Angelo State University  
Department of Political Science and Philosophy

Fall 2018  
POLS 2305 Federal Government

Course Section:    Section 030  Section 060  Section 100  
Location:    RAS 110  RAS 110  RAS 110  
Time:    MWF, 9-9:50am  MWF, 11-11:50am  TR, 9:30-10:45am

Dr. Bruce A. Hunt, Jr., bhunt2@angelo.edu  
Office Phone: 325-486-6112  
Off. Hours: MW 12-2pm; TR 2-3pm  
Location: RAS 220

Course Synopsis

Political Science 2305 is designed to introduce students to the U.S. Federal Government and American politics. A wide variety of topics are organized into 3 sections: (1) The Liberty Section, which covers the origins, significance, and meaning of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; (2) The Equality Section, which covers America's major political ideologies, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Supreme Court; and (3) The Political System Section, which covers parties, interest groups, campaigns, elections, and voting.

This course complements POLS 2306, which covers many of the same topics as they relate to Texas government. POLS 2305 and POLS 2306 are prerequisites for advanced political science courses.

Required: Registering for McGraw Hill's Connect

*Additional Required Readings will be made available on BB.

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 these objectives as we proceed through the course. Your progress towards these objectives will be assessed through your performance on the assigned material. Some (but not all) of students' submitted assignments will be used for purposes of this assessment.
Course Format and Expectations

We are going to typically spend 1 week per assigned chapter from *American Democracy Now*, with 2 exceptions. During weeks 6 and 8 there will be assigned readings from outside the textbook, posted on BB. There are 3 exams, 8 Learn Smart Modules, and 6 Discussion Boards.

*Class Discussion.* Some sections of class time will be devoted to lecture, while others will involve in-class writing and/or focused discussion. Everyone in the class is expected to come prepared to class ready to listen, to think, to write, and to participate in class discussion.

*Learn Smart Reading Assignments.* You will be assigned 8 Learn Smart Modules. These online assignments test your reading comprehension of individual chapters, and will be accessible via BB. Each Learn Smart Module should take between 45 minutes and 1 hour and a half to complete. You are allowed to keep doing the assignment until you achieve full credit, as long as you finish prior to the assignment deadline.

*Exams.* There will be 3 exams, each testing your knowledge from the assigned readings, class lecture and discussion. The first two exams exclusively cover new material. Some questions on the final exam will cover earlier material.

*Writing.* Some weeks there will be an in-class writing exercise. You will be responsible for keeping a notebook or electronic file in which you keep all of your writing from these exercises. Most importantly, you will be required to post your writing from your notebook to the BB discussion board. You will typically be expected to post at least 2 paragraphs per discussion board posting and follow all associated instructions. Doing this gets you full credit for your discussion board requirement. If your posts are incomplete, I may ask that you make an appointment with me to review your writing assignments in order to receive credit.

You will occasionally be required to include citations from the textbook or other scholarly sources in your posting to support your thought or argument. All postings will develop your critical thinking (CT) and communication skills (CS). Some will aim to develop social and personal responsibility (SR and PR).

**EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY**: By responding to your classmates on the discussion boards, you may earn extra credit points. You can earn 1 extra credit point per board. If you reply on every new board to any (1) classmate’s posting, you will receive 2 points added to your final grade. If you reply at least on half of the boards, you will receive 1 point added to your final grade.

Why am I having you do this? First, this is meant to offer you an opportunity to work through your thoughts on various questions and problems raised by our investigation into U.S. Federal Government. It is always better to actively think, by writing and discussing, than to passively think, by listening quietly and reading quickly. Second, the revisiting of your writing from class when you later post it to BB, and the public exposure that results, will cause many of you to think about what you have written more deeply and carefully.
Attendance Policy—Please Read Carefully

I ask that you please be present and on time as much as possible. Attendance is mandatory and a sign-in sheet will be passed around each class. You are allowed 2 weeks’ worth of “free” absences (4 absences for TR classes; 6 absences for MWF classes)—these are for any reason—after which I will subtract two points per absence from your final grade point total. There are not “excused” or “unexcused” types of absences in this course, except in very serious and/or emergency circumstances.

Assignments and Grading

Grade Distribution – Exams 60%, Homework 40%

- Exam #1: 15%
- Exam #2: 15%
- Final Exam: 30%
- Learn Smart Modules: 25%
- Discussion Boards: 15%

Grading Scale

A 100-90
B 89-80
C 79-70
D 69-60
F 59-

Academic Honesty

This class strictly adheres to the university’s policy on academic honesty. Please consult the following website for guidelines on the proper citation of sources and for avoiding plagiarism: http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php. Sanctions for a violation of Academic Policy can include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and a notation on the academic record, and suspension from the university.

Religious Observances

Every effort will be made to accommodate all forms of religious observance in compliance with ASU OP 10.19. Students who require additional arrangements to be made should make these known in good time in order that arrangements can be made.
**Make-up Policy**
Make-ups for missed exams are only allowed on a case-by-case basis. Whenever possible advance notice must be given, excuses must be documented, and grade penalties are at the discretion of the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**
Students that feel that they may need special assistance for any reason should contact the Student Life Office, Rm 112 University Center.
### Reading Assignments and Due Dates for Sections 030 and 060

#### Week 1 -- Introduction
- **27-Aug** Introduction to the course
- **29-Aug** Citizenship and Government
- **31-Aug** The radical doctrine of natural rights
  - Syllabus
  - Chapter 1
  - Declaration of Independence, A-1

#### Week 2 -- Foundational political ideas and American society
- **3-Sep** **Labor Day -- No class**
- **5-Sep** Liberalism (classical) and Democracy
  - Chapter 1
- **7-Sep** America's changing population
  - Chapter 1

#### Week 3 -- The U.S. Constitution
- **10-Sep** Significance of constitutional government, U.S. Revolutionary War
  - Chapter 2
- **12-Sep** Structure of U.S. Constitution
  - Chapter 2

#### Week 4 -- Federalism
- **17-Sep** Distribution of Authority
  - Chapter 3
- **19-Sep** Development of IGR
  - Chapter 3

#### Week 5 -- Civil Liberties
- **24-Sep** Civil liberties as legal protections
  - Chapter 4
- **26-Sep** Protecting civic discourse
  - Chapter 4

#### Week 6 -- Fighting for equality
- **1-Oct** **Exam 1 -- The "Liberty" Exam**
  - online
- **3-Oct** Civil War
  - Lincoln's Gettysburg
5-Oct  Civil Disobedience

Address and
Second Inaugural

MLK Letter from
a Birmingham Jail

Week 7 -- Civil Rights
8-Oct  for LGBT citizens
10-Oct  for African-Americans

Chapter 5 LearnSmart Due Wednesday

12-Oct  for women and others

Chapter 5

Week 8 -- Conservatism and Progressivism
15-Oct  Preserving our basic rights
17-Oct  Advancing the expansion of our
rights
19-Oct  A middle way?

Coolidge speech

FDR speech

Week 9 -- The Judiciary
22-Oct  Function and purpose
24-Oct  Federal court system

Chapter 15 LearnSmart Due Wednesday

26-Oct  U.S. Supreme Court

Chapter 15

Week 10 -- Recap and begin next section
29-Oct  Exam review

31-Oct  Exam 2 -- The "Equality" Exam online

2-Nov  Agents of political
socialization

Chapter 6

Week 11 -- Political Socialization
5-Nov  Measuring public opinion
7-Nov  What Americans think about politics
9-Nov  Parties

Chapter 6

Section of Chapter 8

Week 12 -- Political Parties and Interest Groups
12-Nov  Interest Groups
14-Nov  Elections
16-Nov  Campaigns

Section of Chapter 7

Chapter 9

Chapter 9
Week 13 -- Elections, Campaigns, and Voting
19-Nov  Voting  Chapter 9

**Chapter 9 LearnSmart Due Wednesday**
Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 -- Congress
26-Nov Origins and functions  Chapter 12
28-Nov House and Senate  Chapter 12

**Chapter 12 LearnSmart Due Wednesday**

30-Nov Legislative Process  Chapter 12

Week 15 -- Presidency
3-Dec Presidential roles  Chapter 13
5-Dec Presidential power  Chapter 13
7-Dec Last class

Final exam -- The "Political System" Exam
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<td>2-Oct       Exam 1 -- The &quot;Liberty&quot; Exam</td>
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Legislative
Process

Week 15 -- Presidency
4-Dec Presidential roles Chapter 13
Presidential power

6-Dec Last class

Final Exam -- The "Political System" Exam
ASU Student Learning Objectives

Critical Thinking Skills (CT)

CT1. Gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue.

CT2. Develop and demonstrate a logical position (i.e. perspective, thesis, hypothesis) that acknowledges ambiguities or contradictions.

Communication Skills (CS)

CS1. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication.

CS2. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective oral communication.

Social Responsibility (SR)

SR1. Demonstrate intercultural competence.

SR2. Demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility.

SR3. Demonstrate the ability to engage effectively in the campus, regional, national or global communities.

Personal Responsibility (PR)

PR1. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate choices, actions and consequences as related to ethical decision-making.