

Course Syllabus: Political Science 4302: V01

“American Political Thought”

Fall 2026: Sul Ross State University-RGC

Dr. Mark Saad Saka

Email: Msaka@sulross.edu

Office Hours: by arrangement

Required Texts:

American Political Thought by Michael S. Cummings, CQ Press, 7th edition, ISBN # 978-1483307718

A Great Disorder: National Myth and the Battle for America by Richard Slotkin, Harvard University Press, 2024, ISBN # 978-0-674-30143-6

Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to examine American Political Thought from 1620 to the present.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

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skills in a logically organized, written paper that is mechanically correct and supported by relevant documentation of historical content.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.

Marketable Skills of a Political Science Major

• 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 policymaking across different nation-state settings • Students

can engage with social and political problems and use critical thinking to develop logical solutions

Course Policies:

Contacting the Instructor: The instructor's email is the preferred method of contact.

Msaka@sulross.edu. Please contact me only through the Sul-Ross email as I do not respond to private email such as yahoo, gmail, Hotmail, etc. This is for yours and my security.

I do, however, have a backup email, mark.saka1@yahoo.com. This is a backup in the event of a malware attack or if for some other reason the system goes down. I rarely check it as I want you to only use my yahoo account for emergencies. I check my Sul Ross email regularly. Please stay in contact if you are ill or cannot make class for a legitimate reason.

Academic Integrity: Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Turning in work as original that was used in whole or par for another course and/or for another course and/or professor.
- Turning in another persons' work as one's own.
- Copying from professional works or internet sites without citations.
- Collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

Classroom Climate of Respect:

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing sensitive political issues.

ADA Statement

SRSU Disability Services, SRSU is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans Disability Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Kathy Biddick at (830) 279—3003. The address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde Texas 78801. Kbiddick@sulross.edu

Library Information: The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through the SWTJC website. <https://library.swtjc.edu>. The SWTJC

Libraries serve as pick-up locations for Inter Library Loan (ILL) and Document delivery from the Alpine campus.

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 adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based or distance education 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 complain are located in the student handbook.

Course Requirement and Grading:

The course requirements are as follows:

- Attend class. These lectures will be recorded on Blackboard Collaborate so you can watch the recordings again.
- You will write ten writing assignment/essay exams and the dates will be announced in class. Basically, at the end of each of the sections presented below, you will be given one week to write your essay exams that will cover the textbook readings as well as the material presented in the lectures. At the end of the week, you will submit your essay-exams through Blackboard.
- Each of the ten exams will be worth 100 points and at the end of the semester I will add up the Nine exams and divide them by ten; 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 0-59=F
- Smile, learning is fun and important.

The Lecture outlines and writing assignments can be found on Blackboard and we will meet weekly from 6:00-8:50 on Tuesday evenings. Each week we will cover a topic or era in the formation of American Political Thought. I will send out an email prior to the class directing you to that week's lecture topic. You are responsible for attending class as that is when I will announce that week's writing assignment, one of ten. For instance, the first night we will cover the Classical and British origins of American political thought. The second week we will cover the Colonial formation of American political thought and the American Revolution/Constitution. I will then instruct you that the first writing assignment is open and under the link "writing assignment # 1" it will have the question as well as the required readings.

Your essays and writing assignments must include evidence of the lecture material as well as integrating the reading material from the assigned chapters.

I know that Ai is a resource that more and more students are using. This is your education so if you use AI to cheat and do your work for you, my question to you is what do you really want from an education? How will using AI to do your work help you develop as an educated citizen of our nation?

Why are you even taking this class? Why are you attending college? Please do your own work, its for your own benefit.