Class Hours: 3.0        Credit Hours: 3.0
Laboratory Hours: 0.0    Revised: Spring 2011

Catalog Course Description

This course provides an introduction to U.S. government and politics focusing on citizen participation and governmental institutions. Topics include the Constitution, federalism, civil liberties and civil rights, voting, the media, parties and groups, public opinion, Congress, the Presidency, the federal bureaucracy, and the courts.

Entry Level Standards

Students must be able to read and write at the college level.

Prerequisites

None

Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials


I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>The Constitution</td>
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<td>Federalism</td>
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<td>Civil Liberties and Civil Rights</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Civil Liberties and Civil Rights</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Public Opinion and Political Action</td>
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<td>The Mass Media and the Political Agenda</td>
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<td>Campaigns and Voting Behavior</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Interest Groups</td>
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<td>Congress</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The Presidency</td>
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II. Course Goals*

The course will:

A. Develop an understanding of the key concepts and ideas upon which the American system of government is based. III.1, 111.2

B. Demonstrate an understanding of how the American political process works. III.1, 111.3, 111.4, 111.7

C. Develop critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate political information and to participate in a democratic republic. 111.2, 111.3, 111.4, 111.5

*Roman numerals after course goals reference general education goals in the Social Science.

III. Expected Student Learning Outcomes*

Students will be able to:

1. Identify important themes and eras in U.S. politics from the colonial era to the present. A, B

2. Identify important topics in U.S. Constitutional study. A, B

3. Understand the federal structure and the balance of power between the President, Congress and the courts. A, B

4. Identify the mechanisms individuals use to influence government. A, B

5. Complete written/oral projects demonstrating the ability to apply course content, using appropriate resources to access information. C

* Capital letters after Expected Student Learning Outcomes reference the course goals listed above.

IV. Evaluation

A. Testing Procedures: 50-70% of grade

The final course grade will be determined by a combination of quizzes and exams and other assignments such as written and oral reports and group projects. Examinations may come from any combination of lecture, text, videos and reading assignments.

B. Laboratory Expectations:

N/A

C. Field Work:

N/A

D. Other Evaluation Methods: 30-50% of grade
In addition to exams, students will be asked to complete other assignments such as written and oral reports and group projects.

E. Grading Scale:

A = 90 - 100  
B = 80 - 89  
C = 70 - 79  
D = 65 - 69  
F = Below 65

V. Policies

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses (excluding distance learning courses) must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. Individual departments/programs/disciplines, with the approval of the vice president of the Learning Division, may have requirements that are more stringent. In very specific circumstances, an appeal of the policy may be addressed to the head of the department in which the course was taken. If further action is warranted, the appeal may be addressed to the vice president of the Learning Division.

B. Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Academic misconduct committed either directly or indirectly by an individual or group is subject to disciplinary action. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to the following practices:

• Cheating, including but not limited to unauthorized assistance from material, people, or devices when taking a test, quiz, or examination; writing papers or reports; solving problems; or completing academic assignments.
• Plagiarism, including but not limited to paraphrasing, summarizing, or directly quoting published or unpublished work of another person, including online or computerized services, without proper documentation of the original source.
• Purchasing or otherwise obtaining prewritten essays, research papers, or materials prepared by another person or agency that sells term papers or other academic materials to be presented as one’s own work.
• Taking an exam for another student.
• Providing others with information and/or answers regarding exams, quizzes, homework or other classroom assignments unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
• Any of the above occurring within the Web or distance learning environment.

C. Accommodations for disabilities:

Students who need accommodations because of a disability, have emergency medical information to share, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated should inform the instructor immediately, privately after class or in her or his office. Students must present a current accommodation plan from a staff member in Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) in order to receive accommodations in this course. Services for Students with Disabilities may be contacted by going to Goins 127, 132, 134, 135, 131 or by phone: 539-7153 or TTY 694-6429. More information is available at www.pstcc.edu/departments/swd/.