 COURSE SYLLABUS
POLS 2306: Texas Government
Prof. Tony Bartl, Fall 2019
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Office Hours: T-Th 2-5pm, and by appointment

Course Description: THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS, speaking through their State Constitution, have determined that all citizens, in order to properly perform the duties of citizenship, need to be familiar with the Constitution of the United States and the Texas State Constitution. To fulfill this need, Texas Law requires that six semester hours dedicated to that purpose be completed by all students attending institutions of higher learning receiving state funds. Here at Angelo State University, this requirement is met by taking POLS 2305 and 2306.

Constitutions are the central legitimating symbols of American political life. American citizens therefore need to understand how they frames political controversy and how they influence political and social change. To that end, we will study important debates concerning American democracy and the meaning of liberty and equality from the Founding until the present day. We will examine the important function of citizenship and of federalism in our democracy. We will also discuss the unique political culture of Texas within the broader historical/regional context of the American Southwest.

TEXTS AND READINGS

Required Texts:
1. Miscellaneous readings related to DEMOCRACY IN TEXAS linked within each Lesson.
2. Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (hereafter, DA)
3. Lawler and Schaefer, American Political Rhetoric (hereafter, APR)

GRADING

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Extra Credit: Movie Blog</td>
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JOURNAL

Each week will require students to write a Journal entry reflecting on the questions, problems, ideas, etc., which arise from the readings for that week. Each entry must be a minimum of 500 words in length. These must be posted by 9:15am every Tuesday. Detailed Journal instructions are on Blackboard.
MIDTERM EXAM

The midterm exam will consist of written short answers and an essay. It will be given in the classroom on 10/22. Students must bring blue books to write their answers in.

FINAL EXAM

The final exam will contain written short answers and an essay. It will be given on 12/9 at 8am, in the classroom. Students must bring blue books to write their answers in.

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. Extra credit is considered while final grades are being tabulated.

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

This course works best when students come to class ready to participate. Attendance therefore is expected and rewarded. Attendance is defined as being in class on time, prepared, and undistracted by electronic devices. Students with excellent attendance and participation will be given extra consideration in cases of borderline final grades.

POLICIES

Electronic Devices: Electronic devices are distracting and not conducive to the atmosphere we are trying to build in this class. Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops is therefore not allowed. If you possess such devices and carry them with you to class, please keep these put away while in the classroom. Students who need to use one before class begins will please step out into the hallway to do so.

Honor Code: Cheating, plagiarism, and other violations of the honor code will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy will result in automatic failure for the course. See ASU’s policies at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf

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. 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.