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Website: https://blackboard.angelo.edu  
Technical Support: IT Help Desk: 325-942-2911


Technology: The student must have access to a computer with speakers, and a reliable and speedy Internet. The student will retrieve materials and complete assignments on Blackboard every week. Students are permitted to bring laptops/tablets to the classroom for note taking but will lose such privileges if the student is using the laptop/tablet for something other than its intended purpose in the classroom.

Course Description: Political Science 2305 is designed to introduce the student to the American federal system of government. This introductory survey course covers the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties, and civil rights. This course will also analyze how citizens are linked to their governmental institutions and able to communicate with their elected representatives. Assignments and assessments are based on lectures, readings, videos, discussions, and previous assignments/assessments.

Core Objectives
Critical Thinking: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, gathering, and synthesizing information relevant to a question or issue.

Communication: to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through effective written, oral, and visual communication.

Social Responsibility: to include the intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

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

To gain knowledge and understanding of the foundation of the American political system, including the Constitution and the founding principles of liberty and representation, separation of powers, and checks and balances.

To gain knowledge and understanding of the structure, institutions, and operations of the American government.

To gain knowledge and understanding of the policy making process, which is central to understanding American democracy.

To develop an awareness of the broader trends, themes, and patterns in American politics.
To build an appreciation and understanding of the role citizens, and other actors including media, interest groups, political parties, businesses, civil society groups, play in shaping American public policy and strengthening our democracy.

To understand the importance of the United States’ role in global affairs by integrating key tenets of American politics such as civil liberties, freedom of press, and executive power.

To encourage participation in public life by recognizing students’ self-interest and a broader civil interest.

To use technology and a variety of multi-media tools to enhance our exploration and understanding of American Political System.

To think fearlessly about complicated questions with complicated answers.

**Course Learning Outcomes**
Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution and constitutional democracy in the U.S.
2. Describe the effects that historical, social, political, cultural, and global forces had on the U.S. Constitution.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
4. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the origins and evolution of the U.S. political system, with a focus on growth of political institutions and the key components of the political system.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the American federal system and explain the ways in which different political systems divide and share power between their central and state governments.
7. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, political parties, campaigns, and elections in the political system.
8. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens and be able to comment on the role of civic engagement in U.S. politics and political culture.
9. Analyze political issues, demonstrate critical thinking skills, and develop a critical approach to the study of government.
Summary Matrix
The table below details which core requirements are applicable to this course, the activities to develop the skills in the required areas, mastery assessment, and the level of expertise the student must demonstrate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>University SLO</th>
<th>Course SLO</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>CT1: Gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue.</td>
<td>Students will develop critical thinking skills and the ability to critically evaluate the American political environment and explain the development of constitutional democracy.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student can think critically about American politics and governance.</td>
<td>VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>CS1: Develop, interpret and express ideas through effective written communication.</td>
<td>Students will gain and be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the three branches of government and the general principles and characteristics of federalism.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student can effectively communicate a basic knowledge of American political governance and federalism using a written artifact.</td>
<td>VALUE Rubric for Written Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>SR2: Demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility.</td>
<td>Students will gain and be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the American political system and demonstrate the importance of participating in the American civic and political life.</td>
<td>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student can demonstrate specific knowledge of American civic life and political system.</td>
<td>VALUE Rubric for Civic Engagement - local and global</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Responsibility</strong></td>
<td><strong>PR1: Demonstrate the ability to evaluate choices, actions and consequences as related to ethical decision-making.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Students will exhibit the skills necessary to understand and evaluate political outcomes and evaluate the responsibility of civic engagement. Students will demonstrate an understanding of different strategies for political participation and knowledge of rights and responsibilities of citizenship.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that assess if the student understands ethical decision making and responsibilities as citizen using a written artifact.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Value Rubric for Ethical Reasoning</strong></td>
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**Educational and Critical Thinking Objectives for Students**

1. The student should NOT accept any assertion of fact on face value. The student must listen carefully to different sides in a debate, preparing to see the logic in what people of different viewpoints have to say.

   For those who accept the prevailing traditions and opinions as matters of blind faith, the meaning of new and challenging ideas and experiences may frighten them and are rejected out of hand. New experiences are subconsciously distorted and serve only to reinforce previously held assumptions.

2. The student must have arguments to support their case. The student does not convenience others by simply saying “I feel this way”. For example, students should not argue whether stem cell research is good or bad, instead they study the arguments various parties have made about stem cell research.

3. The classroom should be where political agendas are analyzed, not embraced.

**Attendance and Participation**: Students are expected to attend all classes. Excessive absences will jeopardize final grade for the course and may result in removal from the dual credit course.

Prompt and regular class attendance is considered necessary for satisfactory work. The instructor keeps an accurate, complete, and clearly comprehensive record of attendance.

- 5 non-school related absences will result in dropping one full letter grade.
- 7 non-school related absences will result in dropping another full letter grade.
- 9 non-school related absences will result in being dismissed from the dual credit course.

*An absence is excused if a doctor’s note (on letterhead) is turn in. Students must turn in a copy to both the attendance office and the instructor.*
Method of Evaluation

In-Class and Online Assignments (to include MindTap: Watch and Consider; Focus Activities) 20%
In-Class and Online Quizzes (to include MindTap: Wrap It Up Quiz; Test Prep) 20%
In-Class and Online Tests 20%
Midterm 20%
Final Exam 20%

In-Class and Online Assignments: Students engage in a variety of assignments to help master the material.

MindTap: Watch and Consider: Students watch a brief video introducing the chapter, followed by a brief assessment to check understanding.

MindTap: Focus Activities: Students examine topics related to the chapter, followed by brief assessments to check understanding.

In-Class and Online Quizzes: Questions are drawn from the readings, lecture notes, assigned videos, assignments, and discussions. Online quizzes are due by 11:59 pm on the due date.

In-Class and Online Tests: Questions are drawn from the readings, lecture notes, assigned videos, assignments, discussions, and quizzes. Online tests are due by 11:59 pm on the due date

Midterm: The midterm will be administered in the classroom, which must be completed during the class period. The midterm will consist of multiple-choice questions, fill in the blanks, and essays. The questions will be drawn from the readings, lecture notes, assigned videos, assignments, discussions, previous quizzes, and previous tests.

Final Exam: The final exam will be administered in the classroom, which must be completed during the class period. The final exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, fill in the blanks, and essays. The questions will be drawn from readings, lecture notes, assigned videos, assignments, discussions, previous quizzes, previous tests, and midterm exam.

Grading Scale: A = 90 or above; B = 80 – 89; C = 70 – 79; D = 60 – 69; F = 59 or below

Taking Assessments after an Absence: Absent students must report to the instructor during morning tutorial the first day back to school following an absence, to complete missing assignments and assessments. This does not include assessments on Blackboard. Assessments on Blackboard must be completed on time; otherwise the student will receive a zero for that assessment.

Late work will NOT be accepted. If the student is absent, the assignment must be turned in on the due date, which will require submission through Blackboard. The student will receive a message confirming that the instructor received the assignment.

No re-testing for quizzes, tests, midterm, and final exam. No extra credit work available.
LockDown Browser Requirement
This course requires the use of LockDown Browser for online exams. Watch this video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser: https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml

Download Instructions
Download and install LockDown Browser from this link: https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=384131921

Once Installed
- Start LockDown Browser
- Log into Blackboard Learn
- Navigate to the test

Note: You will not be able to access tests with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Guidelines
When taking an online test, follow these guidelines:
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and that you have allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Turn off all mobile devices, phones, etc. and do not have them within reach
- Clear your area of all external materials - books, papers, other computers, or devices
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted

Getting Help
Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser:
- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues. If an exam requires you to use a webcam, also run the "Webcam Check" from this area
- Respondus has a Knowledge Base available from support.respondus.com. Select the "Knowledge Base" link and then select "Respondus LockDown Browser" as the product. If your problem is with a webcam, select "Respondus Monitor" as your product
- If you are still unable to resolve a technical issue with LockDown Browser, go to support.respondus.com and select "Submit a Ticket". Provide detailed information about your problem and what steps you took to resolve it
Accommodations for Disability: Students who qualify for specific accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should contact the Student Disability Services Office.

Religious Observances: A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make the intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. More information is available in University Operating Policy 10.19.

Student Conduct: Students are expected to take responsibility in helping to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are prohibited from using cell phones, reading material not related to the class, sleeping, or engaging in any other form of distraction or hindrance to the instructor or fellow students. Any act, or attempted act, perpetrated against another person or persons including, but not limited to: disruptive and/or obstructive conduct; harmful, threatening, or endangering conduct; hazing; discriminatory harassment; retaliatory discrimination or harassment; complicity or knowingly present – can result in dismissal from the course. Review the Student Handbook for more details, including other possible consequences.

Academic Honesty: Students are responsible for understanding and complying with Angelo State University Code of Student Conduct and policies found in the Student Handbook. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, violations of published professional ethics/standards, and any act or attempted act designed to give unfair academic advantage to oneself or another student. Falsified work will be reported and can result in a failing grade, dismissal from the dual credit course, or other consequences listed in the Student Handbook.

Online Course Netiquette: Professional netiquette should be used when communicating with students and faculty online, including discussions and emails. Students should be timely in their online communication and should ensure to post discussion responses and replies on time. Students should not discuss confidential information in discussion responses and replies. The absence of face-to-face interaction increases the likelihood of misinterpretation. Avoid using offensive language, excessive exclamation points, all caps, humor and sarcasm, acronyms, emojis, and slang. Recognize and value the experiences, abilities, and knowledge each person brings to class. If you disagree with ideas, state opposing argument in a diplomatic and respectful manner. Be concise, use appropriate formatting, proofread and spell check your message.

COVID-19 Guidelines:
- Students must always wear a mask. Masks must cover nose and mouth.
- Students must remain in assigned seat to minimize unnecessary movement.
- Refrain from touching items outside of your desk area as much as possible.
- Social distance in the classroom as best as possible.
- Follow all Wylie High School COVID-19 rules.
Course Schedule:

August 19 – August 30 – Chapter 1: The Democratic Republican

August 31 – September 13 – Chapter 2: The Constitution

September 14 – September 27 – Chapter 11: The Congress

September 28 – October 11 – Chapter 12: The President

October 12 – October 25 – Chapter 14: The Courts

    *Midterm Exam – October 14

October 26 – November 8 – Chapter 4: Civil Liberties

November 9 – November 22 – Chapter 5: Civil Rights

November 23 – November 29 – Thanksgiving Break

November 30 – December 4 – Review and Final Exam

    *Final Exam – December 2

Changes to the Syllabus:
The schedule and procedures in this syllabus are subject to change if deemed appropriate by the instructor.