

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK**



MASTER SYLLABUS

POLS 105: Introduction to American Government and Politics

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**SCHOOL of BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS
SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT
Last Updated: May 2015
FALL 2021**

A. **TITLE:** Introduction to American Government and Politics

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** POLS 105

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3 Lecture Hours per Week for 15 Weeks

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No

E. **GER CATEGORY:** 3

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall or Spring

G. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this course students will be introduced to the fundamental components of American government and politics, including political culture, interest representation, political participation, government institutions, and government policymaking. Students develop a basic knowledge of American politics and the tools for careful and critical evaluation of current events and political phenomena. Through the framework of the Constitution, this course considers governmental and political issues from the founding until now, including federalism, civil liberties and rights, political processes such as campaigns and elections, and the checks and balances between branches of government.

H. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:** None

I. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

| <i>Course Student Learning Outcome [SLO]</i> | <i>GER 3</i> | <i>ISLO & Sub-Sets</i> |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| a. Describe the role of government and politics in our social, cultural, and economic lives. | 2 | 1 Communication [W] |
| b. Examine and explain the structures, functions, and operations of the American government. | 2 | 2 Critical Thinking [CA] |
| c. Identify major constitutional rights and analyze their judicial interpretation over time. | 1 | 2 Critical Thinking [IA] |
| e. Evaluate America's form of democracy and the political system. | 2 | 2 Critical Thinking [CA] |

GER 3

Students will demonstrate:

1. Understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and employment of mathematical and interpretive analysis.
2. Knowledge of major concepts, models and issues of at least one discipline in the social sciences.

| KEY | Institutional Student Learning Outcomes [ISLO 1 – 5] |
|--------|---|
| ISLO # | ISLO & Subsets |
| 1 | Communication Skills Oral [O], Written [W] |
| 2 | Critical Thinking <i>Critical Analysis [CA], Inquiry & Analysis [IA], Problem Solving [PS]</i> |
| 3 | Foundational Skills <i>Information Management [IM], Quantitative Lit./Reasoning [QTR]</i> |
| 4 | Social Responsibility <i>Ethical Reasoning [ER], Global Learning [GL], Intercultural Knowledge [IK], Teamwork [T]</i> |
| 5 | Industry, Professional, Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills |

J. **APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT:** Yes - Research

K. **TEXTS:** To be determined by the instructor

L. **REFERENCES:**

Bardes, Barbara A., Mack C. Shelley, and Steffen W. Schmidt. 2013. *American Government and Politics Today*. Independence, KY: Wadsworth.

Canon, David T., John J. Coeman, and Kenneth R. Mayer. 3rd ed. 2011. *Faultlines: Debating the Issues in American Politics*. New York, NY: Norton.

Canon, David T. and William T. Bianco. 3rd ed. 2013. *American Politics Today*. New York, NY: Norton.

Fiorina, Morris, Paul E. Peterson, D. Stephen Voss, Bertram Johnson, and William Mayer. 6th ed. 2010. *America's New Democracy*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, and Caroline J. Tolbert. 9th ed. 2013. *We The People: An Introduction to American Politics*. New York, NY: Norton.

Hamilton, Alexander, John Jay, and James Madison. *The Federalist Papers*. Any Edition/Publisher.

Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson, and Thad Kousser. 5th ed. 2011. *The Logic of American Politics*. Washington, DC: CQ Press College.

Valelley, Richard M., ed. 2009. *Princeton Readings in American Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

M. **EQUIPMENT:** Technology Enhanced Classroom

N. **GRADING METHOD:** A -F

O. **SUGGESTED MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

Exams • Quizzes • Assignments/Projects/Papers • Participation/Discussion

P. **DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:**

I. Foundations of American Government and Politics

A. Political Culture

- i. Citizenship
- ii. Knowledge
- iii. Participation

B. The Founding

- i. Declaration of Independence
- ii. Articles of Confederation
- iii. Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists

C. The Constitution

- i. Constitutional Convention
- ii. Branches of Government
- iii. Amending the Constitution
- iv. Changing Constitution

D. Federalism

- i. Powers of the National Government
- ii. Powers of State Governments
- iii. State Obligation to One Another
- iv. Federalism Over Time

II. Civil Liberties & Civil Rights

- A. Bill of Rights
- B. Civil War Amendments

- C. Litigating for Equality
- D. Extending Civil Rights
- E. Affirmative Action
- III. Political Presentation and Representation
 - A. Public Opinion
 - i. Political Values
 - ii. Political Socialization
 - iii. Measuring Public Opinion
 - iv. Polling Procedures
 - v. The U.S. Census
 - B. The Media
 - i. Traditional Media
 - ii. New Media
 - iii. Regulation of the Media
 - C. Political Participation and Voting
 - i. Forms of Political Participation
 - D. Political Parties
 - i. Democrats & Republicans
 - ii. Third Parties
 - iii. Ideology and Political Parties
 - E. Campaigns and Elections
 - i. Types of elections
 - ii. The Electoral College
 - iii. Election Campaigns
 - F. Groups and Interests
 - i. Lobbying
 - ii. Money and Power
- IV. Political Institutions
 - A. Congress
 - i. Organization
 - ii. Powers
 - iii. Lawmaking
 - B. The Presidency
 - i. Organization
 - ii. Presidential Powers
 - C. Bureaucracy
 - D. The Judicial System
 - i. Federal Courts
 - ii. Judicial Review
- V. Political Policy
 - A. Government and the Economy
 - i. Fiscal & Monetary Policy
 - ii. The Environment and the Economy
 - B. Social Policy
 - i. The Welfare State
 - ii. Education
 - iii. Health Care
 - C. Foreign Policy
 - i. Military and Security
 - ii. Diplomacy
 - iii. America and the United Nations