



**Agency Politics  
PS 5312-W01  
Spring 2019  
Sul Ross State University  
SYLLABUS**

**Professor:** Dr. Tiffany Vincent  
**Office Hours:** Via email.  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course deals with the non-electoral politics of the federal bureaucracy. To this end, we will examine how federal agencies are created; structured; staffed; and the roles of the legislative and executive branches in this process. We will also examine the services provided, budget size, and clientele-constituency groups of select agencies.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The graduating student will be able to:

1. Evaluate the role of the bureaucracy in the federal government structure.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion response, question creation, and Exam 1 and research paper.
2. Identify various types of bureaucratic agencies.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion response, question creation, and Exam 2 and research paper.
3. Describe the role of interest groups and funding for agencies.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion response, question creation, and Exam 2
4. Demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate statistical tools for quantitative analysis.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion response, question creation, and Exam 3 and research paper.
5. Identify strengths and weaknesses of agency size and policy responsiveness.  
**Method of Assessment:** Weekly discussion response, question creation, and Exam 3

### **COURSE FORMAT & EXPECTATIONS:**

This is an online distance education course. As such, it is open throughout the semester but there are assigned due dates for submitting assignments and exams (see class schedule below; *\*NOTE:* some assignments/due dates will be announced via our Blackboard homepage throughout the semester or via email). This course is designed to allow for a more peer-led learning vs. instructor-led lecture environment. The role of the instructor will be to guide the students through the process of understanding the course subject matter. The role of the student will be to read the required materials each week and participate in the online class discussion forums. Specifically, it is required that each student:

1. Read and be prepared to discuss the assigned materials online.
2. Raise relevant questions and contribute relevant observations to the topic at hand.
3. Fully participate in online discussion forums.
4. Demonstrate appropriate and respectful communication with classmates and the instructor.

### **CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

Without full participation and being prepared for each weekly activity, students shall find themselves at a severe disadvantage for achieving success in this course. *Keep in mind that your computer problems are NOT an excuse for any lack of completion of course material. YOU will need to maintain access to a reliable Internet connection (keep in mind there are computers available for your use in the Sul Ross Library). I am not responsible for any technological glitches that may occur in the online environment.* Sul Ross State University does *not* tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or collusion. Procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy.

### **DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT:**

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. 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. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

### **CIVILITY STATEMENT:**

In the classroom environment I hold each of you accountable for both your actions and words. Therefore, you should commit yourself to behave in a manner that recognizes personal respect and demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights, and freedoms of every individual in the classroom, including respect for University property and the physical and intellectual property of others. If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the professor, it is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference. –\*Note: This *DOES* apply to this online course.

### **DISABILITY POLICY:**

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services. Contact Mary Schwartze (Office: 112 Ferguson Hall) to set up an accommodations meeting, or call (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

## GRADING SCALE:

- 60% Exams (3 exams worth 20% each)
- 25% Chapter Reflections/Discussion Board Posts
- 10% Research Paper
- 5% Participation/Attendance

\*There is NO EXTRA CREDIT for this course, so please do not ask.

This course follows the traditional percentage based grading system below.

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 & below.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

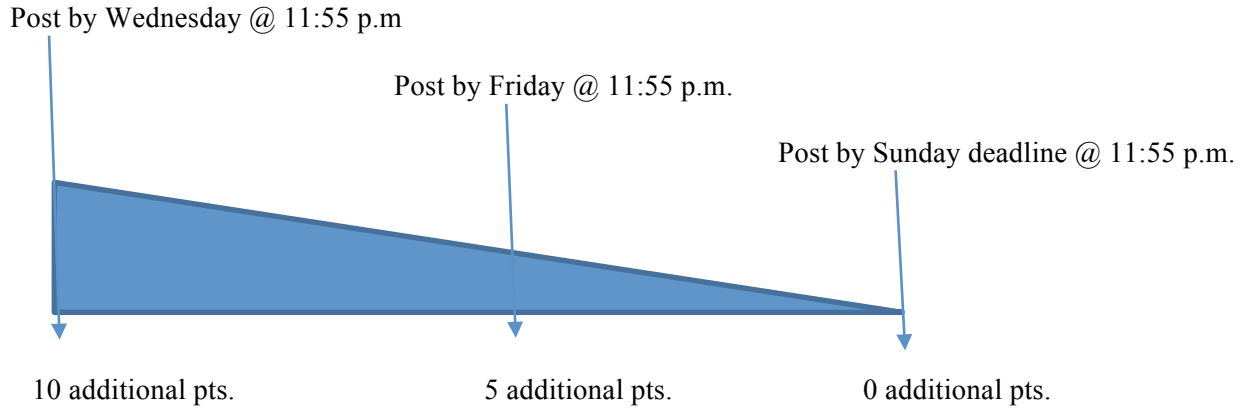
EXAMS- Each student will complete three exams in this course. At the graduate level, this course will consist of written essay responses to question(s) that I will create to determine your ability to think critically about the assigned material. Exams (and directions) will be emailed to your sulross.edu email address (*each exam is worth 20% of your overall final course grade*) and will be due on the date specified in the course outline below. I will email you the exams the week before they are due (see course schedule on the next page), this means that you will have 1 week to complete the exam and submit it to me. **Missed exams will result in a grade of zero. Exam deadlines are inflexible and absolute – no excuses.**

CHAPTER REFLECTIONS/DISCUSSION BOARD POSTS- As an online graduate course, your active engagement, participation, and demonstration of reading comprehension is vital to your success in this class. In the discussion section of Blackboard each week, I will pose a discussion question or two over the assigned reading(s). Discussion post(s) will appear every Monday and will be due on Sunday @ 11: 55 p.m. of the same week, so you will have 7 days to think about and construct your answers. Each week you are required to respond to my question, create a question of your own, and respond to a classmate's question. *For each week then, a total of 3 discussion posts are required.* The questions/answers should be analytical (theoretical) over the topic at hand and/or an attempt to develop a closely related line of inquiry. The purpose is to generate productive classroom discussion and demonstrate critical thinking ability with regard to the assigned reading(s). The questions/answers are meant to be evaluative/analytical for the sake of discussion rather than trivia questions from the readings. Failure to be respectful and civil in your responses/questions with classmates or with the instructor will result in no credit—and potential removal from the course. At the end of the semester, I will take the average of your grade on these weekly submissions and that grade will be worth 25% of your overall final course grade.

RESEARCH PAPER- Worth 10% of your overall course grade. You will complete and follow the writing prompt assignment given over a selected agency of your choosing.

TIMELY PARTICIPATION- Worth 5% of the overall course grade, your active and productive participation in this course is expected and required. This category is directly related to the section above (chapter reflections/discussion board posts). To encourage productive and thoughtful discussion, the earlier you complete your readings and post your discussion question, the more you will be rewarded (this way you hopefully will not have to wait until Sunday to answer a classmate's posted question). If over a majority (51%) of your posts throughout the semester are completed using the submission cut-off dates in the chart below, you will receive additional points toward this category. For example, if you post your question by Wednesday you can get up to 10 additional points added to this category; post by Friday, 5

additional points. No additional points are given for submitting work by the required Sunday deadline. If you submit your questions between the days, the points for the next day will be added; for example, if you post by Tuesday, you will get the Wednesday total of 10 pts.; if you post by Thursday, you will receive the Friday total of 5 pts. *\*NOTE: If you choose to complete your posts by the Sunday deadline you are not penalized, but there will not be any additional points being added to your grade in this category.*



## Class Schedule

WEEK	ASSIGNED READINGS
<b>SECTION 1 THEME: Bureaucracy and Function</b>	
Week 1 (January 22 <sup>nd</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup> )	Course Introduction, Blackboard, and Syllabus
Week 2 (January 28 <sup>th</sup> - February 3 <sup>rd</sup> )  Agency Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read a brief history on U.S. agency creation and function. Be sure to also click on and read about ‘The Independent Agencies’-located on the bottom left-hand side of the website below. <a href="http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/outlines/government-1991/the-executive-branch-powers-of-the-presidency/the-executive-departments.php">http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/outlines/government-1991/the-executive-branch-powers-of-the-presidency/the-executive-departments.php</a></li> <li>• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the journal piece titled, “Deconstructing Independent Agencies (and Executive Agencies). You only have to read through to page 784. <a href="http://cornelllawreview.org/files/2013/05/DatlaReveszfinal.pdf">http://cornelllawreview.org/files/2013/05/DatlaReveszfinal.pdf</a></li> <li>• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and watch the short PBS video titled, “Bureacracy Basics” <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8EQAnKntLs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8EQAnKntLs</a></li> </ul>
Week 3 (February 4 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> )  The President and the Bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Presidential Appointments: No Senate Required” <a href="https://www.thoughtco.com/presidential-appointments-no-senate-required-3322124">https://www.thoughtco.com/presidential-appointments-no-senate-required-3322124</a></li> <li>• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Why Not the Best? The Loyalty-Competence Trade-Off in Presidential Appointments” <a href="https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-not-the-best-the-loyalty-competence-trade-off-in-presidential-appointments/">https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-not-the-best-the-loyalty-competence-trade-off-in-presidential-appointments/</a></li> <li>• Howell, William G., and David E. Lewis. “Agencies by Presidential Design.” <i>The Journal of Politics</i>, vol. 64, no. 4, 2002, pp. 1095–1114. <a href="http://home.uchicago.edu/~whowell/papers/Agencies.pdf">http://home.uchicago.edu/~whowell/papers/Agencies.pdf</a></li> <li>• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled “‘Do This! Do That!’ and Nothing Will Happen”: Executive Orders and Bureaucratic Responsiveness.”</li> </ul>

	<a href="http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1532673X14534062">http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1532673X14534062</a>
<b>Week 4 (February 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>)</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>
<b>SECTION 2 THEME: Influencing Factors of Agency Design</b>	
Week 5 (February 18 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> ) Congress and the Bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and watch the short PBS video titled, “Controlling Bureaucracies” <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12MCVhfo4j4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12MCVhfo4j4</a></li> </ul> <p>To access the two articles below, log into the SRSU library online and access the ‘jstor’ database. Once there type in the title of these articles, you should then be able to download them in .pdf format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balla, Steven J., and John R. Wright. “Interest Groups, Advisory Committees, and Congressional Control of the Bureaucracy.” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, vol. 45, no. 4, 2001, pp. 799–812.</li> <li>Clinton, Joshua D., et al. “Influencing the Bureaucracy: The Irony of Congressional Oversight.” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, vol. 58, no. 2, 2014, pp. 387–401.</li> </ul>
Week 6 (February 25 <sup>th</sup> -March 3 <sup>rd</sup> ) The President vs. Congress vs. the Bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wiseman, Alan E. “Delegation and Positive-Sum Bureaucracies.” <i>The Journal of Politics</i>, vol. 71, no. 3, 2009, pp. 998–1014. <a href="https://my.vanderbilt.edu/alanwiseman/files/2011/08/JO_P_OIRA_july09_supplemental_appendix.pdf">https://my.vanderbilt.edu/alanwiseman/files/2011/08/JO_P_OIRA_july09_supplemental_appendix.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p>To access the article below, log into the SRSU library online and access the ‘jstor’ database. Once there type in the title of the article, you should then be able to download it in .pdf format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinton, Joshua D., et al. “Separated Powers in the United States: The Ideology of Agencies, Presidents, and Congress.” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, vol. 56, no. 2, 2012, pp. 341–354.</li> </ul>
Week 7 (March 4 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> ) The Iron Triangle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Why Bureaucrats Interact with Interest Groups” <a href="https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/13576/03.pdf?sequence=3">https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/13576/03.pdf?sequence=3</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your</li> </ul>

	<p>web browser), and watch the short video on the ‘Iron Triangle’</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7v1KwM3pnE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7v1KwM3pnE</a></p>
<b>Week 8 (March 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>)</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>
Week 9 (March 18 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> )	Spring Break. No Assignments.
<b>SECTION 3 THEME: Political process and outcomes</b>	
<p>Week 10 (March 25<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>)</p> <p>Bureaucracy Size</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Taking the measure of the federal workforce under Donald Trump” <a href="https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2018/jan/22/taking-measure-federal-workforce/">https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2018/jan/22/taking-measure-federal-workforce/</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “The United States needs more bureaucracy, not less” <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/08/09/america-needs-more-bureaucracy-not-less/?tid=hybrid_collaborative_3_na&amp;utm_term=.9d06c759e36e">https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/08/09/america-needs-more-bureaucracy-not-less/?tid=hybrid_collaborative_3_na&amp;utm_term=.9d06c759e36e</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Problems with the Bureaucracy” <a href="http://www.nber.org/chapters/c8632.pdf">http://www.nber.org/chapters/c8632.pdf</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “What Trump proposed cutting in his 2019 budget” <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/politics/trump-budget-2019/?utm_term=.641dd5cb9057">https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/politics/trump-budget-2019/?utm_term=.641dd5cb9057</a></li> </ul>
<p>Week 11 (April 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>)</p> <p>Selected Agencies and Issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “To Fix America's Education Bureaucracy, We Need to Destroy It” <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/04/to-fix-americas-education-bureaucracy-we-need-to-destroy-it/255173/">https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/04/to-fix-americas-education-bureaucracy-we-need-to-destroy-it/255173/</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Trump EPA proposes major rollback of federal water protections” <a href="https://www.npr.org/2018/12/11/675477583/trump-epa-proposes-big-changes-to-federal-water-protections">https://www.npr.org/2018/12/11/675477583/trump-epa-proposes-big-changes-to-federal-water-protections</a></li> </ul>

<p>Week 12 (April 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>)</p> <p>Selected Agencies and Issues Cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Trump administration rejects responsibility for death of 7 year old girl in border patrol custody”  <a href="https://www.politico.com/story/2018/12/14/niesen-migrant-girl-death-border-patrol-1063729">https://www.politico.com/story/2018/12/14/niesen-migrant-girl-death-border-patrol-1063729</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Who is right about the economy? Trump or the Federal Reserve”  <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/12/19/whos-right-about-economy-trump-or-federal-reserve/?utm_term=.10af94894940">https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/12/19/whos-right-about-economy-trump-or-federal-reserve/?utm_term=.10af94894940</a></li> </ul>
<p>Week 13 (April 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>)</p> <p>Agency Effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Freeing Technology from the Pace of Bureaucracy”  <a href="https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/05/freeing-technology-from-the-pace-of-bureaucracy/524034/">https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/05/freeing-technology-from-the-pace-of-bureaucracy/524034/</a></li> <li>Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “ Federal Agencies ordered to restrict their communications”  <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-agencies-ordered-to-restrict-their-communications/2017/01/24/9daa6aa4-e26f-11e6-ba11-63c4b4fb5a63_story.html?utm_term=.766e0649dc67">https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-agencies-ordered-to-restrict-their-communications/2017/01/24/9daa6aa4-e26f-11e6-ba11-63c4b4fb5a63_story.html?utm_term=.766e0649dc67</a></li> </ul>
<p>Week 14 (April 22<sup>nd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Paper Due on 4/28/18 @ 11:55 p.m.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 15 (April 29<sup>th</sup>-May 5<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>	<p><b>EXAM 3</b></p>

**\*NOTE:** This schedule is tentative and therefore subject to change at my discretion.