

GOVT 2305: Federal Government Course Syllabus

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Ph.D.: Texas Tech University; M.A. in History and B.A. in Political Science:
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Office Hours: MWF: 8-9am; TTh: 10-11am; W: 11am-12pm; M: 6-7pm; & Th 6-7pm

Course: GOVT 2305

Times: MWF 9-9:50am

Location: DH 216

Credit Hours: 3

Objective: The student will disseminate information and interpret the development of American political thought, the origins and development of the U.S. Constitution, federalism, public opinion, and the political process of American Democracy. Additionally, the student will gain an understanding on the institutions of government including the presidency, Congress, the courts, the bureaucracy of the U.S. government, the study of domestic and foreign policy issues such as civil rights, national defense, managing the economy and welfare. All material in the textbook is testable and it is your responsibility to read the chapters. SCANS 6 and 9.

Text: *Politics in America*, 8th Edition, by Dye & Sparrow. ISBN # 978-0-13-602718-8

Grading Policy: Test 1 = 20%, Test 2 = 20%, Final/Test 3 = 20%,
Current Event (2 @ 10% each) = 20%, Research Project = 20%

Grading Scale: A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = below 60

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and participation is essential to achieving satisfactory progress, therefore it is the student's responsibility to attend class and to keep up with the assigned readings so that participation in class discussions and proper understanding of the material can occur. Please let me know if you require special accommodations.

Tests & Final Exam: There will be a total of three tests, with the third exam being your Final. The tests will consist of multiple choice and essay questions. All exams will cover 4-5 chapters, including the Final Exam which is not comprehensive. It is imperative that students complete the reading assignments in order to be better prepared for the exams. I do not drop any test grades. Make-up exams will only be allowed with permission from the instructor and will be a different version comprised of the textbook's test bank- Exceptions could be made at the Professor's discretion. No study guides will be provided although students will be allowed to use one index card on the test. If the material on the index card is typed, only one side of a 3x5 card can be used; if it is hand-written you may use both sides of a 5x7 card.

Extra Credit: In this age of technology it is imperative that college students master the art of internet research, therefore for every exam up to ten extra credit points can be earned if the student submits to me a summary describing a website they found pertinent to the test material- DO NOT use websites such as Wikipedia, Dictionary.com, etc.- Actually research a site related to the material. The summary should include the URL, the date accessed, author and/or organization that maintain the site, a brief description of the website, and why or why not you found it useful. The extra credit assignment is due one week after the exam date and only one extra credit assignment can be turned in per test. The assignment must be submitted via e-mail at dmregalado@odessa.edu.

Current Event: It is extremely vital for all Americans to stay informed with current events, therefore each student will be responsible for bringing 2 news articles dealing with an American current event (Current meaning no more than a month old). Every student will be assigned a certain day to bring their chosen news article and will give an informal 5 minute presentation to the class. The student will be responsible for leading discussion afterwards as well as tying it into federal government- This includes having at least 3 questions prepared to ask the class. The only thing the student must turn in is: 1) a copy of the news article with their name on it, and 2) a list of the 3 questions.

Research Project: The research project will consist of two components: a research paper and a presentation- Project can be completed in groups of 3-5 members and students will have the opportunity to choose their own members. The research paper will count as 15% and the presentation will count as 5% of the project. 1) Research Paper: The research paper will be 8-10 pages typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12 point font, and properly cited discussing any topic on American Government. You may use any writing style you would like to cite your paper, although I would suggest using the style commonly used by your major. Your sources should include a minimum of: three books, one website, and a scholarly journal. The paper will be graded on penmanship, topic, content, format, and grammar. Late papers will be penalized 5% of the final grade for every day that it is late. 2) Presentations: Each individual/group will be required to give a 10-15 minute PowerPoint presentation on the topic they chose for their research paper. I accept rough drafts at anytime.

Research Day: This day will be for your benefit- It is your chance to edit your rough draft, discuss your topic with your group members, review your sources, or complete/discuss any other tasks for your research project.

Scholastic Dishonesty: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and will be handled in accordance to the OC Student Code of Conduct/Board Policy Manual. The Professor has the right to, at his discretion, add or alter any assignments, exams, and or methods.

Classroom Etiquette: Please turn off all cell phones- DO NOT TEXT (Or hold non-course discussions) during class. If it is a necessity that you keep your cell phone on please put it on vibrate or discuss the matter with me before class. You may eat or drink in class...just keep in mind to be courteous to your fellow students.

Tentative Schedule:

Your reading assignments on the specified chapters should be read prior to class.

- January**
- 19 – Introductions & Discuss Syllabus
 - 21 – Chapter 1 “Politics”
 - 24 – Chapter 1 “Politics,” **Pick Groups**
 - 26 – Chapter 2 “Political Culture,” **Assign Groups**
 - 28 – Current Event Day
 - 31 – Chapter 2 “Political Culture”
- February**
- 2 – Current Event Day
 - 4 – Chapter 3 “The Constitution”
 - 7 – Current Event Day
 - 9 – Chapter 4 “Federalism”
 - 11 – Chapter 4 “Federalism”
 - 14 – Chapter 3 “The Constitution”
 - 16 – LRC Tour (Meet on the second floor of the library)
 - 18 – Research Day (Meet with your groups)
 - 21 – Catch Up/ Review
 - 23 – **Test 1, Chapters 1-4**
 - 25 – Chapter 5 “Opinion and Participation”
 - 28 – Current Event Day
- March**
- 2 – Chapter 5 “Opinion and Participation,” **Last Day to Submit Extra Credit Assignment for Test 1**
 - 4 – Chapter 6 “Mass Media”
 - 7 – Current Event Day
 - 9 – Chapter 6 “Mass Media”
 - 11 – Chapter 7 “Political Parties”
 - 14-18 – No Class, Spring Break
 - 21 – Chapter 8 “Campaigns and Elections”
 - 23 – Current Event Day
 - 25– Chapter 9 “Interest Groups”
 - 28 – Catch Up/ Review
 - 30 – **Test 2, Chapters 5-9**
- April**
- 1 – Chapter 10 “Congress”
 - 4 – Current Event Day
 - 6 – Chapter 10 “Congress,” **Last Day to Submit Extra Credit Assignment for Test 2**
 - 8 – Chapter 11 “The President”
 - 11 – Current Event Day
 - 13 – Chapter 11 “The President”
 - 14 – **Last day to drop with a grade of W**
 - 15 – Chapter 12 “The Bureaucracy”
 - 18 – Chapter 13 “Courts”
 - 20 – Current Event Day
 - 22 – No Class, Good Friday Holiday
 - 25 – Current Event Day
 - 27 – Chapter 13 “Courts”
 - 29 – Research Day (Meet with your groups)
- May**
- 2 – **Research Papers Due**, Group Presentations
 - 4 – Group Presentations
 - 6 – Group Presentations
 - 11 – **Final Exam 8-10:30am, Chapters 10-13, Last Day to Submit Extra Credit for Final Exam**

Special Needs

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may also call the Office of Disability services at 432-335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.

Learning Resource Center (The Library)

The Library, known as the Learning Resources Center, provides research assistance via the LRC's catalog (print books, videos, e-books) and databases (journal and magazine articles). Research guides covering specific subject areas, tutorials, and the "Ask a Librarian " service provide additional help.

Student Email

Please access your Odessa College Student E-mail, by following the link to either set up or update your account: <http://www.odessa.edu/gmail/>. **All assignments or correspondence will be submitted using your Odessa College email.**

Technical Support

For Blackboard username and password help and for help accessing your online course availability and student email account contact the Student Success Center at 432-335-6878 or online at https://www.odessa.edu/dept/ssc/helpdesk_form.htm.

Important School Policies

For information regarding student support services, academic dishonesty, disciplinary actions, special accommodations, or students' and instructors' right to academic freedom can be found in the Odessa College Student Handbook.