

## Course Syllabus: Political Science 3302: American Constitutional Law

Dr. Mark Saad Saka/Sul Ross State University

### Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to examine the structure, interpretation, and implementation of the American Constitution on American Law, Government, Society, and Policy. We will examine:

1. The origins and ideas that shaped the American Constitution during the Constitutional Convention,
2. Its structure, and its historical development through the Courts, the Executive, and the Legislative branches.
3. The Constitution through the lens of federalism and the relationship between state and federal authority.
4. The role of the Constitution in foreign policy and affairs
5. Contracts and the economy.
6. Civil Liberties
7. Civil Rights

### Course Required Readings

American Constitutional Law, Volume I; 11<sup>th</sup> Edition by Ralph A. Rossum, G. Alan Tarr, Vincent Philip Munoz, Routledge Press, 2019, ISBN # 978-0367233334.

### Course Requirements

There are a number of requirements for this course.

1. Regular and punctual attendance. My lectures will be recorded on Blackboard so in the event that you miss a lecture, you can access them through Blackboard Collaborate.
2. Obtain the book and read it.
3. Five exams, and a final exam. Each exam will consist of 25 multiple choice worth 2 points each and two essays worth 25 points each. The final exam will consist of 50 multiple choice worth 1 point each and one essay worth 50 points.
4. At the end of the course, I will add up your six exams. (540-600=A; 480-540=B; 420-480=C; 360-420=D; 0-360-F.
5. Open debate—all ideas are open on the table and can be discussed. My commitment to the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment and Free Speech is total—but not completely--vulgarity, profanity, and racially or gendered attacks upon another student or ideas can create a hostile environment. Let us just be civil with one another and we can all learn.
6. A happy smile-a positive attitude will help you enjoy this course much more than if you are wearing a frown!

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 Rebecca Wren at 432-837-8691; Ferguson Hall Room 112.

### Marketability Skills of a History Major

**SLO 1—**The history student will demonstrate historical research skills in a logically organized, written paper that is mechanically correct and supported by relevant documentation of historical content.

**Marketable skills---**Students can identify useful resources from a pool of data.

Students can select and organize data in a relevant manner.

Students can make written presentations to various audiences. SLO

**2—**The history student will demonstrate the ability to write about topics in historiography and how those topics are interpreted.

**Marketable skills---**Students can utilize data to persuade various audiences.

Students can utilize data to generate and strengthen ideas.

Students can decipher stances adopted by various individuals.

**SLO 3—**The history student will demonstrate knowledge of American History, World History, and Non-American History.

**Marketable Skills---**Students can meet deadlines in a successful manner.

Students can discharge responsibilities in an adequate manner.

Students can manage the absorption of data.

**Academic Honesty** The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. "Cheating" includes: 1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same. 2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test. 3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work. 4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a nonadministered test. 5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit. 6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about a nonadministered test. 7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist. 8. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea in one's own written work offered for credit. 9. "Collusion" means the

unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.

10. "Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials. 11.

"Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.

12. "Falsification of Data" means the representation, claim, or use of research, data, statistics, records, files, results, or information that is falsified, fabricated, fraudulently altered, or otherwise misappropriated or misrepresented.

All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean and eventually, to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be final.

**Important Dates-The dates for the exams will be announced in class.**

January 17, classes begin.

January 18, first day of class.

March 11-15-spring break.

April 12-last day to drop the course with a grade of a "W".

April 25-last class day

May 8-final exam

## Outline of Course

**Jan. 18-Introduction to Course, Course Syllabus, the Articles of Confederation and the Constitutional Convention, the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Debates**

**Jan. 25-The Constitution-its structure, and the American Bill of Rights, the Amendments (Exam # 1)**

**Feb. 01-Interpretations of the Constitution-chapter one in the textbook**

**Feb.08-Constitutional Adjudication-chapter two in the textbook (exam # 2)**

**Feb. 15-The Judicial Power-chapter three in the textbook)**

**Feb. 22-The Legislative Branch-chapter four in the textbook)**

**Feb 29-The Executive Branch-chapter five in the textbook- (exam # 3)**

**Mar. 07-Wars and Foreign Affairs-chapter six in the textbook-**

**Mar. 14-Spring break, no class**

**Mar. 21-Federalism-chapter seven in the textbook**

**Mar. 28-the Exercise of National Power-chapter eight in your textbook (Exam # 4)**

**April 04-the exercise of state power-chapter nine in your textbook**

**April 11—The Contract Clause (chapter ten in your textbook)**

**April 18-Economic Due Process and the Taking Clause (chapter twelve in your textbook) (Exam # 5)**

**April 25-The struggle for the Constitution and Political Polarization in America**

**May 8-6<sup>th</sup> and final exam due**