come and see me. Deadlines are firm, but if you talk to me before an assignment is due, I am more likely to accept a late assignment with a smaller penalty. Since this is a condensed summer schedule class, you have a much stronger need to stay engaged and caught up
# Weekly Schedule

Key for Core Objectives:
- CS – Communication Skills
- CT – Critical Thinking
- SR – Social Responsibility
- PR – Personal Responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Core Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M (6/3)</td>
<td>Understanding US Politics</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>The Founding of the US</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>CT, SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>CS, PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M (6/10)</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Federalist Paper</td>
<td>PR, SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Finish Up/Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm 1</td>
<td>PR, CS, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>CS, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M (6/17)</td>
<td>Congress/The President</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>The President/Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>CS, CT, SR, PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>JUNETENITH HOLIDAY</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Bureaucracy/Wrap Up</td>
<td>News Assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M (6/24)</td>
<td>Law and the Courts</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
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<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm 2</td>
<td>PR, SR, CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Parties and Interest Groups</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>CT, SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Voting and Elections</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>CT, SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M (7/1)</td>
<td>Domestic and Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>CT, SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Domestic and Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>CT, SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>CS, CT, PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>4th of July - No Class</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## POLICIES

### Attendance Policy
Students are expected to be in class. I will take attendance on a regular basis. Missing class, disrupting class, or not being engaged with the material while in class will result in your participation grade being lowered. If you miss class, you will miss important concepts and discussions. That will affect how well you do on exams and writing assignments. Come to class.

### Institution Absences (HOP 04-110)
Please copy and paste the following information regarding Institutional Absences into your syllabus. In addition, you may include your guidelines for institutional absences as appropriate.
An Institutional Absence may be granted to a student who participates as a representative of the University in academic (including research), extra- or cocurricular, or athletic activities. Students will be excused for institutional purposes from otherwise required academic activity only when a valid Institutional Absence is approved by the appropriate administrative unit or official and the documentation of approval is provided to the faculty member at least five (5) days in advance.

Institutional absences will not be approved for keystone events, defined as: a special or unique assignment, test, project, experience, or other academic exercise identified by the Faculty member as critical for successful completion of standards of the class and unable to be missed. These events must be identified on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester and communicated to the students. Events added to the syllabus at a later date will not qualify for Keystone Event status. Keystone Events where the date/time is changed will no longer be considered a Keystone Event. Students should make themselves aware of any Keystone Events identified in the syllabus to ensure there are no conflicts.

For keystone events where the assignment dates vary, it is incumbent upon the students to work with their faculty member to not select a conflicting date.

More information on Institutional Absences, including how to apply, can be found at https://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents/student-resources/institutional-absences.

**Academic Integrity (4.1)**

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.

**USE OF Artificial Intelligence (AI) for any assignment is prohibited. Any written work turned in as part of this class must be written completely by the student.**

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

*Please copy and paste the following information regarding Withheld Grades into your syllabus. Add additional information as needed to meet your departmental or course needs.*
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 coursework 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 to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

Students with Disabilities

Please copy and paste the following statement and place it in your course syllabus.
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 promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.
Student Wellness and Well-Being
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, 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:
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

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

The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

• Health Services
• Counseling Services
• Student Outreach and Support
• Food Pantry
• Wellness Coaching
• Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:
• Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
• National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
• Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
• johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

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
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>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communication Skills   | To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication. | Midterm 1  
Federalist Papers Assignment  
Midterm 2  
News Assignment  
Final Exam |
| Critical Thinking      | To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information | Federalist Paper Assignment  
News Assignment  
Each Chapter Reading |
| Social Responsibility  | To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities | News Assignment  
Midterm 2  
Final Exam |
| Personal Responsibility| To include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making | Midterm 1  
Midterm 2  
News Assignment  
Final Exam |