



Sul Ross State University
PS 2306 – State (Texas) Government – Syllabus Fall 2016

Adjunct Professor: Michael Sandoval

Email: michael.sandoval@sulross.edu

Class Meeting Times: Mon-Wed-Fri 1500 to 1600

Meeting Location: Room M-2

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.

Course Description

This is an introductory course covering State Politics and Texas Public Policy. The purposes of this class include introducing students to the most salient and contentious policy debates in Texas as well as providing the tools and knowledge necessary for students to critically and intelligently evaluate policy. It is my hope that the information you learn in this class will increase your interest in politics as well as make you a more informed citizen.

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 2306 credits from Sul Ross State University.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

The graduating student will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.

TEXAS Domain III Competency 19: The teacher understands and applies social science knowledge and skills to plan, organize, and implement instruction and assess learning.

TEXAS Domain III Competency 23: The teacher understands and applies knowledge of concepts of government, democracy, and citizenship, including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems.

Course Goals/Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
- Describe state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government
- Describe the separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas
- Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government
- Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
- Analyze the state and local election process
- Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- Analyze policies, issues and political culture of Texas

These objectives will be assessed throughout the semester utilizing the Unit Quizzes, Homework assignments, Mid-Term and Final Exams and a Research Paper.

Required Readings

All required readings will be posted on our course Blackboard page <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.

Books

There is no required book for this course. I will use supplemental links/handouts/power points that will be provided to emphasize particular concepts we cover in class.

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* to 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. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. 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.

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.

Course Grading

Grades are assigned on a point system. You can earn up to 336 points total in the course this semester.

To receive an **A**, you must earn 300 points or more.

To receive a **B**, you must earn at least 272 points or more.

To receive a **C**, you must earn at least 238 points or more.

To receive a **D**, you must earn at least 208 points or more.

Below 208 is an **F**

All grades will be posted in our class located in your Sul Ross Blackboard account.

Grading Information related to Dual-Credit

Refer to Sul Ross Grade Point Conversion to Faith Academy Grade Points Table that was distributed in class on August 22, 2016,

Makeup Exams:

I expect that students will take exams on the day that they are given. If you have to miss an exam you must contact me **in advance** and plan a day to take the makeup exam. Any absences on an exam day require written documentation (doctor’s note, etc.) and I reserve the right not to permit you to take a makeup. All makeup exams consist of essay questions and no one will be allowed to take a makeup for more than one exam. No makeup exams will be given for the final.

Religious Holiday: A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

Academic Honesty: Students will be expected to adhere to the university honor code for all assignments. Any student who is caught cheating or plagiarizing 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.

Plagiarism is defined as: Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgement. Any student, who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines, the Internet, and other reference works, or from the themes, reports, or other writings of a fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes:

- 1) Deliberate copying or use of another's work without citing the source.
- 2) Cutting and pasting of information off of the Internet without citing the source.
- 3) The use of an exact sentence from a source (book, Internet, etc.) without quotes.

Drop/Withdrawal Policy: November 11th is the last day to drop a course with a “W”. Once the deadline to withdrawal has passed, the student receives an ‘F’ for the course if he/she still chooses to withdraw. Thus, it is imperative for students to be cognizant of these dates to avoid earning an ‘F’ for the course.

Schedule of Classes

Class Days	PS 2306 – Fall 2016 – Federal Government – Dual Credit			
	Units	Class Dates	Readings	Assignments
1	UNIT 1 <i>The Context of Texas Politics</i> <u>(See Unit breakdown below this table)</u>	Monday, August 22	Review Syllabus	

2-5	Continue UNIT 1	Wednesday, August 24 Friday, August 26 Monday, August 29 Wednesday, August 31		Homework 1 assigned on August 24 DUE on September 7
5	QUIZ 1	Friday, September 2	QUIZ 1	QUIZ 1
6-10	UNIT 2 <i>Our Freedoms under State and Federal Constitutions</i>	Monday, Sept. 5 HOLIDAY Wednesday, Sept. 7 Friday, Sept. 9 Monday, Sept. 12 Wednesday, Sept. 14 Friday, Sept. 16		Homework 1 assigned on August 24 DUE on Sept. 7 Homework 2 assigned on September 9 due on September 23
11	QUIZ 2	Monday, September 19	QUIZ 2	QUIZ 2
12-16	UNIT 3 <i>Our State Government and Bureaucracy</i>	Wednesday, Sept. 21 Friday, Sept. 23 Monday, Sept. 26 Wednesday, Sept. 28 Friday, Sept. 30		Homework 2 assigned on Sept. 9 DUE on Sept. 23
(15)	QUIZ 3	Wednesday, September 28	QUIZ 3	QUIZ 3
17-24	UNIT 4 <i>Judicial Branch and Public Policies</i>	Monday, October 3 Wednesday, October 5 Friday, October 7 Monday, October 10 Wednesday, October 12 Friday, October 14 Monday, October 17 Wednesday, October 19		Homework 3 assigned on Sept. 30 DUE on October 7 Homework 4 assigned on October 12 DUE on Monday, October 24
(24)	MID-TERM EXAM	Wednesday, October 19	Mid-Term Exam will cover Units 1, 2, 3 and 4	
25	QUIZ 4	Friday, October 21	QUIZ 4	QUIZ 4
26-34	UNIT 5 <i>Policies Continued</i>	Monday, October 24 Wednesday, October 26 Friday, October 28 Monday, October 31 Wednesday, November 2 Friday, November 4 Monday, November 7 Wednesday, November 9 Friday, November 11		Homework 4 assigned on October 12 DUE on October 24 Homework 5 assigned on November 2 DUE on Friday, November 11
(33)	QUIZ 5	Wednesday, November 9	QUIZ 5	QUIZ 5
35-37	UNIT 6 <i>Civil Rights, Media & Public Opinion</i>	Monday, November 14 Wednesday, November 16 Friday, November 18		Research Paper Topics Assigned Monday, November 14 DUE December 5

	THANKSGIVING BREAK	NOVEMBER 21 - 25	THANKSGIVING BREAK	NOVEMBER 21 - 25
38-40	UNIT 6 Continued <i>Civil Rights, Media & Public Opinion</i>	Monday, November 28 Wednesday, Nov. 30 Friday, December 2		Homework 6 assigned on November 28 DUE on Monday, December 5
(40)	QUIZ 6	Friday, December 2	QUIZ 6	QUIZ 6
41-43	Review Week	Monday, December 5 Wednesday, December 7 Friday, December 9		Research Paper DUE Monday, December 5
44	FINAL EXAM	Monday, December 12	The Final Exam is comprehensive	

UNIT 1

08/22 Course introduction and overview
08/24 Texas History I
08/26 Texas History II
08/29 Political Culture
08/31 The People and Land

09/02 QUIZ 1

UNIT 2

09/02 Federalism
09/07 Federalism
09/09 State Constitutions
09/12 Texas Constitution
09/14 Texas Constitution

09/16 QUIZ 2

UNIT 3

09/19 Governorship
09/21 House of Representatives and Texas Senate
09/23 Interest Groups
09/26 Bureaucracy

09/28 QUIZ 3

UNIT 4

09/30 Counties and Municipal Government
10/03 Judicial Branch in Texas
10/05 Tax Policy
10/07 Agriculture Policy
10/10 Healthcare Policy
10/12 Education Policy
10/14 Welfare Policy
10/17 Tax Policy & Agriculture Policy

10/19 MID-TERM EXAM

10/21 QUIZ 4

UNIT 5

10/24 Immigration Policy
10/26 Drug Policy
10/28 Environmental Policy
11/02 Crime Policy
11/04 Various Videos on Policy
11/07 Review
11/09 QUIZ 5
11/11 Civil Liberties (**Last day to drop course with a W)

UNIT 6

11/14 The Media
11/16 Public Opinion
11/18 Civil Rights
11/28 Civil Rights Videos
11/30 Review
12/02 QUIZ 6

REVIEW WEEK

12/05 Review of Semester
12/07 Review
12/09 Review
12/12 FINAL EXAM

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Distributed in Class on 8-22-16 and posted in SRSU Blackboard