Political Science 2305
Federal Government

COURSE INFO:

This course will focus on a range of inputs in the American political system. The purpose of this class is not to only reiterate the fundamental setup of our government, but to also shine a light on its imperfections and strengths. The American system of government continues to evolve, grow and change. Such growth and change has spurred various responses from the American people such as revolution, civil disobedience, and moments of chaos.

In addition to lecture, this class will be discussion and participation based. In other words, there will be a strong correlation between those who attend and do not attend class regularly and grade success. The university experience should challenge you and help you hone your critical thinking, argumentative, and research skills. Occasionally, students may be required to work in groups, speak in front of the class, and write well-informed research papers.

The core objectives, learning outcomes, assignments/general activities, and assessments are identified below.

CORE OBJECTIVES:

- Critical Thinking: gather, analyze, evaluate and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue.

- Communication: develop, interpret and express ideas through effective written communication.

- Social Responsibility: demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility.

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

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Student will explain the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution and constitutional democracy.

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

3. Student will demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
4. Student will demonstrate knowledge of the origins and evolution of the U.S. political system, with a focus on growth of political institutions, federalism, and the key components of the U.S. political system.

5. Student will understand the American federal system and explain the ways in which different political systems divide and share power between their central and state governments.

6. Student will evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.

7. Student will describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens and be able to comment on the role of civic engagement in U.S. politics and culture.

8. Student will analyze political issues, demonstrate critical thinking skills, and develop a critical approach to the study of government.

REQUIRED TEXT:


*In addition to your text book, slides, and handouts, I will provide additional online resources that may cover state or federal matters. It would also benefit you to download a U.S. Constitution App to your smart phones or purchase a “pocket constitution” from the bookstore.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS:

Exams – There will be a total of 3 exams. The 3rd exam is the Final Exam and taken during final exam week. Exams are cumulatively worth 60% of your grade. All exams will be written.

Research Paper - Students will be required to write a 5 page, double-spaced scholarly paper in Modern Language Association (MLA) format regarding an instructor approved topic that relates to the subject of political science. A work cited and cover page are required and do not count toward your 5 pages. Also, students will be required to give a brief, yet informative presentation on their papers. This is worth 20% of your grade.

Attendance/Participation/Projects – Attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed 2 absences for any reason. On the third absence, I will begin deducting a letter grade from your participation grade. In addition, students may be asked to prepare a speech or presentation with a group in front of the class. Participation is worth 20% of your grade.

Grading Scale: A - 90% B - 80% C - 70% D - 60% F - Less than 60%.
Topics:
Intro
Citizenship
The Constitution
Federalism
Civil Liberties
Civil Rights
Congress
Judiciary

Executive Branch (Presidency and the Bureaucracy)
Political Parties, Campaigns, and Political Participation
The Media
Public Opinion
Domestic and Foreign Policy
Conspiracy Theories
State and City Government

*Please note that the schedule to cover these topics is fluid and subject to change at any time. You are responsible for any course work missed. Please find a classmate for missed notes.

Office Hours: Remotely via zoom or phone by appointment only. Email anytime at rsalas1@angelo.edu.

HONOR CODE:

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions in the Student Handbook.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students who may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 in the University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to any accommodations being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangement can be made.

CLASSROOM DECORUM:

A proper learning environment is one in which all points of view, all questions asked, all questions answered, and various discussion are treated and met with tolerance and respect. Any behavior that disrupts the classroom learning environment such as late arrivals, early departures, unapproved electronic devices are unacceptable and will be subject to appropriate sanction. Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices upon entering the classroom. Additionally, cell phones should not be out during lecture times. Laptops are permitted with instructor permission. Recording of lecture is prohibited unless given permission by instructor.
REQUIRED USE OF MASKS/FACIAL COVERINGS BY STUDENTS IN CLASS AT ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY

As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.