Instructor: Gabriela Caro Bundy  
Office: Wylie High School, Room 414  
School Phone: 325-690-1181 x1832 (please use e-mail when possible)  
E-Mail: gbundy@wylie.esc14.net  
Website: https://blackboard.angelo.edu  
Technical Support: The Technology Service Center (TSC) may be contacted by calling 325-942-2911 or 1-866-942-2911, or by email at helpdesk@angelo.edu.


Technology: The student must have access to a computer with speakers, and a reliable and speedy Internet. The student will retrieve materials and complete assignments on Blackboard every week. Students are permitted to bring laptops/tablets to the classroom for note taking, but will lose such privileges if the student is using the laptop/tablet for something other than its intended purpose in the classroom.

Course Description: Political Science 2305 is designed to introduce the student to the American federal system of government. This introductory survey course covers the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. This course will also analyze on how citizens are linked to their governmental institutions and are able to communicate with their elected representatives. In addition, this course meets the requirements under Chapter 113 Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for United States Government. Lectures and discussions will normally supplement the text, not merely explain it. Assignments and assessments will cover lectures as well as course readings.

Core Objectives
Critical Thinking: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, gathering, and synthesizing information relevant to a question or issue.

Communication: to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through effective written, oral and visual communication.

Social Responsibility: to include the intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to evaluate choices, connect choices, actions and consequences as related to ethical decision-making.

To gain knowledge and understanding of the foundation of the American political system, including the Constitution and the founding principles of liberty and representation, separation of powers, and checks and balances.

To gain knowledge and understanding of the structure, institutions and operations of the American government.
To gain knowledge and understanding of the policy making process, which is central to understanding American democracy.

To develop an awareness of the broader trends, themes, and patterns in American politics.

To build an appreciation and understanding of the role citizens, and other actors including media, interest groups, political parties, businesses, civil society groups, play in shaping American public policy and strengthening our democracy.

To understand the importance of the United States’ role in global affairs by integrating key tenets of American politics such as civil liberties, freedom of press, and executive power.

To encourage participation in public life by recognizing students’ self-interest and a broader civil interest.

To use technology and a variety of multi-media tools to enhance our exploration and understanding of American Political System.

To think fearlessly about complicated questions with complicated answers.

Course Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution and constitutional democracy in the U.S.

2. Describe the effects that historical, social, political, cultural, and global forces had on the U.S. Constitution.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.

4. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.

5. Demonstrate knowledge of the origins and evolution of the U.S. political system, with a focus on growth of political institutions and the key components of the political system.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of the American federal system and explain the ways in which different political systems divide and share power between their central and state governments.

7. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, political parties, campaigns and elections in the political system.

8. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens and be able to comment on the role of civic engagement in U.S. politics and political culture.

9. Analyze political issues, demonstrate critical thinking skills, and develop a critical approach to the study of government.
The table below details which core requirements are applicable to this course, the activities to develop the skills in the required areas, mastery assessment, and the level of expertise the student must demonstrate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>University SLO</th>
<th>Course SLO</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>CT1: Gather, analyze, evaluate and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue.</td>
<td>Students will develop critical thinking skills and the ability to critically evaluate the American political environment and explain the development of constitutional democracy.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student can think critically about American politics and governance.</td>
<td>VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>CS1: Develop, interpret and express ideas through effective written communication.</td>
<td>Students will gain and be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the three branches of government and the general principles and characteristics of federalism.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student can effectively communicate a basic knowledge of American political governance and federalism using a written artifact.</td>
<td>VALUE Rubric for Written Communication</td>
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<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>SR2: Demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility.</td>
<td>Students will gain and be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the American political system and demonstrate the importance of participating in the American civic and political life.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student can demonstrate specific knowledge of American civic life and political system.</td>
<td>VALUE Rubric for Civic Engagement - local and global</td>
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<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>PR1: Demonstrate the ability to evaluate choices, actions and consequences as related to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Students will exhibit the skills necessary to understand and evaluate political outcomes and evaluate the responsibility of civic engagement. Students will demonstrate an understanding of different strategies for political participation and knowledge of rights and responsibilities of citizenship.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student understands ethical decision making and responsibilities as citizen using a written artifact.</td>
<td>Value Rubric for Ethical Reasoning</td>
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**Educational and critical thinking objectives for students**

1. The student should NOT accept any assertion of fact on its face value. The student must listen carefully to different sides in a debate, preparing to see the logic in what people of different viewpoints have to say.
   a. For those who accept the prevailing traditions and opinions as matters of blind faith, the meaning of new and challenging ideas and experiences may frighten them and are rejected out of hand. New experiences are subconsciously distorted and serve only to reinforce previously held assumptions.

2. The student must have arguments to support their case. The student does not convince others by simply saying “I feel this way”.
   b. For example, students should not argue whether stem cell research is good or bad, instead they study the arguments various parties have made about stem cell research.

3. College students should go beyond tradition and opinions that fit into their comfort zone, to question, to reason and make conscious choices based on knowledge and understanding. **The classroom should be where political agendas are analyzed, not embraced.**

**Course Format, Requirements, and Assessment**

**Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend all classes. Excessive absences will jeopardize final grade for the course, and may result in removal from the dual credit course.

Prompt and regular class attendance is considered necessary for satisfactory work. The instructor keeps an accurate, complete, and clearly comprehensive record of attendance.

- 5 non-school related absences will result in dropping one full letter grade.
- 7 non-school related absences will result in dropping another full letter grade.
- 9 non-school related absences will result in being dismissed from the dual credit course and placed in a regular Economics class.

*An absence is excused if a doctor’s note (on letterhead) is turn in. Students must turn in a copy to both the attendance office and the instructor.*
Method of Evaluation:

Discussion Forums (one per chapter) 20%
Research Paper (1) 20%
Quizzes (one per chapter) 20%
Midterm (1) 20%
Final Exam (1) 20%

Discussion Forums – Each chapter will have discussion forums on Blackboard. Each forum assignment requires one initial response supported by at least one source, and one substantive reply to another student’s post. The criterion for substantive reply includes the following:

1. The reply is in complete sentences and paragraphs.
2. The reply genuinely adds new information or fresh insight.
3. It does not simply summarize what another student has said. Example: “I really like your post, especially when you said…”
4. The reply is supported by at least one source, similar to the original Forum response.
5. Discussion forums are due by 11:59 pm on the due date.

Students are required to utilize proper citation in all written assignments.

Research Paper – Students will write a 4 – 5 page paper relevant to the course concepts, theories, politics or public policy. All topics must be selected with the instructor’s approval. The paper must be double spaced, using Arial 12” font, in Chicago/Turabian style format. A bibliography and cover page are required and do NOT count toward the 4 – 5 pages. Further information will be given to students in class and on Blackboard. The paper must be submitted in electronic format, no exceptions. The research paper is due by 11:59 pm on the due date.

Quizzes – Each chapter will have a quiz which will consist of multiple choice questions on Blackboard. The questions will be drawn from the readings, class lectures, assigned videos, and discussions. Quizzes are due by 11:59 pm on the due date.

Midterm – The midterm will be administered in the classroom, which must be completed during the class period. The midterm will consist of multiple choice questions, fill in the blanks, and essays. The questions will be drawn from the readings, class lectures, assigned videos, discussions, and previous quizzes.

Final Exam – The final exam will be administered in the classroom, which must be completed during the class period. The final exam will consist of 100 multiple choice questions. The questions will be drawn from readings, class lectures, assigned videos, discussions, and previous quizzes.

Grading Scale: A = 90 or above; B = 80 – 89; C = 70 – 79; D = 60 – 69; F = 59 or below

Taking Assessments after an Absence: Absent students must report to the instructor during morning tutorial the first back to school following the absence to take any missed assessments, per the instructor’s discretion. This does not include assessments on Blackboard. Assessments on Blackboard must be completed on time; otherwise the student will receive a zero for that assessment.

Late work will NOT be accepted. If the student is absent, the assignment must be turned in on the due date, which will require submission through Blackboard. The student will receive a message confirming that the instructor received the assignment.
No re-testing for quizzes, midterms, and final exam.

No extra credit work available.

**Accommodations for Disability**: ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation. The Student Affairs Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Student Affairs Office, Suite 112 of the Houston Harte University Center, at 325-942-2047 (phone) or 325-942-2211 (fax) or by email at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Student Affairs Office will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Students who qualify for specific accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should notify the instructor the first week of class. It is the student’s responsibility to provide the necessary documentation to the Office of Student Affairs.

**Religious Observances**: As stated in the Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day), a student who intends to observe a religious holiday should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Course Content**: College level courses may include controversial, sensitive, and/or adult material. Students are expected to have the readiness for college level rigor and content. The study, respect, and exercise of First Amendment freedoms are integral aspects of this course, class debate and discussion is encouraged. However, freedom demands responsibility; therefore, respect for the opinions and ideas of others is expected. The free exchange of information is vital to the pursuit of learning.

**Student Conduct**: Students are expected to take responsibility in helping to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are prohibited from using cell phones, reading material not related to the class, sleeping, or engaging in any other form of distraction or hindrance to the instructor or fellow students. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom will result in dismissal from the course. A more detailed list of inappropriate behaviors is found in the current Wylie/Angelo student handbook. In addition, harassment of any form is strictly prohibited (Zero Tolerance), as are those remarks concerning one’s ethnicity/race, life style, religion, etc., violations of these rules will result in immediate dismissal.

**Academic Honesty**: Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the university Academic Honor Code and the ASU Student Handbook. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code.

Acts of academic dishonesty and misconduct as referenced in Angelo State University Student Handbook will be referred to the Dean of Students. The attempt of students to present as their own any work they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension. **Falsified work, to include plagiarism, will result in a falling grade for that assignment, and possible dismissal from the dual credit course.**
Participation Policies

Online Course Netiquette: Proper netiquette enables students to be professional while communicating online with faculty and with other students. To comply with course expectations, it is important to consider the following values during online discussions and when corresponding to the instructor and fellow students via email and discussions:

**Timeliness:** Monitor course activity and respond to communications from your instructor in a timely manner.

**Confidentiality:** When discussing topics, be sure to be discreet about how you discuss students, teachers, and aides from school. Do not use names of people or names of facilities.

**Formatting:** As a rule, do not use all caps in your emails or discussions. It is unprofessional and hard to read. Also, use standard capitalization and punctuation in all course communications, and sign your name.

**Value:** Recognize and value the experiences, abilities, and knowledge each person brings to class. Value the diversity of the class.

**Language tone:** The absence of face-to-face interaction increases the likelihood of misinterpretation. Avoid using offensive language, excessive exclamation points, all caps, humor and sarcasm, acronyms, emoticons, and slang.

**Respect:** Each student’s viewpoint is valued as an opinion. When responding to a person during online discussions, be sure to state an opposing opinion in a diplomatic way. Disagree with ideas, but do not make personal attacks. Be careful what you write because you cannot use body language or tone of voice when trying to convey ideas, intent, or thoughts.

**Brevity** Be concise when contributing to a discussion. Online courses require a lot of reading, therefore, your points may be missed if hidden in a flood of text.

**Read and proofread:** Read all discussions before you post a comment, so you do not repeat information. Proofread and spell check all messages before you send them.

**Student-to-Instructor Netiquette:** In addition to the above values, you are expected to respond to communications from your instructor in a timely manner. Any emergencies that arise due to illness, death, etc. should be reported to the instructor as quickly as possible.

**Instructor-to-Student Netiquette:** The instructor will also follow the values listed above by checking and responding to emails (Wylie account) and grading your assignments in a timely manner.
Course Schedule:

**Week 1 (Aug 21)** – Introduction

Week 2 (Aug 28) – Introduction

**Week 3 (Sep 4)** – Chapter 2 The Constitution

Week 4 (Sep 11) – Chapter 2 The Constitution

**Week 5 (Sep 18)** – Chapter 3 Federalism

Week 6 (Sep 25) – Chapter 3 Federalism

**Week 7 (Oct 2)** – Chapter 11 The Congress

Week 8 (Oct 9) – Chapter 11 The Congress

**Week 9 (Oct 16)** – Chapter 12 The President

Week 10 (Oct 23) – Chapter 12 The President

**Week 11 (Oct 30)** – Chapter 14 The Courts

Week 12 (Nov 6) – Chapter 14 The Courts

**Week 13 (Nov 13)** – Chapter 4 Civil Liberties

Week 14 (Nov 20) – Thanksgiving Break (catch up) Chapter 4 Civil Liberties

Week 15 (Nov 27) – Chapter 5 Civil Rights

**Week 16 (Dec 4)** – Chapter 5 Civil Rights

Week 17 (Dec 11) – Review and Final Exam

Week 18 (Dec 18) – Film about Congress

**Changes to the Syllabus:**
The schedule and procedures in this syllabus are subject to change if deemed appropriate by the instructor.