COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE TITLE
POS111 American Government

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Includes the background of the U.S. Constitution, the philosophy of American government, general principles of the Constitution, federalism, and civil liberties. Examines public opinion and citizen participation, political parties, interest groups, electoral process, and the structure and functions of the national government. This course is one of the Statewide Guaranteed Transfer courses. GT-SS1

Link to gtPathways Requirement Course Information Page

TOPICAL OUTLINE

I. History
   a. Development of early republic
   b. Ideas, ideologies, and events

II. Constitution and federalism
    a. History
    b. Development
    c. Purpose

III. Civil liberties and civil rights
     a. Theories and historical events
     b. Constitutional amendments
     c. Court decisions

IV. Public opinion, elections, the media
    a. Theory and practice

V. Political parties and interest groups
   a. Development and impact

VI. Branches of government
    a. Powers
b. Theoretical approaches  
c. Separation of powers and checks and balances

VII. Policy
   a. Issues and outcomes

**Credit Hours**

3

**Suggested Prerequisite Knowledge**

None

**GT Pathways:**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has approved POS 111 for inclusion in the Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways program in the GT- SS1 category. For transferring students, successful completion with a minimum C– grade guarantees transfer and application of credit in this GT Pathways category. For more information on the GT Pathways program, go to [http://highered.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/gtpathways/curriculum.html](http://highered.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/gtpathways/curriculum.html)

**Social & Behavioral Science Content Criteria GT-SS1 (Economics and Political Principles)**

a. Demonstrate knowledge of economic or political systems.

b. Use the social sciences to analyze and interpret issues.

c. Explain diverse perspectives and groups.

**Competencies & Student Learning Outcomes for GT-SS1:**

*Critical Thinking:

1. **Explain an Issue**
   
a. Use information to describe a problem or issue and/or articulate a question related to the topic.

2. **Utilize Context**
   
a. Evaluate the relevance of context when presenting a position.

   b. Identify assumptions.

   c. Analyze one’s own and others’ assumptions.
5. Understand Implications and Make Conclusions

a. Establish a conclusion that is tied to the range of information presented. b. Reflect on implications and consequences of stated conclusion.

Civic Engagement:

1. Civic Knowledge

a. Connect disciplinary knowledge to civic engagement through one’s own participation in civic life, politics, and/or government.

CCCOnline Course Policies

The CCCOnline Course Policies page contains information about the student’s role in the classroom, grading policies, and rights and responsibilities.
COURSE MATERIALS

All course reading material is available online and linked within the course site. You do not need to purchase any additional materials.

MINIMUM COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

To complete this course, you will need regular access to a computer from which you can get to the internet and use email. In order to ensure that your course functions properly, you must run the System Check. This is a CRITICAL STEP, and taking the time to do it now will eliminate a tremendous amount of frustration for you later. To run the System Check, click Tools in the course NavBar and then click System Check.

REQUIRED eTEXT


DIGITAL CONTENT USED IN ADDITION TO eTEXT

There is additional required digital content listed in each Module under Read/View.
Course Competencies and Outcomes

Student Competencies

The competencies you will demonstrate in this course are as follows:

A. Demonstrate knowledge of historical developments of early republic, democratic theory, federalism, and institutionalism.
B. Examine key elements of the United States Constitution and changes related to judicial interpretations as well as socio-economic developments.
C. Evaluate political parties, the electoral process, and interest groups.
D. Analyze public opinion and the Media.
E. Demonstrate an understanding of civil liberties and civil rights.
F. Examine the three branches of government.
G. Interpret public policy themes and issues.

The module outcomes that will permit you to demonstrate course competencies are:

Module 1

# Outcomes Competencies
1 Explain the evolution of American democracy and describe the various forms of democracy. A
2 Describe major events during the establishment and creation of the US Constitution. B
3 Identify the basic principles and philosophy of the US Constitution and assess the impact of these principles on the political system. B
4 Explain the constitutional, historical, and legal basis of federalism. A
5 Relate current events to theories and ideas about government D,G

Module 2

# Outcomes Competencies
1 Examine public opinion, political socialization, and the media’s impact on voter behavior. D
2 Describe the roles and structure of the political party system and evaluate the American two party system. C
3 Identify the types, functions, and operations of interest groups and Political Action Committees in the American political system. C
4 Evaluate the purpose and process of the American electoral system. C
5 Identify a political issue that will allow the student to interact with government. G
6 Relate current events to theories and ideas about government D,G
### MODULE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Describe the structure, functions, and powers of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of government.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Compare the separation of powers and the checks and balances each branch has over the other branches of government.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify and assess the structure, powers, and functions of the federal bureaucracy.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Identify appropriate research resources and write an annotated bibliography related to a political issue.</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Relate current events to theories and ideas about government.</td>
<td>D,G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### MODULE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Compare and contrast civil rights and civil liberties and identify their constitutional basis.</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Examine and describe important Supreme Court rulings based on the Constitution and its amendments.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Describe the evolutionary nature of our civil rights and civil liberties.</td>
<td>B, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Write an essay related to a political issue in which the student connects disciplinary knowledge through participation in civic life, politics, and/or government.</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Relate current events to theories and ideas about government.</td>
<td>D,G</td>
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### MODULE 5

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Describe and evaluate the role of the political institutions in shaping America’s domestic policies.</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Describe and evaluate the role of the political institutions in shaping America’s foreign policies.</td>
<td>G</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify and assess the impact of government on their daily lives.</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prepare a summary of and present their interaction project to their peers.</td>
<td>G</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Relate current events to theories and ideas about government.</td>
<td>D,G</td>
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**Grading and Evaluation**

**Methods**

Evaluation includes a combination of discussion participation, assignments, and other evaluations. Rubrics are provided for assignments and discussions.

**Grading Policies**

Mark all Module due dates on your calendar for this class. You may submit assignments AHEAD of schedule. Written assignments submitted through the Assignment folder may be submitted up to five days late with a 10% late penalty per day (up to 50%), with the exception of any assignments which are due the last day of class. Written assignments will not be accepted late after this five-day grace period. No late work will be accepted for the discussions. Discussions are designed for students to discuss module concepts in the week they are covered; therefore, discussions cannot be submitted after their due date.

**Summary of Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Discussions (10 @ 25 points each)</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Events Discussions (5 @ 40 points each)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Essay Assignments (5 @ 50 points each)</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Topic Essay (1 @ 25 points)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Annotated Bibliography (1 @ 50 points)</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Final Interaction Project Essay (1 @ 150 points)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Presentation Discussion (1 @ 75 points)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Project* (subtotal)</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
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**Grading Scale**

A = 90 to 100%  
B = 80 to 89%  
C = 70 to 79%  
D = 60 to 69%  
F = 59% and below

**Discussions**

There are 16 required discussions, with 3-4 discussions in every Module. Participation in these asynchronous Discussions is a very important part of the class experience and cannot be made up. Plan accordingly, as not participating will have a negative effect on your final course grade.

Specific instructions and advice for how to get a Proficient grade for these discussions can be found on the Discussions page.
ASSIGNMENTS
Each Module has a short essay designed to help you meet the overall competencies of this course. There are also Interaction Project elements that are part of your final essay and presentation, with one element due in modules 2 through 5. These elements include a topic essay, an annotated bibliography, the final of your interaction essay and a presentation.

Specific instructions and rubrics for these assignments can be found in each Module.

QUIZZES
There are short Check Your Understanding quizzes in each Module's Exploration. These quizzes are optional reviews to help you learn, and are not graded.
**Course Schedule**

The Schedule is subject to change as needed.

This page summarizes all of the graded assignments, exams, and reading assignments for the course. If you want, you can print it out and post it somewhere handy.

All assignments are described in detail on the Module assignment pages. If you have questions check there and/or send me an e-mail.

**This course is not self-paced and is not open-exit.** All written assignments are to be completed by no later than 11:59 pm MST/MDT of the due date. All discussions are to be completed by no later than 10:00 pm MST/MDT of the due date.

NOTE: Important CCCOnline semester dates (e.g., drop/withdraw/term end) appear on the CCCOnline calendar.

The instructor reserves the right to change the course schedule.

**Module 1**

**Reading/Assignments/Exams**

- Read Chapters 1, 2, 3 in American Government
- Complete the Student Introductions discussion
- Participate in Discussion 1: Establishing and Limiting Government
- Participate in Discussion 2: Federalism
- Participate in Discussion 3: Module 1 Current News Event discussion
- Complete Module 1 Essay Assignment: Constitutional Principles
  - Essay, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu
  - *Students must participate in a graded assessment in Module 1 by XXX, or they will be dropped for non participation.*

**Module 2**

**Reading/Assignments/Exams**

- Read Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 in American Government
- Complete Module 2 Interaction Project: Topic Essay, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu
- Participate in Discussion 1: Voter Turnout
- Participate in Discussion 2: Reform of the Electoral College
- Participate in Discussion 3: Module 2 Current News Event discussion
- Complete Module 2 Essay Assignment: Political Participation Essay, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu
**MODULE 3**

**Reading/Assignments/Exams**
- Read Chapters 11, 12, 13, 15 in American Government
- Complete Module 2 Interaction Project: Annotated Bibliography, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu
- Participate in Discussion 1: The Three Branches and the Bureaucracy
- Participate in Discussion 2: Reducing the Bureaucracy
- Participate in Discussion 3: Module 3 Current News Event discussion
- Complete Module 3 Essay Assignment: Government's Impact on Our Lives Essay, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu

**MODULE 4**

**Reading/Assignments/Exams**
- Read Chapters 4, 5 in American Government
- Complete Module Interaction Project: Final Essay, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu
- Participate in Discussion 1: Our Most Important Civil Liberties and Rights
- Participate in Discussion 2: Analyzing Free Speech
- Participate in Discussion 3: Module 4 Current News Event discussion
- Complete Module 4 Essay Assignment: Important Civil Liberties and Civil Rights, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu

**MODULE 5**

**Reading/Assignments/Exams**
- Read Chapters 16, 17 in American Government
- Complete Module 5 Interaction Project: Presentation, due on the Discussion page
- Participate in Discussion 1: The Best and Worst of Foreign and Domestic Policy
- Participate in Discussion 2: Applying Government to Our Daily Lives
- Participate in Discussion 3: Module 5 Current News Event discussion
- Complete Module 5 Essay assignment: The Impact of Government Policy, due on the Assignments page on the Course Menu

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