Constitutional Rights and Liberties (POLS 4302)
Mr. Bartl, Fall 2018

Class Time: TR 9:30-10:45pm
Classroom: RAS 112
Office: RAS 215
Office Hours: T/Th 8am-9:30am; Wed. 8-10am; 1-3pm

Text

Course Requirements
Final Grades will be calculated as follows:
Exams – 40%
Papers/Presentations – 45%
Participation – 15%

Exams
There will be 2 exams, each worth 20% of the course grade. Exams will consist of short answer identifications and essays.

Paper
Two/Three short papers will be assigned during this course. The first paper will be 900-1000 words in length and cover some topic from the early history of American Constitutionalism. The second will be the same length and will touch on the intent and scope of the 14th Amendment when it was ratified. The third is part of the presentations.

Written/Oral Assignment
Near the end of the semester, the class will be divided into “lawyers” and “judges,” and we will present oral arguments for a number of cases on the docket for the next Supreme Court session. Volunteers will be assigned to small lawyer teams who will argue each side of a pending Supreme Court case. The rest of the class will be divided into groups of “judges” and assigned to a particular case. Lawyers will be responsible for preparing and presenting “briefs” in front of the class. Judges will have three responsibilities: First, they will need to prepare penetrating questions based on the briefs and will ask the lawyers these questions during the presentation; Second, they will have a conference where they vote on the outcome of the case; Third, they will each write individual “opinions,” explaining why the law required them to vote the way they did. More specific directions will be given as the assignment approaches.

Participation and Attendance
Students are expected to do all the assigned reading and to be in class for every session. Active participation in class discussion is an indispensable part of this class. The material
you will need to know for the exams is difficult. Reading and talking about it is the only way to digest it in a way sufficient to prepare you to excel.

More than 5 absences will result in a zero for this portion of course. Students expecting to receive a good grade for the course will plan to be in class every day, on time. Coming late to class is disrespectful and distracting, as is leaving during class. Anyone not present at the beginning of class, or who leaves early, will be marked absent.

**Students with Disabilities**
If you have particular learning needs that are documented with the university’s Student Life Office, please let me know so arrangements for testing can be made in advance. If not yet documented, please contact them at: Rm 112 University Center, (325) 942-2126, Student.Life@angelo.edu

**Electronic Devices**
Use of electronic devices of any kind is absolutely prohibited, except for those who fall into the above category of students and who need the device as an aid for their health or specific disability. This prohibition especially includes cell phones and laptops. If you possess such devices and carry them with you to class, they should not be seen or heard by anyone in the room. Infractions of this policy will not be tolerated.