



## PS 3315: Women & Politics (online)

**Professor:** Jessica Velasco, D.P.A.  
**Office Hours:** MW (2-5 p.m.) & by appointment  
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### Course Description

**SRSU Catalog Description:** Women's roles in politics at national, state, and local levels as they reflect the economic, legal social status of women; also, an overview of related political issues, important concepts, events, and movements.

This class: There are many different approaches one could take with this topic, and there is enough information to cover several semesters. In this class, with the use of scholarly articles and discussion, we will explore the following questions:

- Why aren't there more women involved in government in the United States?
- What role does the Constitution play?
- What are the attitudes we have about women running and being elected?
- What are some of the strategies that have been used to improve the representation of women? Have they been effective? Do they have similar results for other underrepresented groups in society?
- What is the impact (perceived impact) of increased representation of women?
- What level of representation is desirable? What are other measures of progress?
- How does representation in the private sector relate to representation in the public sector?
- What does the role of the first lady play in the overall progression of women in politics?
- How do we compare with other countries in approaches, representation, and attitudes?
- What are some of the organizations that have developed related to women and government? What is their role?



## Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Provide a substantiated and educated response to the questions above
- Critically analyze information to discern its meaning and validity
- Express your political opinions in ways that enhance understanding, while also learning to listen and understand different viewpoints
- Conduct research on various political topics
- Identify resources for further study and support on this topic

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Program Learning Outcomes<br/>(Political Science):</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The graduating student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work and oral communication.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Marketable skills for Political Science:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can effectively communicate ideas and information verbally, visually, and in writing</li> <li>• Students can distinguish between credible/relevant information and information lacking credibility/relevance</li> <li>• Students can identify critical and common institutions of political decision-making and policymaking across different nation-state settings</li> <li>• Students can engage with social and political problems and use critical thinking to develop logical solutions</li> </ul> |
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## Required Course Materials

There is not a required text for this course. All readings and course materials will be provided on Blackboard, online, or through the SRSU library.

## GRADING

Grades in this class will be determined by the number of points you earn by the end of the course. The point distribution is listed below:

|                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Introduction Post                    | 30           |
| Syllabus Quiz                        | 20           |
| Discussion Boards (4 x 50)           | 200          |
| Reading and Org. Assignment (5 x 50) | 250          |
| Policy Brief Outline                 | 100          |
| Movie Analysis                       | 100          |
| Policy Brief & Recorded Presentation | 300          |
| Total                                | 1000         |
| Bonus points                         | Up to 50 pts |

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| A | 895-1000 points  |
| B | 795-894 POINTS   |
| C | 695-794 POINTS   |
| D | 595-694 POINTS   |
| F | BELOW 595 POINTS |

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Introduction Post**

By the end of the first week, please post an introduction that includes information about yourself (see Blackboard for more information). In addition, your introductory post needs to include the following: 1) your personal reflection on the questions we will be exploring in this class, and 2) the country you will be using throughout the semester for comparison. This is worth 30 points.

### **Syllabus Quiz**

By the end of the first week of class (by Friday at 11:59 p.m.), please complete the syllabus quiz. You will get one attempt to take this quiz, and it is worth 20 points.

### **Discussion Boards**

You will have four discussion boards this semester, each worth 50 points. Please refer to the course calendar below to see which weeks will have discussion boards. On the weeks with discussion boards, you need to post **3 discussion questions** by Monday at 11:59 p.m., and you need to respond to **two questions** from classmates by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.

Your **first post** for each discussion board should be a **set of three questions** related to the readings for the module. Instead of asking questions that will prompt regurgitation of course readings, ask questions that encourage fellow students to think critically and to research further for their responses. See “Discussion Questions” section of this syllabus for more guidance.

Please make sure to read over the rubric and examples posted on Blackboard. Discussion posts should be viewed much like mini research papers. Unless the question specifically calls for it, the use of first person and opinions should be minimal. Statements should be substantiated by scholarly references, and grammar and spelling errors should be non-existent. In other words, these are not social media posts that you can write from your phone. It is recommended that you type all posts in word processing software before posting to check for grammar & spelling mistakes. Make sure you also include both in-text and full citations for references used (APA format). NOTE: All discussion board posts are “post first” discussion boards, meaning you will not be able to view the posts of others until you have made your first post.

**NOTE: Blackboard only allows one due date per assignment, so it will only have the due date for the responses, not the discussion questions post. The discussion boards are worth 50 points total (the questions and responses combined)**

### **Policy Brief Outline**

The major writing assignment for this course is a policy brief addressing the issue of women’s representation in government in the United States. An outline of the brief will be due by Friday, October 27, at 11:59 p.m. This will be worth 100 points.

## Reading Assignment and Organization Assignment

During the weeks that you do not have discussion boards, you will have reading assignments for four weeks and then an organization assignment for one week. The template, instructions, and rubrics for each are on Blackboard. Each of these is worth 50 points.

## Movie Analysis

During Week 12, you will not have any readings or discussion boards. However, you will be selecting a movie to watch and analyze using the readings and discussions we have had up to that point as a lens for your analysis. Please see Blackboard for a list of suggested movies and instructions. Please ask me if you want to use a movie that is not on the list. This is due by Friday, November 17, at 5 p.m. This is worth 100 points

## Final Paper & Presentation

Instead of a final in this class, you will have a final paper and recorded presentation. Your final paper will be a policy brief. These are both due by 11:59 p.m. on 12/8/2023 (Friday). The instructions and rubric for these items are posted on Blackboard.

## Bonus Point Opportunities

I will announce bonus point opportunities throughout the semester. These will include reaction posts for the guest speakers of the course (or virtual attendance when they join class). The recordings for each will be posted once available. The max number of bonus points one may earn will be 50 points.

## Calendar (subject to change)

| W | Dates     | Topic   | Reading        | Assignments due & important dates  |
|---|-----------|---|----------------|--|
| 1 | 8/28-9/3  | Introduction to the course and SRSU Library     | Syllabus       | Post an introduction using the prompts provided and take the syllabus quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.<br><b>*8/31 Last day for registration changes</b> |
| 2 | 9/4-9/10  | History & current status of women in government | See Blackboard | Discussion questions due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.; Response posts due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.<br><b>*9/4 Labor Day Holiday</b>                     |
| 3 | 9/11-9/17 | Why women's representation matters              | See Blackboard | Reading assignment due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.<br><b>*9/13 Last day to drop with no record</b>   |

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| 4  | 9/18-9/24   | U.S. Constitution   | See Blackboard | Discussion questions due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.; Response posts due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.<br><br><b>*9/19-Constitution Day Celebration and National Voter Registration Day</b> |
| 5  | 9/25-10/1   | Attitudes and stereotypes about women in government (including women on right vs. left) | See Blackboard | Reading assignment due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.<br><br><b>*9/27 Meal on the Mall</b>  |
| 6  | 10/2-10/8   | Impact  | See Blackboard | Discussion questions due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.; Response posts due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.  |
| 7  | 10/9-10/15  | Strategies  | See Blackboard | Reading assignment due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.<br><br><b>*10/10—Last day to register to vote in November</b>   |
| 8  | 10/16-10/22 | Measuring progress & goals; role of the First Lady                                      | See Blackboard | Discussion questions due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.; Response posts due by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.  |
| 9  | 10/23-10/29 | Research week   | See Blackboard | <b>DUE: Outline of policy brief by Friday at 11:59 p.m.</b><br><b>*10/23 Early voting starts</b>   |
| 10 | 10/30-11/5  | Private vs. public sphere   | See Blackboard | Reading assignment due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.<br><br><b>*11/3-Last day of early voting</b>  |
| 11 | 11/6-11/12  | Support organizations   | See Blackboard | Organization assignment due by Monday at 11:59 p.m.<br><b>*11/7-Election Day</b>   |
| 12 | 11/13-11/19 | Movie/show analysis   | See Blackboard | Movie/show analysis-due by Friday at 11:59 p.m.  |

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|----|-------------|------------------|--|---|
|    |             |                  |  | *11/14 Last day to apply for Fall 2023 graduation<br>*11/17 Last day to drop with a "W"           |
| 13 | 11/20-11/26 | Research week    |  | *11/22-24 Thanksgiving Holiday  |
| 14 | 11/27-12/3  | Research week    |  |   |
| 15 | 12/4-12/10  | Policy Brief due |  | Submit policy brief and recorded presentation by 12/8/2023<br>*12/6 Last day of Fall 2023 classes |
| 16 | 12/11-12/15 | Finals Week      |  |   |

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Asking good questions is an important skill. In some weeks, you will be asked to create a discussion question for your classmates.

--A good discussion question meets the following criteria:

- Is clear and easy to understand
- Has appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- Allows your classmates the opportunity to apply or critically think about a concept from the readings or to discuss an issue that is relevant to the topics for the week
- Is open-ended, allowing for a lengthy response. Adding a "why or why not" follow up question is appropriate
- Encourages deeper exploration of course topics
- Helps bring in new knowledge to the learning environment

--A good discussion question DOES NOT

- Ask for specific answers that can be easily found in the book or online (you're not testing your classmates)
- Promote a certain opinion (e.g. Why should we do away with the electoral college?)
- Duplicate questions from other sources
- Present inaccuracies (e.g. Why does the President get to serve six terms?)

### **Responding to Discussion Questions**

When you respond to discussion questions, you need to respond to questions that are good discussion questions if you want to reduce point loss. Please refer to the list above when selecting a question to respond to. **Also, PLEASE make sure to include the full question you**

**are responding to in your response post.** When I grade the discussion board, I do not grade by thread; I grade by person. In addition, all students must adhere to the basic ground rules below.

### **GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION BOARDS**

SOURCE: Center for Teaching and Learning. (2020). Sample discussion board ground rules. Retrieved from <https://ctl.wiley.com/sample-discussion-board-ground-rules/>

- **Ask questions.**  
If you find something confusing or want to know more, do not hesitate to ask questions. Make sure to post your questions in the appropriate thread.
- **Participate.**  
Do not hide in the background; it is not fair to lurk and let others do all the work. Contribute to discussions to get as much as possible from the course and to maintain your participation grade.
- **Do not dominate a discussion.**  
Share your knowledge, but not to the point of excluding others. If you have something to offer, please share it, but allow everyone to contribute equally to a discussion.
- **Be intellectually rigorous.**  
Do not excuse sloppy or illogical thinking. Challenge yourself and one another.
- **Be tactful.**  
Be critical of ideas, but remember there are other people involved. Be tactful and kind. You can hurt the feelings of a person reading your post.
- **Forgive other students' mistakes.**  
Do not correct others, even if you follow the rules of netiquette and use good manners. Just because you do not agree with a student's post does not mean that he or she is wrong. Instead, offer a different perspective to encourage further discussion.
- **Read the whole thread before posting.**  
Read all the posts in a thread before responding so you don't repeat what others have already said. Try to contribute clarifying information or a new idea to a discussion.
- **Be concise.**  
Do not waste people's time by posting basic, repetitive information. Make your point clearly and quickly.
- **Reread and check your posts.**  
Practice professionalism. Be mindful of how you look online; others will likely judge the tone and quality of your writing. Reread your posts and edit for clarity and mechanics.
- **Cite your sources.**  
If you use a source, cite it properly. Give credit where credit is due. Include links where appropriate.
- **Maintain confidentiality.**  
Respect your classmates' privacy. Do not repeat the personal information that others share.
- **Report technical problems.**  
If the platform is not working properly, please let me know as soon as possible.

### **What you can expect from me:**

- I will provide weekly communication with the class through announcements (email and posted on Blackboard), email notifications, and virtual office hours.
- I will provide email responses within 24 hours of receipt during the hours of 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday.
- I will provide grades and feedback for assignments **within one week of the submission due date**.
- I will provide regular and ongoing feedback to discussion boards.
- I will provide clear and concise instructions on how to complete the online course requirements (**please ask questions if something is not clear**).
- I will provide a range of opportunities to engage in the course content in a meaningful way.
- I will stay abreast of the current research in the field to help you get the best possible experience in the course.

### **What I expect from you:**

- You will familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, policies, assignments, materials, grading criteria, and course design.
- You will acquire the tools necessary to be successful in this class. This includes reliable Internet access and a device other than your phone for completing assignments.
- You will complete all assigned readings and coursework by assigned due dates.
- You will engage in the course, with your peers, and with me, using open and appropriate communication
- You will be diligent about using communication in a way that shows respect to me and your classmates
- You will submit college-level work that has been checked carefully for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation (using a free extension like Grammarly is recommended).
- You will respond to communication from me and your classmates in a timely manner (within 24 hours).
- You will not plagiarize the work of others or yourself, and you will also not collaborate with others on class assignments (unless clearly authorized to do so)
- You will reach out to me immediately if you are having trouble in the class or with access to course materials (although please call the Help Desk--888.837.6055 for general access issues).

### **OTHER COURSE POLICIES & RESOURCES**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources ***unless permission is expressly given*** for an assignment or course. Violations



of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

As an SRSU student, it is your responsibility to read and understand the university's expectations about academic integrity. All violations will be taken seriously and handled through the appropriate university process. The policy can be found at: <https://www.sulross.edu/about/administration/university-policies/>

**In addition, please note that plagiarism detection software will be used in this class for written assignments. Respondus Lockdown and Monitor will likely be used for the two exams as well.**

If you have any questions about this, please ask!

### **LATE WORK:**

I have been very intentional about how I have designed this course and distributed the content to optimize your learning and comprehension. Trying to cram weeks of work into a few days or waiting until the end of the semester to do everything isn't conducive to learning. For this reason, you must have an extenuating circumstance and approval from me to submit late work. If you submit late work without an approved extension from me, I reserve the right not to grade it. IMPORTANT NOTE: Since university-related travel (e.g., travel for athletics competition) is planned in advance (with a few exceptions), make sure to plan ahead and submit assignments before departure to avoid missing deadlines.

### **COURSE BLACKBOARD RESOURCES:**

There are several resources on the course Blackboard page. You are expected to review and familiarize yourself with the items in Blackboard in the first week of class. NOTE: Please post general, course-related questions to the discussion board forum I have set up for this. Typically, if one student in the class has the question, others do as well. Please allow 24 hours for a response, and then feel free to email me or call me directly with your question.

### **ADA STATEMENT**

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartz Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

### **SRSU DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT**

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as 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. 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. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

### **ALPINE LIBRARY INFORMATION**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu/](http://library.sulross.edu/). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting [library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/](http://library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/) or ask a librarian by emailing [srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu).

New for Fall 2023: Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and ScanIt to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

**BLACKBOARD TECHNICAL SUPPORT:** SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support Online Support Desk Contact Info: Toll Free: 888.837.6055. Email: [blackboardsupport@sulross.edu](mailto:blackboardsupport@sulross.edu)

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