

Sul Ross State University
Political Science 3304
Integrated Social Sciences
Fall 2020

Dr. Jeremy Stephen Roethler
Phone: 830-275-0919 (mobile)
E-mail: jroethler@sulross.edu
Zoom: Jeremy Roethler
Office Hours: by appointment

Course meeting times: This is a web course and does not have class meeting times.

Course Description: This course is designed for students preparing for their state of Texas teacher certification examinations at the EC-6, 4-8, and 7-12 levels in history and the social sciences. It will also be useful as a review course for students in related social science fields. The social studies discipline competencies covered in this course include: (1) history, (2) geography, (3) economics, (4) government, (5) citizenship, (6) culture and (7) science, technology, society, and the environment.

Required Texts: None

Primary Learning Objectives:

At the successful conclusion of this course, through performance on a short research paper and objective multiple-choice examinations, the student will be able to

- Apply knowledge of significant historical events and developments, as well as multiple historical interpretations and ideas, to be able to facilitate understanding of relationships between the past, the present and the future;
- Apply knowledge of people, places and environments to be able to facilitate understanding of geographic relationships in Texas, the United States and the world;
- Know how people organize economic systems to produce, distribute and consume goods and services and to be able to use this knowledge to enable students to understand economic systems and make informed economic decisions;
- Know how governments and structures of power function, provide order and allocate resources and to use this knowledge to be able to facilitate student understanding of how individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems;

- Understand citizenship in the United States and other societies and to be able to use this knowledge to prepare students to participate in our society through an understanding of democratic principles and citizenship practices;
- Understand cultures and how they develop and adapt and to be able to use this knowledge to enable students to appreciate and respect the cultural diversity in Texas, the United States and the world; and
- Understand developments in science and technology and to be able to use this knowledge to facilitate student understanding of the social and environmental consequences of scientific discovery and technological innovation.

To complete the requirements of this course successfully, you must have a Sul Ross State University Blackboard account and be able to access documents attached to this course. See below for further details

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 should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require 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.

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act): Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students who need accessibility services should contact Kathy Biddick at 830-279-3003. The address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde, TX 78801.

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Course requirements, course objectives, and course grade breakdown:

Short Paper (20%): In 2-3 pages, write a formal, organized essay that addresses the following questions:

1. What are the social sciences and what do they have in common?
 2. What important questions can the social sciences address and answer?
 3. What are the special challenges in teaching the social sciences to a socio-economically and culturally diverse demographic in today's classroom?
- The essay must be double-spaced, and formatted according to APA, MLA, or Chicago style. Please see (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) for templates for each format
 - The essay must be written in a college/professional level tone and style. (It is strongly recommended that you make use of appropriate resources, including the writing center.)
 - In supporting its answers to these three questions, the essay must use no fewer than three college-appropriate resources. (Internet sources are acceptable.)
 - The essay must use APA, MLA or Chicago style in-text citation and include a works cited page.
 - The essay will be screened for plagiarism using the SafeAssign tool. This database includes papers submitted previously by students in this course. Papers found to have an unacceptable SafeAssign match (as determined by the instructor) will receive an automatic "zero" (0).

Four practice multiple-choice examinations based on the seven social sciences competencies (40%): The examinations will be 100 points each. They will cover

1. World History, Cultures, and Geography
2. American and Texas History, Cultures, and Geography
3. The Constitution of the United States and the Institutions of the American Government
4. The Economy, Science, Technology, and the Environment

You may take these examinations under the conditions of your own choosing, using whatever resources are available to you (including collaboration with other students) and there will be no time limit. You are free to find the information to answer the questions from any appropriate resource, whether it be materials from previous courses, or the public domain. Part of the exercise is to learn how to find reliable information quickly. You can submit your answers to me, and I will give you a second opportunity to take these tests after I identify the incorrect answer choices. Your grade on your second submission will stand as your grade for the test.

The practice tests will include sample questions from (among other places)

- The Core Subjects, EC-6 Texas test
<http://www.tx.nesinc.com/content/docs/291PrepManual.pdf>
- Texas test, Social Studies, 4-8
<http://www.tx.nesinc.com/content/docs/118PrepManual.pdf>
- Texas test, History, 7-12 <http://www.tx.nesinc.com/content/docs/233PrepManual.pdf>
- Texas test, Social Studies, 7-12
<http://www.tx.nesinc.com/content/docs/232PrepManual.pdf>

Final Examination (400 points) (40%). The final examination will consist of 100 questions drawn at random from the four practice examinations. This test will be taken online using the Blackboard testing tool and submitted under actual testing conditions. The testing window will open at the beginning of final examination week and close at the end of final examination week. Once you open the testing window on Blackboard, you will have 120 minutes (2 hours) to complete the examination.

Grading methodology: All assignments for this course will be graded on a 100-point scale as follows

90-100 (A) 80-89 (B) 70-79 (C) 60-69 (D) <60 (F)

Although I am giving you the maximum possible discretion to work at your own pace, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to submit your work as early and as often as possible. All required assignments must be completed no later than 5 pm of the final day of instruction. The final examination must be completed no later than 5 pm of the last day of final examination week. All relevant deadlines are posted to Blackboard. Good luck!

Paper Scoring Rubric

| Rubric Criteria | Inadequate 1 | Passing 2 | Good 3 | Excellent 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thesis/ Topic | No clear thesis/topic, or thesis/topic does not relate to purpose & audience. | Thesis/topic is not stated early; it is unconvincing because it is too broad/vague/unrelated to purpose/audience. | Thesis/topic is good and relates to purpose, although it could be revised to be more precise. | Thesis/topic is precise and clear and related to purpose |
| Development: Reasons & Evidence | The essay does not offer clear reasons and evidence to support thesis/topic. It may offer only reasons unsupported by evidence | The paper lists reasons and evidence but they are unconvincing and/or undeveloped. Lack of critical discussion of evidence. | The paper offers reasons and evidence that support thesis/topic; but more supporting details and other kinds of evidence would have demonstrated mastery. | Reasons and evidence are accurate, precise, and relevant. Thesis/topic is fully and convincingly developed. |
| Organization of entire paper and of paragraphs | An overall logical structure is lacking. Paragraphs lack cohesion. No transitions. | Overall logical structure is evident, but paragraphs may lack cohesion and transitions may be lacking. | The paper is supported with adequate overall structure and paragraph cohesion; sequence of ideas or transitions could be improved. | Paragraphs are coherent & unified, and connected with effective, eloquent transitions. |
| Style, Vocabulary, Grammar & Mechanics | The reader cannot understand the paper because of distracting patterns of error in word choice, sentence structure, grammar, and usage. | The often must reread because of distracting patterns of error in word choice, sentence structure, grammar, and usage. | The writing successfully communicates through effective grammar and mechanics, except for one or two patterns of error in word choice, grammar, or usage. | The writer chooses words aptly and observes the conventions of correct grammar and usage. |
| Documentation -In-text citations & bibliography page (APA) | Author does not cite in-text sources or provide a bibliography (works cited page) at the end of paper. | Author does not cite in-text sources accurately or consistently and/or does not format bibliography accurately/consistently | Author documents sources consistently with one or two minor inconsistencies or mistakes that do not damage writer's ethos. | Author documents sources accurately and consistently. |

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| Total (out of 4) | Points (out of 100) | |
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Conversion Scale: 4.0 (100) – 3.5 (90) – 3.0 (85) – 2.5 (80) – 2.0 (75) – 1.5 (70)