



POLS 1100

Division: Social and Behavioral Science

Department: Social Sciences

Course: POLS 1100

Title: American National Government

Catalog Description:

This course is an introduction to the structure, function, and political dynamics of the major institutions within the American governmental system.

General Education Requirements: American Institutions

Semesters Offered: Fall, Spring

Credit/Time Requirement: Credit: 3; Lecture: 3; Lab: 0

Clock/Hour Requirements: 0

Offered for Non-Credit: No

Prerequisites: N/A

Corequisites: N/A

Justification:

This course satisfies three semester credit hours toward the social science group of the Social and Behavioral Science general education requirements. It also meets the American Institutions requirement established by the Utah State legislature.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- know the basic structure and function of the major institutions within the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the American Federal Government
- learn to interpret and analyze the dynamics of government by observation of past and current events in the political context
- participate in government by exercising their voting and voicing rights from a basis of understanding of issues and representation. One can better appreciate his or her responsibility as a citizen when in possession of a clear perspective of the realities and possibilities offered by the uniquely American form of Democracy.

Content:

This course of study will include the following components:

- Defining politics and your role in politics
- The Constitution and Federalism
- Public opinion and public policy

- Population demographics and political participation
- Mass media and public perception/influence
- Political Parties and Interest Groups
- Campaigns and Elections
- Congressional structure and function
- The Presidency
- The Federal Bureaucracy
- The Federal Court System
- Public Policy making
- Current and controversial issues in politics

General Education Outcomes:

1) Read effectively, constructively, and critically.

Students read a variety of text, reference, and media offerings in an analytical context and are required to respond in quizzes and essays. The goal is to elicit critical responses demonstrating a rudimentary ability to examine political orientation and dynamics and explain same.

2) Write clearly, informatively, and persuasively.

Each student is required to write and submit at least five essays which are designed to demonstrate the student's understanding of the topic. Additionally, in some of these essays the student must articulate their own thinking or position on some of the more controversial subject matter.

5) Apply a cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena.

The very nature of American Government is demonstrated by cultural and historical markers. Every issue can be analyzed and/or interpreted in these contexts. Students must demonstrate an understanding of cultural and historical influence to some degree in every assignment and test because of its inherent nature, e.g., the issue of gun control can be examined historically by analysis of the intent of the framers in writing the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This same issue can be culturally examined in terms of modern day attempts to address gun violence versus gun rights in our society.

Key Performance Indicators:

- one pretest: not graded
- two to four quizzes (short answers): 20% of final grade
- four to five essays (short essays 1-3 pages): 20-25% of final grade
- one research paper (6-10 pages): 25-35% of final grade
- final exam (multiple choice, true/false): 25% of final grade

Representative Text and/or Supplies:

- *Introduction to American Government*, current edition, by Stephenson, Bresler, Freidrich, Karlsleky, Turner, Northwest Publishing.
- *Government in America, People, Politics, and Policy*, current edition, by Edwards, Wattenberg, Lineberry, Pearson Longman.

Optimum Class Size: 35

Maximum Class Size: 35

Signatures:

I hereby submit this course syllabus:

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I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Social Sciences Department:

Kerry Hansen, D.A., Professor, Chair

I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Social and Behavioral Science Division:

Sue Dalley, M.S., Associate Professor, Dean

I have discussed the need for library resources related to this class with the person submitting the syllabus:

Lynn Anderson, MLIS, Technical Services Librarian (Main Campus)

Michelle Olsen, MLS, Campus Librarian (Richfield Campus)