

POLS 2305-01  
Fall 2008  
E-mail- [john\\_raulston@mac.com](mailto:john_raulston@mac.com)  
Office- Bus 233  
Phone- 565-5876

John Raulston

### **Introductory American Government**

This course offers a survey of the ideas and the practice of contemporary government and politics in the United States. It will examine the American political process with special attention to its context, institutions, and the electoral process. Furthermore, this course will emphasize the theoretical and practical understanding of how and why the American political system produces the kind of policies it does, and how the system itself is structured.

#### **Office Hours-**

Monday and Wednesday 1:00pm to 2:00pm  
Friday 1:30pm to 2:00pm  
Wednesday 5:30pm to 6:00pm

#### **Class Meetings-**

Classes will meet on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 11:00am to 11:50am in BUS 158

#### **Text-**

The following text is required and is available for purchase at the campus bookstore.

American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials. Schmidt, Shelley, and Bardes. 2008 Edition

#### **Course Requirements-**

1. Attendance of class meetings.
2. Successful completion of three exams to be held on September 24<sup>th</sup>, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, and November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008
3. Successful completion of the Final Exam date TBD (Final Exam Week).

#### **Grading Scale-**

Make up exams will only be scheduled for students with a valid and credible excuse. Each exam, including the final exam, will be worth 100 points for an overall total of 400 points. The grading scale will be as follows:

360-400 points = A

320-359 points = B  
280-319 points = C  
240-279 points = D  
239 or below = F

### **Learning Outcomes:**

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to demonstrate:

- familiarity with terminology used to study political science and American government
- basic knowledge of the historical evolution of American governmental structures
- an understanding of the constitutional, institutional, political and legal processes and structures of the United States
- comprehension of the interrelationships of American governmental institutions
- awareness of basic values of American political culture

**Disability Statement-** If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact Ida MacDonald in the Disability Support Services office so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, students requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Support Services counselor. For more information, call or visit the Student Services Center located in the University Center, Room 282. The telephone number is 903-566-7079.

**Social Security Statement-** It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number.

**Note Regarding Student Absence due to Religious Observance-** Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of such absences.

**Grade Replacement-** If you are repeating this course for a grade replacement, you must file an intent to receive grade forgiveness with the registrar by the 12<sup>th</sup> day of class. Failure to file an intent to use grade forgiveness will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. A student will receive grade forgiveness (grade replacement) for only three (undergraduate student) or two (graduate student) course repeats during his/her career at UT Tyler. (2006-08 Catalog, p. 35)

### **Course Outline-**

1. Introduction, Schmidt, Chapter 1
2. The Constitution, Schmidt, Chapter 2
3. The Judiciary, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Schmidt, Chapters 4, 5, and 13
4. Voting Behavior, Campaigns and Elections, Schmidt, Chapter 9
5. Public Opinion, Schmidt, Chapter 6
6. Political Parties and Interest Groups, Schmidt, Chapters 7 and 8

7. Congress, Schmidt, Chapter 10
8. The Presidency, Schmidt, Chapter 11
9. Foreign Policy, Schmidt, Chapter 15
10. Conclusion