

**Federal Government
Political Science 2305
Sections: ALP, FTD, BA1, HF1, MFA
Monday and Wednesday 11:00 – 12:15
MAB 205
Sul Ross State University
Fall 2009**

Contact Information

Ryan Baade
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Office Hours: M, W, F 9am-11am, and by appointment

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Course Description

This is an introductory course covering American Politics Today i.e. Federal Government. The purpose of this course is to provide students the tools and knowledge necessary for students to critically and intelligently evaluate politics in the United States. My goal is that the information you learn in this class will increase your interest in politics as well as make you a more informed citizen.

Course Goals

1. Describe the essential elements of American Politics
2. Explain how American politics affect our everyday lives
3. Analyze the impact of politics on our lives
4. Analyze key political issues facing the U.S. today and in the future

Methods of Instruction: Lecture with student participation, individual/group analysis of assigned readings, and student presentations.

Course Evaluation: The effectiveness of the methods of instruction will be evaluated primarily through the use of exams. Three unit examinations plus a comprehensive final will be given.

Expectations

The duty of the instructor for this course is to be prepared and on time for the lectures. In turn, the students' duty is to be on time and prepared for the lectures as well. "Prepared" means having completed the assigned reading prior to the lecture. This course will rely heavily on discussion between instructor and students; so advanced reading by the students will facilitate an active classroom environment. Keeping up with the readings is essential in order to actively participate in class and to help the instructor monitor the students' understanding of the material before the exams, rather than on exam days. Please turn off cell phones during class.

**Although attendance is not mandatory, you will have a difficult time passing this course if you do not attend it. Occasionally, I will offer extra credit during class. This credit cannot be made up at a later time. Further, it behooves you to come to class because a good deal of knowledge needed to pass the tests will be derived from the lectures.

If you happen to miss class it is your responsibility to get the notes from another student in class. I will not provide notes for students that miss.

Common courtesy expected in class:

- Coming to class on time
- Disabling the ringer on cell phones
- Refraining from talking, sleeping, and reading outside material during class
- **Respect/toleration for fellow students regarding their political views

Required Text: *American Politics Today* by Bianco and Canon

Course Requirements

Semester grades will be determined by each student's performance on four exams. The final exam will be cumulative; however emphasis will be placed on the material covered following the second exam. There will be extra credit offered in this course.

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Assignment	Date	Percent of Final Grade
Exam I	September	25
Exam II	October	25
Exam III	November	25
Final Exam	December 8	25
Extra Credit		10

Grade Scale: A: 100-90 B: 89-80 C: 70-79 D: 60-69 F: 59-0

Make-up Exams: All make-up exams will be essay and will be given the last regular class period.

Academic Honesty: Students will be expected to adhere to the university honor code for all assignments. Any student who is caught cheating will be punished by automatically receiving a zero on the assignment in question and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

Cheating is defined in the Student Code of Conduct as:

- 1) Use of any unauthorized aid, sources, and assistance and assisting others in taking a course, quiz, test, or examination, writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out assignments;
- 2) The acquisition without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the University community;
- 3) Alteration of grade records;
- 4) Bribing or attempting to bribe a member of the University community or any other individual to alter a grade.