

# SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

## Federal Government

Spring, 2020

Political Science 2305.003

Federal Government

6:00 p.m.-8:50 p.m.

Tuesday

Lawrence Hall 309

**Instructor:** Jim Case  
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**Office Hours:** 2-3:00 p.m. M-Th  
and by appointment  
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**Required texts:** Christine Barbour and Gerald C. Wright, *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics* (CQ Press, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 2015). ISBN—13:9781483352725.

**Course description:** Political Science 2305, Federal Government, is an introduction to the governmental institutions and governmental/political processes of the United States of America. The course will begin with an introduction to political theory. Political Science 2305 is required to meet core curriculum requirements.

### Student learning outcomes:

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

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of selected concepts of selected political philosophers;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the major institutions of U. S. government and the processes associated with the institutions;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between governmental institutions and politically relevant non-governmental groups, e.g., political parties, the media, interest groups;
- Demonstrate an understanding of selected policy challenges facing the United States government.

### Core Curriculum Objectives:

- To develop and promote an awareness of the importance of social responsibility, personal responsibility, critical thinking, and communication.

### Program learning outcomes:

- 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 and oral communication;
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.

**Teacher certification requirements.**

Political Science 2305 addresses the following competencies for teacher certification:

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

**Marketable skills.**

- Students can effectively communicate ideas and information verbally, visually, and in writing;
- Students can distinguish between credible/relevant information and information lacking credibility/relevance;
- Students can identify critical and common institutions of political decision-making and policy-making across different nation-state settings;
- Students can engage with social and political problems and use critical thinking to develop logical solutions.

**Course evaluation.**

- Unit Examinations. There will be three unit examinations. The examinations will be comprised of a multiple choice section that will be administered in-class and an essay portion that will be an out-of-class assignment. Due dates for the essays will be announced at the time of the examination. The material covered on the exams will be from the text and from the class lectures. The lowest of the three unit exams will be dropped from the exam average;
- Make-up Exams will be given the last day of class;
- There will be a comprehensive final examination given at the end of the semester during Final Exam week. The final exam will be given to students who wish to raise their course averages;
- There will be a series of very brief paragraph assignments in which the student will be asked to bring information to help develop the class period. Examples are "Why Government," "Authoritarian Leaders," and "News Commentators" (10%).

**Classroom conduct.**

Students conduct is expected to contribute to the creation of a positive learning environment. Behaviors which distract the professor or fellow students from the mission of the classroom are addressed immediately. Examples of distractive behaviors are leaving the classroom and conversations between students. Once the class has convened the student is expected to stay in the classroom for the duration of the course. If the student must leave, the student is asked not to return to the classroom for that day and disrupt the course further.

**Attendance.**

Be here. Because much of the information I discuss in class is not directly from the textbook, you will miss out on the information if you are not in class which will make it more difficult to do well.

**Disabilities Accommodation.**

It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodation because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact Accessibilities Services Coordinator, in Ferguson 112 or at (432) 837-8203.

<b>Calendar for Course</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic of the day</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
January 14	Course overview Why government?	In-Class paragraph on Why Government [What do you expect of government?] Report on essays	Introduction to the course The essay assignment is due on January 16; Introduction to philosophers
January 21	Martin Luther King Day Observance		
	Politics	Chapter 1, Politics: Who gets What, and How?	
January 28	Political Culture	Chapter 2, American Citizens and Political Culture	
	Public Opinion	Chapter 11, Public Opinion	
February 4	The Media	Chapter 15, The Media	
	Political Parties	Chapter 12, Political Parties	
February 11	Political Parties	Chapter 12, Political Parties	
	Elections	Chapter 14, Voting, Campaigns, and Elections	
February 18	Interest Groups	Chapter 13, Interest Groups	
	Review for Exam I		
February 25	Exam I		The essay portion of the exam will be done outside of class.
March 3	The U. S. Constitution	Chapter 3, Politics of the American Founding Chapter 4, Federalism and the U. S. Constitution	
	The U. S. Constitution	Chapter 16, State and Local Politics in a Federal Setting	
March 10		Spring Break	
March 12		Spring Break	

March 17	The U. S. Constitution	Chapter 5, Fundamental American Liberties Chapter 6, The Struggle for Equal Rights Review for Exam II	
March 24	Exam II		The essay portion of the exam will be done outside of class.
March 31	Branches of Government: Congress	Chapter 7, Congress	
	Branches of Government: Congress	Chapter 7, Congress	
April 7	Branches of Government: The Executive	Chapter 8, The Presidency	
	Branches of Government: The Executive	Chapter 19: Foreign Policy	
April 14	Branches of Government: The Executive	Chapter 9, The Bureaucracy	
	Branches of Government: The Judiciary	Chapter 10, The American Legal System and the Courts	
April 21	Branches of Government: The Judiciary	Chapter 10, The American Legal System and the Courts	
	Review for Exam III		
April 28	Exam III		The essay portion of the exam will be done outside of class.
	Make-Up Exams		
April 30	Dead Day		
May 4	Final	6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	
May 8	Graduation	7:00	