

**Federal and State Government
Political Science 2302**

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OFFICE HOURS: MW 9-1 and 2:15-3:15 and by appointment

COURSE OBJECTIVE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The primary objective of this course is to teach you about federal and Texas government and politics. We will examine and compare the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government and Texas state government. We will also spend considerable time analyzing civil liberties, civil rights, foreign policy and public policy.

A secondary but equally as important objective is improve your ability to think critically and analytically. Students will be encouraged to critically assess information and developed informed opinions. Political Science and society depend on your ability to make informed decisions about issues and elected officials and this class should help encourage you to develop the necessary knowledge and skills.

This course is part of the ASU core. The learning outcomes, assignments/general activities, and assessments are identified below.

Course Level Learning Outcomes	Proposed 2014 Core Assignments/General Learning Activities for the Core Objectives	Proposed 2014 Core Assessments
<p><u>POLS 2302</u> CT1: Students will develop critical thinking skills and the ability to critically evaluate their political environment. CS1: Students will gain and be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of American & Texas governments. SR1: Students will gain and be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of American & Texas governments. PR: Students will exhibit the skills necessary to understand and evaluate political outcomes.</p>	<p><u>POLS 2302</u> CT, CS, SR, PR: Reflective writing samples based on lectures, class discussion, required class readings, and assigned movies that have content relating to PR/SR</p>	<p><u>POLS 2302</u> Rubrics may be used to evaluate student work in one or more Core Objectives.</p>

These objectives will be assessed through the Political Science and Your Major Paper. Further information on the assignment will be posted on Blackboard.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

I have assigned one textbook for this course and additional readings will be available on Blackboard.

Joseph Losco and Ralph Baker. AM GOV 2015 New York: McGraw Hill, 2014 is the text book assigned for the course. It is available at the college bookstore and can also be purchased online through www.amazon.com. Please order the current edition since there is much new material.

The Grieder reading is posted on Blackboard.

EXAMINATIONS AND MEANS OF ASSESSMENT

Attendance and Participation (10%) Students are expected to attend class regularly having completed the reading and prepared to engage in discussion. Attendance will be taken in each class. Absences will be excused for school functions, verified medical reasons and verified family emergencies. Students with more than three unexcused absences will lost 10 points off of their participation grade for each additional absence. Excessive lateness in the 8am section may result in a reduction in the participation grade.

STUDENTS WHO LEAVE EARLY WITHOUT INFORMING THE PROFESSOR WILL BE COUNTED AS ABSENT FOR THE DAY.

Political Science and Your Major Paper (20%)

Each student will write a 2-3 page paper that explores 1) How their major relates to the course, 2) How the course relates to their life and 3) Specific examples of how American political institutions shape the opportunities in their major and in their life. Papers that are vague and do not show a serious effort to engage with the topic will lose points. Director of Career Development Julie Ruthenbeck will be visiting the course to give students ideas of some opportunities that can be pursued based on majors and personal interests. **A complete assignment will be available on Blackboard. Late papers will be penalized by 10% for each day they are late.**

Exams [15% each]: I will administer three exams consisting of fill in the blank questions. Questions will be drawn from the readings, clips and documentaries used in class and the lectures. A review sheet will be given prior to each exam through Blackboard. **MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE ALLOWED FOR DOCUMENTED MEDICAL REASONS ONLY.**

Final Examination [25%]: I will administer a comprehensive final exam consisting of fill in the blank questions. Questions will be drawn from the readings, clips and documentaries used in class and the lectures. A review sheet will be given prior to each exam through Blackboard. **MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE ALLOWED FOR DOCUMENTED MEDICAL REASONS ONLY.**

GRADING SCALE

A - 90% B - 80% C - 70% D - 60% F - Less than 60%

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

Supplemental instruction will be available this semester, more information will be forthcoming.

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.

SPECIAL NEEDS

In accordance with OP 10.15 of ASU's Operating Policies and Procedures, persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 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 arrangements can be made.

CLASS ETIQUETTE

Behavior consistent with basic rules of courtesy contributes to a productive classroom. To minimize distractions that occasionally disturb the class, refrain from bringing food into the classroom, turn off all cell phones or other electronic devices with audible signals that would disrupt classroom presentations or activities. Students should also avoid whispering or other disrespectful behavior. Laptops may be used for note taking only, students using laptops in a disruptive manner will be asked to put them away.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Angelo State University Honor Code http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf : Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Therefore, you are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code. Click on the link to access the code.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COURSE

The last day to drop a course or to withdraw from the University will be **April 6, 2015**.

1/20 Introduction: Course Outline, the United States and Texas Political Culture (Week 1)

Block 1: The Legislative Branch (Weeks 1-2)

READINGS: AMGOV, Chapter 11 and Blackboard Information

1/22 Getting Elected (AMGOV Pg. 259-263)

1/27 Powers of Congress and the Texas Legislature (AMGOV Pg. 253-259 up to Getting Elected and Blackboard Information)

1/29 Being a Legislator: Laws, Responsibilities and Benefits (AMGOV Pg. 263-286)

2/3 Exam 1

Block 2: The Executive Branch (Weeks 3-5)

READINGS: AMGOV, Chapter 12 and Blackboard Information

2/5 Powers of the President and the Texas Governorship (AMGOV Pg. 287-291 up to Path to the Presidency and Blackboard Information)

2/10 Getting Elected (AMGOV Pg. 291-299)

2/12 Julie Ruthenbeck, Director of Career Services and "Game Change"
(Film Shown in Class)

2/17 "Game Change" (Film Shown in Class)

2/19 Roles of the President and the United States Executive Branch (AMGOV Pg. 299-320)
Roles of the Texas Executive Branch (Texas Politics Information Available on Blackboard)

2/24 Exam 2

Block 3: The Judicial Branch (Weeks 6-7)

READINGS: AMGOV, Chapter 14 and Blackboard Information

2/26 Structure of the United States and Texas Judicial Systems (AMGOV Pg. 344-360 and Blackboard Information)

2/26 Paper Due at 11:59pm

3/3 Confirmation and Election: the Judicial Selection Process and Courts in Action (AMGOV Pg. 360-368)

Block 4: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Weeks 8-10)

READINGS: AMGOV, Chapter 4, 5

3/5 The First Amendment Part I (AMGOV Pg. 61-71)

3/10 The First Amendment Part II (AM GOV, Pg. 71-78)

3/12 The Second and Third Amendments, Due Process and Privacy (AMGOV, Pg. 78-90)

3/24 Civil Rights and the Minority Rights Revolution (AMGOV Chapter 5)

3/26 “A Class Apart”: Texas, Mexican Americans and Civil Rights

3/31 Conclusion of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and review of the Judicial Branch (Review Chapters 4 and 5)

4/2 Exam 3

Block 5 Policies: Foreign Policy and Public Policy (Week 12-14)

READINGS: AMGOV, Chapters 15, 16

4/7 The National Interest: Introduction to Foreign Policy (AMGOV Pg. 400-411)

4/9 Current Challenges in Foreign Policy (AMGOV Pg. 411-419)

4/14 The policy making process (AMGOV Pg. 369-382)

4/16 “The Revisionaries” Documentary Shown in Class

4/21 Public Policy and Education (Excerpt from *Big, Hot Cheap and Right* available on Blackboard)

4/23 “A Place at the Table” Documentary Shown in Class

4/28 Tax and Budget Policy (AMGOV Pg. 382-391)

Block 6: The American Anomaly

4/30 The United States in Comparative Perspective (Excerpt from *The American Anomaly*)

Review

5/5 Review for Final

5/7 Review for Final

A review sheet and notes for review will be posted on Blackboard

FINAL will be held Thursday May 14th at 8am