Class Hours: 3.0
Laboratory Hours: 0.0
Credit Hours: 3.0
Date Revised: Summer 01

Catalog Course Description:
Introduction to fundamental institutions and processes of American National Politics including the constitution, voting and the presidency, the congress and the courts.

Entry Level Standards:
The course is designed to introduce students to the fundamental institutions and processes of American national politics including the Constitution, the presidency, Congress, the legal system and the role of the citizen in this political process. Students must be able to read and write at the college level.

Prerequisites:
None

Textbook(s) and Other Reference Materials Basic to the Course:


I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Civil Liberties and Civil Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Public Opinion and Political Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Mass Media and the Political Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Political Parties</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Campaigns and Voting Behavior</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Interest Groups</td>
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II. Course Objectives*:

A. Acquire a general understanding of the key concepts and ideas upon which the American system of government is based. I.5, IV.3

B. Demonstrate a clear understanding of how the American political process works. I.5, IV.3

C. Develop critical skills which are necessary to the decision-making process in a democratic republic like the United States. III.2

*Roman numerals after course objectives reference goals of the university parallel program.

III. Instructional Processes*:

Students will:

1. Use teamwork to accomplish in class group activities utilizing knowledge of course concepts. Problem Solving and Decision Making Outcome, Active Learning Strategy

2. Complete a project (oral presentation, report, application paper), demonstrating their ability to apply course content. Communication Outcome, Information Literacy Outcome, Active Learning Strategy, Transitional Strategy

3. Use the World Wide Web and Pellissippi State library resources to access information for media reports, application papers, and oral presentations. Information Literacy Outcome, Technological Literacy Outcome

4. Access available course software for study and review of concepts. Technological Literacy Outcome

5. Practice elements of the work ethic such as professionalism, preparedness, punctuality, honesty, cooperation, dependability, contribution, effectiveness, and good manners. Personal Development Outcome, Transitional Strategy

*Strategies and outcomes listed after instructional processes reference Pellissippi State’s goals for strengthening general education knowledge and skills, connecting coursework to experiences beyond the classroom, and encouraging students to take active and responsible roles in the educational process.

IV. Expectations for Student Performance*:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Understand our governmental heritage (where our rules emerged). A, B
2. Understand our governmental heritage (how our rules emerged). A, B

3. Understand basic societal rules (the Constitution). B

4. Understand the mechanisms individuals use to influence their government (i.e., interest groups and political parties). A, B, C

5. Understand how the electoral system operates. B

6. Understand the delicate balance of power between the President, Congress and the courts. A, B, C

*Letters after performance expectations reference the course objectives listed above.

V. Evaluation:

A. Testing Procedures: 100% of grade

The final course grade will be determined by the accumulation of three/four one hour exams (75 points) plus a final exam (25 points) The instructor will drop the lowest of the first four exams. Generally a missed exam will count as the drop. Examinations may come from any combination of lecture, text, videos and reading assignments. THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS. Students who miss an exam may, at the discretion of the instructor, take a comprehensive final. This comprehensive final will then count as both the final exam grade and the missed exam.

B. Laboratory Expectations:

N/A

C. Field Work:

N/A

D. Other Evaluation Methods:

Each student is expected to participate in class discussions so attendance is mandatory. Students who are consistently late or miss an excessive number of classes may be dropped one letter grade. Two (2) late will equal one absence.

E. Grading Scale:

A  =  94 - 100
B  =  80 - 88
B+ =  88 - 93
C  =  70 - 79
D  =  60 - 69
F  =  Below 60

VI. Policies:

Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State Technical Community College expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course.