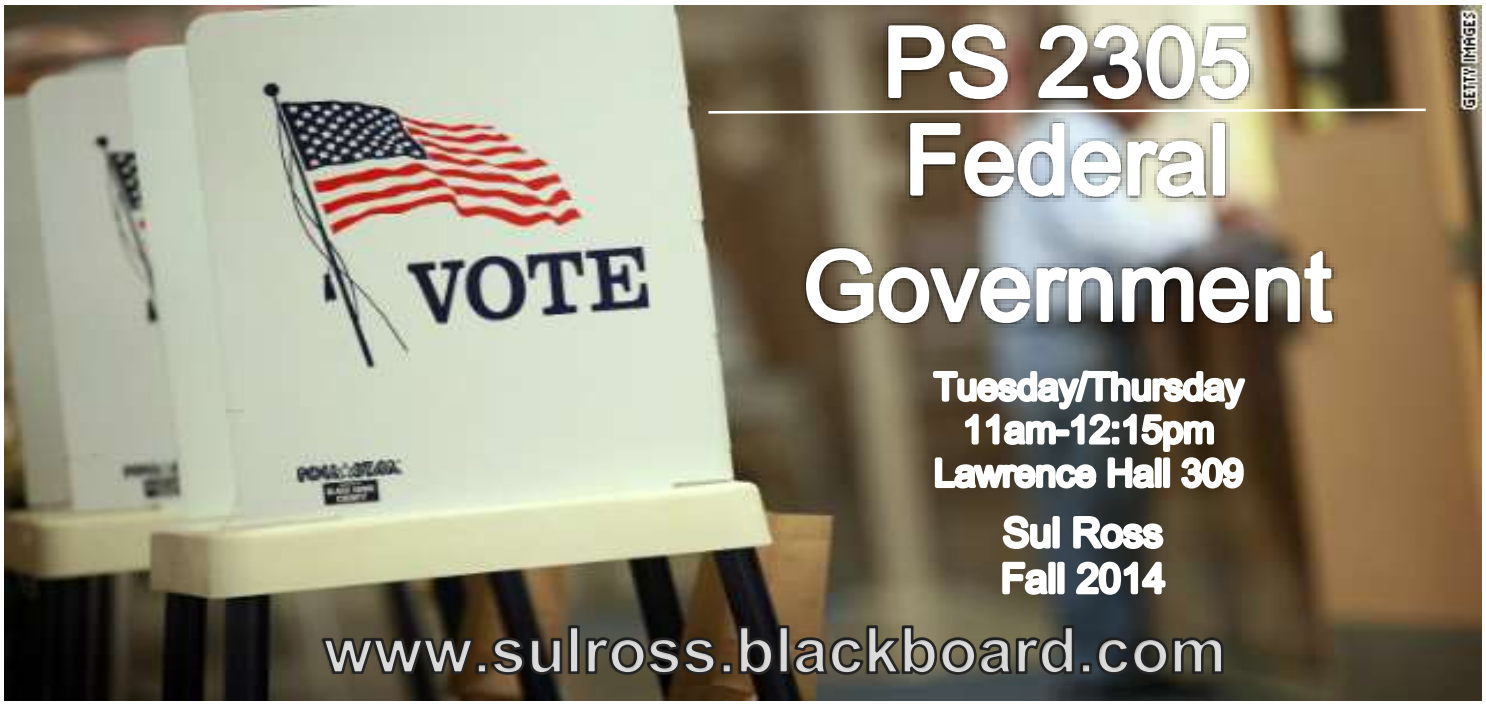

PS 2305 Federal Government

Tuesday/Thursday
11am-12:15pm
Lawrence Hall 309

Sul Ross
Fall 2014

www.sulross.blackboard.com

Required Readings

- Lenz, Timothy O. and Mirya Holman. 2013. *American Government.* Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida. http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00016298/00001
  - This is a free, open-source book that can be downloaded from our Blackboard page.
- Additional readings will be posted to our course Blackboard page.

Course Professor

Professor: Dr. Amy Moreland

Email: amoreland@sulross.edu

Phone: 432.837-8162

Office: Lawrence Hall 202

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 2-3pm

Important Dates

- Homework 1 Due: Tuesday, September 23
- Exam 1: Thursday, October 2
- Homework 2 Due: Tuesday, October 21
- Exam 2: Thursday, October 30
- Homework 3 Due: Tuesday, November 25
- Thanksgiving Holiday: November 26-28
- Exam 3: Tuesday, December 9

Course Description & Policies

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Course Description

"A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."
—James Madison, Father of the U.S. Constitution

What is the role of the federal government? How have American political institutions developed over time? How democratic is American federal government? This course is designed to answer these questions by introducing you to the key political processes in contemporary American government.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication (*TExAS Domain III Competency 19*)
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work (*TExAS Domain III Competency 19*)
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication (*TExAS Domain III Competency 23)*

Course Policies

Required Readings

There are no required books that must be purchased. All required readings are posted on our course Blackboard page, as PDFs or links. You are expected to complete the assigned readings before the first class day for which they are assigned.

Attendance

Attendance is extremely important and mandatory for this course. The class meetings will supplement, not repeat, the readings and assignments for this class, so it will be very difficult to pass this course if you do not attend regularly.

Disruptions and Classroom Respect

You are encouraged to openly engage in class discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts. However, please be respectful of others by avoiding disruptive behaviors.

Late Work and Missed Assignments

Late assignments will only be allowed in the case of an emergency. Any student who is absent from classes for a university-excused absence (such as a game, tournament, or event) should make arrangements for missing class prior the absence.

Students with Special Needs

Any student who because of a disability may require accommodations in order to meet course requirements should contact the Center for Counseling and Accessibility Services, at (432) 837-8363.

Religious Observance

Any student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to make up assignments for that day. Arrangements for missing class due to religious observance must be made with the instructor prior to the absence.

Academic Integrity

Any instance of academic misconduct, such as cheating and plagiarizing written assignments, collusion, or misrepresenting facts will be punished according to the university's disciplinary policy.

Communicating with the Professor:

The best way to contact Dr. Moreland is through email at amoreland@sulross.edu. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please resend your email or call 432.837-8162.

Course Assignments and Requirements

Our course Blackboard page contains more information about class assignments and requirements, including notes, readings, study guides, and homework assignments.

You can access our course Blackboard page at www.sulross.blackboard.com.

Course Grading

Grades are assigned based on a point system.
You can earn up to 100 points throughout the course.

- To receive an A, you must earn at least 90 points.
- To receive a B, you must earn at least 80 points.
- To receive a C, you must earn at least 70 points.
- To receive a D, you must earn at least 60 points.

All course grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Late work will not be accepted without prior written permission from Dr. Moreland. Extensions are only granted in cases of emergencies. Please make your best effort to submit assignments by the due date.

Course Assignments

3 Homework Assignments

Complete monthly online assignments, based on class discussion and readings.

Due on Blackboard by 11am on due date.

Worth 30 points total.
(3 homeworks x 10 points each)

10 In-Class Labs

Participate in quizzes, activities writing assignments, or discussions during class each day.

Completed each day during class, due by end of class.

Worth 20 points total.
(10 labs x 2 points each)

3 In-Class Exams

Exams 1 & 2 will have 5 short-answer questions & 1 essay. Exam 3 will have 10 multiple-choice, 5 short-answer, and 1 essay question.

Exam 1 is worth 10 points.
Exam 2 is worth 10 points.
Exam 3 is worth 30 points.

Unit	Class Date	Readings & Assignments (More information on our class Blackboard page)
Introduction	Tuesday, August 26	Read the syllabus and visit our course Blackboard page.
1. What are the foundations of American federal government?	Thursday, August 28 Tuesday, September 2 Thursday, September 4 Tuesday, September 9 Thursday, September 11	Read Chapter 2 by Tuesday, September 2. Read Chapter 6 by Tuesday, September 9.
2. Which freedoms and liberties are protected by the US Constitution?	Tuesday, September 16 Thursday, September 18 Tuesday, September 23 Thursday, September 25 Tuesday, September 30	Read Chapter 18 by Tuesday, September 16. **Homework 1 Due Tuesday, September 23 at 11am.**
Exam 1	**Thursday, October 2**	**Exam 1 in Class on Thursday, October 2 at 11am.**
3. How are laws made and who makes laws?	Tuesday, October 7 Thursday, October 9 Tuesday, October 14 Thursday, October 16	Read Chapters 3, 4, and 5 (selected pages on Blackboard) by Tuesday, October 7.
4. How are lawmakers chosen?	Tuesday, October 21 Thursday, October 23 Tuesday, October 28	Read Chapters 3, 4, and 5 (selected pages on Blackboard) by Tuesday, October 21. **Homework 2 Due Tuesday, October 21 at 11am.**
Exam 2	**Thursday, October 30**	**Exam 2 in Class on Thursday, October 30 at 11am.**
5. How can citizens participate in governing?	Tuesday, November 4 Thursday, November 6 Tuesday, November 11 Thursday, November 13 Tuesday, November 18	Read Chapter 10 by Tuesday, November 4. Read Chapters 9 & 11 by Tuesday, November 11. Read Chapter 12 by Tuesday, November 18.
6. How do Americans feel toward government?	Thursday, November 20 Tuesday, November 25	Read Chapter 8 by Tuesday, November 25. **Homework 3 Due Tuesday, November 25 at 11am.**
Final Exam Review	Tuesday, December 2	In-Class Review for Exam 3
Exam 3	**Tuesday, December 9**	**Exam 3 on Tuesday, December 9 at 10:15am.**