



ILLINOIS VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

DIVISION: Humanities, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences

COURSE: PSI 1000 American National Government

Date: Spring 2023

Credit Hours: 3

Complete all that apply or mark "None" where appropriate:

Prerequisite(s): None

Enrollment by assessment or other measure? Yes No

If yes, please describe:

Corequisite(s): None

Pre- or Corequisite(s): None

Consent of Instructor: Yes No

Delivery Method:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture	3 Contact Hours (1 contact = 1 credit hour)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Seminar	0 Contact Hours (1 contact = 1 credit hour)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab	0 Contact Hours (2-3 contact = 1 credit hour)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical	0 Contact Hours (3 contact = 1 credit hour)

Offered: **Fall** **Spring** **Summer**

CATALOG DESCRIPTION and IAI NUMBER (if applicable):

This course will introduce students to the Constitution and the formal and informal governmental institutions of the United States of America. This course will allow students to critically analyze our system of government and to thoughtfully address some of the major dilemmas that face American politics today. **IAI Equivalent: S5 900**

ACCREDITATION STATEMENTS AND COURSE NOTES:

None

COURSE TOPICS AND CONTENT REQUIREMENTS:

A variety of topics concerning our political system will be studied, with emphasis placed not only on the institutions themselves, but also the results of the interactions of people and groups inside and outside the governing process. Topics covered include: Federalism, The Constitution, Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, Congress, the Presidency, The Courts, Political Parties, Elections and Voting, The Media, and Interest Groups.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

Lectures, assigned readings, videos, and guest speakers.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

Discussion, research paper, video presentation, written exams.

Grading Scale: 90-100%=A, 80-89%=B, 70-79%=C, 60-69%=D, 59% and Below = F

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

Textbooks

American Democracy Now

Resources

Supplemental readings and videos provided by the instructor.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GOALS:

Institutional Learning Outcomes

- 1) Communication – to communicate effectively;
- 2) Inquiry – to apply critical, logical, creative, aesthetic, or quantitative analytical reasoning to formulate a judgement or conclusion;
- 3) Social Consciousness – to understand what it means to be a socially conscious person, locally and globally;
- 4) Responsibility – to recognize how personal choices affect self and society.

Course Outcomes and Competencies

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

Outcome #1: Students will be able to explain how human behavior relates to the social sciences, dictates its methods, and leads to the need for government in civil society.

Competency 1.1: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the field of the political science as a social science.

Competency 1.2: Students will explain methodological and informational differences between the social sciences and the natural/physical sciences.

Competency 1.3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of what government is, and explain how their lives would be different if there was no government in society.

Competency 1.4: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methods used by government to regulate human behavior.

Competency 1.5: Students will be able to explain and cite examples of the three major governmental types, based on control of the political apparatus.

Competency 1.6: Students will be able to contrast direct and indirect democracy.

Outcome #2: Students will gain an overview of the content of the Declaration of Independence, and learn the origins and content of the Constitution.

Competency 2.1: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the general philosophic bases in the Declaration of Independence, including the contribution of John Locke.

Competency 2.2: Students will be able to explain why the Articles of Confederation system failed and how that failure led to the writing of the Constitution.

Competency 2.3: Students will be able to outline the membership requirements, organizational structures, and roles of the three branches of government, as specified in the Constitution.

Competency 2.4: Students will demonstrate an understanding of how to amend the Constitution, and why the Bill of Rights was added as Amendments.

Outcome #3: Students will gain an overview of civil liberties and rights in America.

Competency 3.1: Students will be able to identify the Bill of Rights and the rights contained therein.

Competency 3.2: Students will be able to discuss the addition of civil rights to the constitution through Amendments.

Competency 3.3: Students will be able to compare and contrast civil liberties and civil rights and discuss how both are necessary for the basic protections of human rights.

Competency 3.4: Students will be able to discuss current and often controversial subjects about civil liberties and civil rights, including race/racism, sex/sexism, lgbtqia+ rights/discrimination, etc., and how government and society contribute to and are influenced by discrimination.

Outcome #4: Students will gain an overview of the efforts that public opinions, interest groups, and voters make to externally influence our government.

Competency 4.1: Students will be able to define public opinion.

Competency 4.2: Students will be able to define interest group, describe its goals, and cite specific names of groups.

Competency 4.3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of tactics used by interest groups in America in attempting to accomplish their goals.

Competency 4.4: Students will be able to cite characteristics of American voters.

Competency 4.5: Students will demonstrate an understanding of which categories of people vote more often than their counterparts, and why these people make the voting decisions that they do.

Competency 4.6: Students will demonstrate an understanding of how laws are used to allow or limit access to voting.

Competency 4.7: Students will demonstrate an understanding of why free, fair and open elections are vital to a functioning democratic society.

Competency 4.8: Students will demonstrate an understanding of pluralism and why a pluralistic society is good for democratic institutions.

Outcome #5: Students will gain an understanding of political parties, nominations, and elections in exercising internal control on our governmental system.

Competency 5.1: Students will be able to define what a political party is and explain why we have a two-major-party-culture in America.

Competency 5.2: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the organizational structure of U.S. political parties and the role performed by each part in the structure.

Competency 5.3: Students will be able to explain how a person is nominated for non-partisan public office, ordinary partisan public office, and for the presidency.

Competency 5.4: Students will be able to explain how elections work and how the vote of the people and the electoral college are the ultimate determinants of who holds office.

Competency 5.5: Students will be able to explain the importance of voting in a democratic country, as this is the primary control on government.

Outcome #6: Students will be able to identify the 3 branches of government and the importance of checks and balances in a democracy.

Competency 6.1: Students will be able to describe the legislative branch and its functions. Students will know how House and Senate Seats are determined and why Congress is the most powerful branch of government.

Competency 6.2: Students will be able to describe the executive branch and its functions. Students will know the powers and limits on presidential powers and the importance of insuring that no single individual holds dominion over the country.

Competency 6.3: Students will be able to describe the judicial branch and its functions. Students will know how the Court issues decisions and how this positively and negatively affects American civil rights and liberties.

Outcome #7: Students will be able to identify and explain what the media is and how to evaluate it to avoid bias.

Competency 7.1: Students will gain an understanding of the importance of a free press in maintaining a free society.

Competency 7.2: Students will be able to understand media bias and distinguish that from deliberate misinformation and conspiracies.

Competency 7.3: Students will be able to describe confirmation bias and how to avoid it.