COURSE SYLLABUS
POLS 2306: Texas Government
Dr. Bartl, Fall 2017
tony.bartl@angelo.edu

CLASSROOM: RAS 110
CLASS TIME: MWF 9:00-9:50
OFFICE: RAS 215; (325) 486-6107
OFFICE HOURS: M-Th 10am-11:30am, and by appointment.

WHAT THIS COURSE IS

This course studies the political life of Texas, in the greater contexts of the American nation, the Southern experience, and what could be called Texarkansan Studies. In addition to historical documents and theoretical inquiries about politics, it will make use of speeches, stories, and songs which are rich in reflections on the basic questions and experiences of civic life in the United States. At the center of these lived experiences are the questions which have arisen in that process are the foundational ideas and structures of the American political order. The story of Texas is part of that story.

TEXTS AND READINGS

Required Texts:
1. S. Adam Seagrave, The Accessible Federalist (AF)
2. S. Adam Seagrave, Liberty and Equality: The American Conversation (LE)
3. Charles Portis, True Grit
4. Miscellaneous readings linked in Course Outline. These must be printed out and brought to class on the day for which they are assigned.

Composition Notebook: Every student will need to have college ruled composition notebook dedicated for the sole purpose of the Course Journal (see below). Note: this is not for taking class notes; you’ll need a separate notebook for that purpose.

Course Goals

We will be working on 4 Core Objectives: Critical Thinking (CT), Communication Skills (CS), Social Responsibility (SR), and Personal Responsibility (PR). Each of these Core Objectives contains its own Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), with 8 in total (listed on back page). We are going to pursue all of these objectives as we proceed through the course. Your progress towards these objectives will be assessed through your performance on the requirements listed below, especially the Course Journal.
ATTENDANCE

Attendance at each class meeting is expected and rewarded. Attendance is defined as “being present when attendance is taken at the beginning of each class and remaining until class is dismissed.” Students who are not present when attendance is taken or who leave class without permission prior to dismissal will be considered absent. Please do not come to class late, as this is both discourteous and disruptive. The same is true of leaving one’s seat during class. This should be done only in emergencies. If an emergency is anticipated, the instructor should be informed prior to class and the student should sit in a seat nearest the exit. Special circumstances which require late arrival or early departure will be considered if the instructor is informed ahead of time. Stellar attendance will be rewarded as part of the “participation” grade. More than 10 absences will result in automatic failure for the course.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Participation in class discussions is a necessary part of the learning in this class. It is both expected and rewarded in the grading. Assigned readings must be brought to class. The good student will be present and attentive and prepared to answer questions about the assigned readings, to ask questions of his or her own, and to volunteer helpful observations about the material. Students may respectfully disagree with one another but are expected to behave with proper courtesy and regard for others’ comments. Because much of this class involves reading and discussing passage from the readings, students should always bring to class with them all the readings assigned for that class period. Frequent class discussion will foster a better classroom environment than one in which the instructor simply lectures every day.

COURSE JOURNAL
Transcriptions and Narrations

This assignment will require you to have a College-Ruled Composition Notebook dedicated solely to this assignment. It will contain two distinct assignments each week. The first is transcription: Every week you will write out the chosen reading word for word in your notebook. The second is narration: Prior to every class period you will write a 1-2 page narrative of the readings assigned for that day, identifying the central themes and disputed questions. You should, in addition, include everything you want to remember about the readings.

I will call on students periodically (without warning) to give oral narrations of individual readings in class. Every student can expect to be called on at least two or three times during the semester. These oral narrations will impact the grade for this assignment.

This Journal will be collected three times during the semester. The first time will be on 10/16. The second time will be on 11/20. Then I will bring them to class the day of the Final Exam and you will use them to write your exam.
FINAL EXAM

There will be a final written exam in this course, consisting of short answers identifications and an essay/narration. Exams will be written out in your Course Journal, which I will hand back to you, along with the exam questions, at the beginning of the exam period on Wednesday, 12/13. The exam will begin at 8am in our regular classroom.

EXTRA CREDIT: MOVIE BLOG

I have provided a list of movies, which you may watch and write about for extra credit. You will find a tab with the list and further instructions on Blackboard.

POLICIES

Electronic Devices: Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops is strictly prohibited. If you possess such devices and carry them with you to class, they should not be seen or heard by anyone, including (especially) yourself. Using your cell phone in class will result in a zero for Class Participation. Flagrant violators of this rule will be asked to leave and counted absent.

Students with Disabilities: If you have particular learning needs that are documented with the university’s Student Life Office, please contact let me know so arrangements for testing can be made in advance. See

http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14216-op-1015-providing-accommodations-for-students-with. If not yet documented, please contact them at: Rm 112 University Center, (325) 942-2126,

Student.Life@angelo.edu

Honor Code: Cheating, plagiarism, and other violations of the honor code will not be tolerated. See ASU’s policies at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf

GRADING

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<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Journal</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Extra Credit: Movie Blog</td>
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* The Final Grade for the course may not be more than one letter grade higher than the Final Exam