



Course Syllabus

Government 2305 – Federal Government

Catalog Description: A study of the background and development of the government of the United States, including the foundations of political power, the national party systems, the national judiciary, and the development of the federal constitution. Lecture hours = 3, Lab hours = 0

Prerequisites: TSIP reading completed

Semester Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours per Week: 3

Contact Hours per Semester: 48

State Approval Code: 4510025125

Course Subject/Catalog Number: Govt. 2305

Course Title: Federal Government I

Course Curriculum: State Criteria (those marked with an X reflect the state-mandated competencies taught in this course) (*double-click on the box and choose 'checked' or 'not-checked'*)

Basic Intellectual Competencies in the Core Curriculum

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening
- Critical thinking
- Computer literacy

Perspectives in the Core Curriculum

- Establish broad and multiple perspectives on the individual in relationship to the larger society and world in which he/she lives, and to understand the responsibilities of living in a culturally and ethnically diversified world.
- Stimulate a capacity to discuss and reflect upon individual, political, economic, and social aspects of life in order to understand ways in which to be a responsible member of society.
- Recognize the importance of maintaining health and wellness.
- Develop a capacity to use knowledge of how technology and science affect their lives.
- Develop personal values for ethical behavior.
- Develop the ability to make aesthetic judgments.
- Use logical reasoning in problem solving.
- Integrate knowledge and understand the interrelationships of the scholarly disciplines.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

The objective of a social and behavioral science component of a core curriculum is to increase students' knowledge of how social and behavioral scientists discover, describe, and explain the behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, events, and ideas. Such knowledge will better equip students to understand themselves and the roles they play in addressing the issues facing humanity.

- To employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition.
- To examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures.
- To use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
- To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.
- To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the area under study.
- To comprehend the origins and evolution of U.S. and Texas political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitutions of the U.S. and Texas, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.
- To understand the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.
- To differentiate and analyze historical evidence (documentary and statistical) and differing points of view.
- To recognize and apply reasonable criteria for the acceptability of historical evidence and social research.
- To analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.
- To recognize and assume one's responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.
- To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.

Instructional Goals and Purposes: The purpose of this course is to fulfill academic requirements of the Panola College Core Curriculum and an Associate of Arts or Associate Science degree.

General Course Objectives:

The student must be able to:

1. Explain the environment and background of the American political system.
2. Discuss public opinion and voting patterns as they connect to the political process.
3. Discuss the historical background, ideas, and organizational structure of the American constitution.
4. Discuss federalism, the specific relationships between various levels of government and its influence on the overall political system.
5. Thoroughly understand the significance of interest groups and political parties in the political process.
6. Explain the powers, responsibilities, and requirements of the presidency, as well as the organization of the overall executive branch.
7. Discuss the functions, structure, and composition of the United States Congress.

8. Cultivate and build personal and civic values for ethical behavior and will also reflect upon individual, political, and economic aspects of life in order to become a responsible member of society.
9. Discover and successfully discuss current political and governmental issues
10. Explain responsibilities, powers, and organizational structure of the federal court system
11. Identify and discuss basic civil liberties, and equal rights guaranteed under the constitution
12. Explain and recognize the structure, powers and responsibilities of the federal judiciary.

Specific Course Objectives:

Over seventy per cent of students will be able to:

1. Identify key contributors' to the constitution and major ideas and part that shaped it.
2. Identify constitutional amendments and their significance.
3. Successfully differentiate between conservatism, liberalism, and diverse political philosophies such as Nazism, socialism, communism, and libertarianism
4. Explain the legislative process of how a bill becomes law.
5. Tell the major powers, duties, and requirements of the American presidency.
6. discuss the media and its marriage with political thought
7. Identify landmark cases of the Supreme Court that have shaped the American landscape.
8. Recognize voting trends, political socialization, and levels of participation
9. Recognize major interest groups and political parties.
10. Identify major tools- filibustering, logrolling, etc...-in the overall legislative process.
11. Identify levels of the federal court system, with an even greater command of membership of the supreme court and its history

Course Content:

- 1 Evolution of the constitution
- 2 Structure of the constitution
- 3 Essential ideas and people at constitutional convention
- 4 Background of constitutional amendments and landmark supreme court decisions
- 5 Political style employed in campaigns
- 6 Electoral Politics and campaigning
- 7 The Press and Political socialization
- 8 Major Political ideologies
- 9 Powers, responsibilities, and structure of Congress
- 10 Legislative Process
- 11 Political Action Committees, Lobbyists, Interest Groups
- 12 Process and function of the federal judiciary, including the supreme court
- 13 Historical background of the presidency, as well as responsibilities, and powers of the office
- 14 The executive branch beyond the scope of the presidency

Students will take unit exams and daily quizzes while participating in brainstorming discussion, listening experiences and meticulous note taking. Tests will focus upon essentials of the federal constitution, legislative powers and process, and the executive branch

Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery: Lecture/Brainstorming Discussion/Web based research/Note taking and proactive listening, selected guest speakers, examination of relevant current events, including primary and secondary documents.

Assessment: This includes three major exams, daily quizzes, class participation, and selected research topics delivered from the instructor to the student. Multiple choice, listing, matching and selected writing exercises may be employed.

Course Grade: The course grade is determined as follows:

Unit Exams (3) 80%

Daily Quizzes 12%

Participation 8%

Texts, Materials, and Supplies: Dye, Thomas. Politics in America. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2007

Other:

- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <http://www.panola.edu/collegestore.htm>
- For testing services, use the following link: <http://www.panola.edu/instruction/dl/testing.htm>

Syllabus revised 2008