



Sul Ross State University

PS 2305 – Federal Government – Syllabus Spring 2015

Adjunct Professor: Michael Sandoval

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Class Meeting Times: Mon-Wed-Fri 1350 to 1445

Meeting Location: Building A, Room A-4

Course Description

Origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, the 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. PS 2305 Federal Government is a required course in United States government. (3 semester credit hours)

Course Textbooks & Readings

Lenz, Timothy O. and Mirya Holman. 2013. *American Government*. Gainesville, FL. University Press of Florida. <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00016298/0001> this is a free, open-source book that can be downloaded.

Woll, Peter. *American Government: Readings and Cases*, 15th Edition ISBN: 0-321-12977-6.

All required readings are posted on our course Blackboard page (**DO NOT use Internet Explorer to access Blackboard. I suggest Mozilla**) <http://www.sulross.edu/bb> as PDFs or links also in the **Course Schedule**, you should check both. You are expected to complete the assigned readings *before* the first class day for which they are assigned.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication (*TEXAS Domain III Competency 19*) this goal will be met by the Readings and Activities on the first day of each Units 1-6. The assessment for achieving this goal will be measured by Exams 1 and 2; Quizzes 1-6
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work (*TEXAS Domain III Competency 19*) this goal will be met by the Readings and Activities for Units 3-6. The assessment for achieving this goal will be measured by Exam 2, Quizzes 3-6, and In-Class Labs
- 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*) this goal will be met by the Readings and Activities for Units 2 and 5, and the In-Class Labs.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will also be able to:

- Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.
- Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
- Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
- Analyze the election process.
- Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.



Course Policies

Attendance

Is mandatory and extremely important for this course. Class meetings will supplement, *not repeat*, the readings and assignments for this class. If you miss class it is *your responsibility* to get the notes from another student in the class; so make friends. It is not my responsibility to provide notes for those who miss class for whatever reason. In addition, a significant portion of exam material will be taken from the in-class lectures and discussions, so it will be very difficult to pass this course if you do not attend regularly or *miss six* or more classes and do not have the notes from which to study.

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three-hour class will constitute three absences. An absence due to participation in an official activity is considered to be an authorized absence. Instructors may at their discretion, drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. A student who is dropped from a course for excessive absences will be notified in writing by the Center for Enrollment Services after the drop has been approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive either an "F" or a "W" depending up on the faculty member's discretion.

You are expected to have completed the assignments by the beginning of the class for which they are assigned and be in class, on time, prepared and to participate when called upon. Furthermore, if you are not prepared to participate when called upon, I reserve the right to treat your lack of participation/preparation as the equivalent of an absence.

Student Expectations

I expect you to act as responsible adults in your in class conduct. If you infringe on my ability to conduct class, you will be asked to leave. Common courtesies expected in class are:

- Arriving to class on-time
- Disabling the ringer on cell phones
- Refraining from talking, sleeping, reading or doing non-related class activities during class
- Have respect and tolerance for fellow students regarding their political views
- Avoid disruptive behaviors

Late Work and Missed Assignments

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

Students with Special Needs

A student who because of a disability may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make any necessary accommodations. If you would like to request such an accommodation, please contact Grace Petty, the coordinator for the Center for Counseling and Accessibility Services at (432) 837-8363. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.

Religious Observance

Any student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day. Arrangements for missing class due to religious observance must be made with the instructor prior to the absence.

Student Conduct and Discipline

Each student is expected to be fully acquainted and comply with all published policies, rules, and regulations of the Sul Ross State University Student Handbook which shall be available to each student on-line at:

http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/handbook_2014-2015_0.pdf Students are also expected to comply with all federal and state laws.

Academic Integrity

Any instance of academic misconduct such as turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, cheating and plagiarizing written assignments, collusion, or misrepresenting facts will be published to the full extent of the university's disciplinary policy. **You** are responsible for reading the statement on Academic honesty in the Sul Ross State



University Rules and Regulations Supplement to the Student Handbook. The SRSU faculty considers academic dishonesty to be a serious matter and will act accordingly. Students caught cheating will receive no credit for assignment/quiz/exam and more severe penalties may be pursued.

Communicating with the Professor

The best way to contact me is through email at michael.sandoval@sulross.edu this provides a paper record of your concern. If you do not receive a reply within twenty-four hours please contact me on campus anytime or before or after your next class.

Dual Credit Courses

Dual Credit academic courses are transferable to all Texas public colleges and universities. Many private and out-of-state institutions also accept this course. Students planning to transfer to a private or out-of-state college or university should check with the receiving school to confirm transferability of PS 2305 credits from Sul Ross State University.

Distance Education Statement Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university’s academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook.

Course Grading

Grades are assigned on a point system. You can earn up to **230** points total in the course.

The following is the point distribution:

To receive an **A**, you must earn **207** points or more.

To receive a **B**, you must earn at least **184** points or more.

To receive a **C**, you must earn at least **161** points or more.

To receive a **D**, you must earn at least **138** points or more.

Below **138** an **F**

Grading Information related to Dual-Credit

This is a college course taught under the auspices of Sul Ross State University where grades are an A if they are in the 207-230 point range at semesters end. For example, if you earn 207 points it will show on your high school transcript as a 90 percent, if you earn 211 points it will show as a 95 percent, 213 points a 97 percent, etc. The college grade points ranking is the same in all grade categories for converting to a percentage for your high school transcript.

Course Schedule

Instruction for the course will be presented through lecture, textbook assignments; multi-media presentations e.g., power points and film. Eleven (11) textbook chapters are covered during the semester class meetings and are listed below:

Class Days	PS 2305 – Spring 2015 – Federal Government – Dual Credit			
	Units	Class Dates	Readings	Assignments
	Holiday	Monday, January 19	NO CLASS	
1	Introduction to Course	Wednesday, January 21	Syllabus	Blackboard & Course Review
2-7	UNIT 1 The Foundations of our Federal Government	Friday, January 23 Monday, January 26 Wednesday, January 28 Friday, January 30 Monday, February 2 Wednesday, February 4	Read Ch. 2 by January 28 Read Ch. 6 by February 4	Homework 1 assigned on January 28 DUE on February 4. SLO 1 Assigned January 28 DUE on February 4: Students will demonstrate understanding of the



				assumptions and biases that shape their political perceptions by successfully completing a self-analysis of their political ideology
	Quiz 1	Wednesday, February 4		Quiz 1
8-14	UNIT 2 Our Freedoms under the Constitution	Friday, February 6 Monday, February 9 Wednesday, February 11 Friday, February 13 Monday, February 16 Wednesday, February 18	Read Chapter 18 by February 18	Homework 2 assigned on February 11 DUE on February 20
	Quiz 2	Wednesday, February 18		Quiz 2
15-20	UNIT 3 Our Laws and Our Judiciary	Friday, February 20 Monday, February 23 Wednesday, February 25 Friday, February 27 Monday, March 2 Wednesday, March 4 Friday, March 6	Read Chapter 5 by February 27 Read Chapters 3 and 4 by March 13	Homework 3 assigned on February 27 DUE on March 6
	Quiz 3	Friday, March 6		Quiz 3
21-23		Monday, March 9 Wednesday, March 11 Friday, March 13		
	MID-TERM EXAM	Friday, March 13	Exam will cover Units 1, 2 and 3 work	
	SPRING BREAK	March 16-20	SPRING BREAK	
24-29	UNIT 4 Choosing our Representatives to Congress	Monday, March 23 Wednesday, March 25 Friday, March 27 Monday, March 30 Wednesday, April 1 Friday, April 3	Read Chapters 3 and 4 by April 3	Homework 4 assigned on March 25 DUE on April 6 SLO 2 Assigned March 27 DUE on April 3: Students will analyze political polling devices and predictions, demonstrating an understanding of statistical significance and bias in polling, while identifying the public's preference for presidential candidates for the 2016 election
	Quiz 4	Friday, April 3		Quiz 4



30-38	UNIT 5 Participation in our Government, is it Our Civic Duty	Monday, April 6 Wednesday, April 8 Friday, April 10 Monday, April 13 Wednesday, April 15 Friday, April 17 Monday, April 20 Wednesday, April 22 Friday, April 24	Read Chapter 10 by April 10 Read Chapters 9 & 11 by April 17 Read Chapter 12 by April 24	Homework 5 assigned on April 13 DUE on April 22
	Quiz 5	Wednesday, April 24		Quiz 5
39-43	UNIT 6 Our Government and Our Opinions	Monday, April 27 Wednesday, April 29 Friday, May 1 Monday, May 4 Wednesday, May 6	Read Chapter 8 by May 4	Homework 6 assigned on April 24 DUE on May 4 SLO 3 Assigned April 27 DUE on May 4: Students will identify and analyze their elected leaders in the U.S. Congress, demonstrating an understanding of the bicameral nature of the federal legislature, and the geographic representation it allows
	Quiz 6	Monday, May 4		Quiz 6
44	Final Exam Review	Wednesday, May 6		
45	Final Exam	Friday, May 8	Exam will cover Units 1 through 6 work	

SLO Assignments	Learning Activity	Assessment
SLO 1 Where Do I Stand?	Students will demonstrate understanding of the assumptions and biases that shape their political perceptions by successfully completing a self-analysis of their political ideology	Students must complete the Pew Research Typology quiz, and submit a reflection paper along with a result printout
SLO 2 Who Wins? Who Says?	Students will analyze political polling devices and predictions, demonstrating an understanding of statistical significance and bias in polling, while identifying the public's preference for	Students access recent presidential polls (for 2016) and make predictions who will win. Students will understand the difference in poll accuracy.



	presidential candidates for the 2016 election	
SLO 3 Who Represents Me?	Students will identify and analyze their elected leaders in the U.S. Congress, demonstrating an understanding of the bicameral nature of the federal legislature, and the geographic representation it allows	Students must research their national representatives, the district they reside in, and understand the work of their national legislators, the committees they serve on, and the legislation they introduce.

End of Spring 2015 Syllabus

(H:) SRSU Syllabus Final Revision 1-21-15