

# **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: 11am-12pm; TTh: 10-11am & 12:30-1:30pm; W: 5:30-6:30pm

**Times:** Th 11am-12:20pm **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/lectures is testable and it is your responsibility to read the chapters. SCANS 6 and 9.

**Text:** *Politics in America*, OC Edition, by Dye, ISBN # 978-0-205-82609 (9<sup>th</sup>, ISBN # 978-1-256-32047)

**Grading Policy:** Tests (3 @ 20% each) = 60%, 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 multiple 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 5x8 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 assignment should include the URL, the date accessed, author and/or organization that maintain the site, and 2-3 sentences on your opinion of the webpage. The extra credit assignment due dates will be announced and only one extra credit assignment can be turned in per test. The assignment must be submitted via e-mail at [dmregalado@odessa.edu](mailto: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 a 10-15 minute Powerpoint presentation covering any topic on American Government- The project can be completed individually or in groups of 2-4 and students will have the opportunity to choose their own members. You must properly cite your presentation- Any writing style can be used 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 presentation will be graded based on a rubric that the professor will provide at a later date- Presentations will be e-mailed to the professor at the designated date. Late presentations will be penalized 5% of the final grade for every day that it is late.

**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.

<b>August</b>	<b>23</b> – Introductions & Discuss Syllabus <b>25</b> – Chapter 1 “Politics” <b>30</b> – Chapter 2 “Political Culture,”
<b>September</b>	<b>1</b> – Chapter 3 “The Constitution,” <b>Pick Groups</b> <b>6</b> – Chapter 3 “The Constitution” <b>8</b> – Current Event Day <b>13</b> – Chapter 4 “Federalism” <b>15</b> – Current Event Day <b>20</b> – LRC Tour (Meet on the second floor of the library) <b>22</b> – Research Day (Meet with your groups) <b>27</b> – Catch Up/ Review <b>29</b> – <b>Test 1, Chapters 1-4</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>4</b> – Chapter 5 “Opinion and Participation,” <b>Last Day to Submit Extra Credit Assignment for Test 1</b> <b>6</b> – Current Event Day <b>11</b> – Chapter 6 “Mass Media” <b>13</b> – Chapter 7 “Political Parties” <b>18</b> – Current Event Day <b>20</b> - Chapter 8 “Campaigns and Elections” & Chapter 9 “Interest Groups” <b>25</b> – Catch Up/ Review <b>27</b> – <b>Test 2, Chapters 5-9</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>1</b> – Chapter 10 “Congress” & Chapter 11 “The President,” <b>Last Day to Submit Extra Credit Assignment for Test 2</b> <b>3</b> – Current Event Day <b>8</b> – Chapter 12 “The Bureaucracy” & Chapter 13 “Courts” <b>10</b> – Current Event Day, <b>Last day to drop with a grade of W</b> <b>15</b> –Catch Up/ Review <b>17</b> –Research Day (Meet with your groups) <b>22</b> – <b>Research Papers Due</b> , Group Presentations <b>24</b> – No Class, Turkey Day Holiday <b>29</b> – Group Presentations
<b>December</b>	<b>1</b> – Group Presentations <b>6</b> – <b>Final Exam 11am-1:30pm, Chapters 10-13, Last Day to Submit Extra Credit for Final Exam</b>

**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](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.