PSC102H

HONORS U.S. AND MISSOURI GOVERNMENTS AND CONSTITUTIONS

3 Credit Hours

Prepared by:
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September 2009

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PSC102H Honors U.S. and Missouri Governments and Constitutions

I. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

A. Prerequisite: Honors Program qualification

B. Three (3) Credit Hours

C. U.S. and Missouri Government and Constitutions Honors examines the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions including their impact on federal, state and local government structure and power. Focus is on citizen and group efforts to influence government policies. Fulfills the Missouri and US Constitutions requirements. Partially fulfills the history-political science requirement for the Associate of Arts and Associate of Applied Science Degrees. (S)

II. EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES/ASSESSMENT MEASURES

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Expected Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
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<tr>
<td>Describe the environment of the American political system by examining the political ideologies and theories of democracy that influenced the construction of our system of government.</td>
<td>Class Discussion&lt;br&gt;Written Exam&lt;br&gt;Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline the structure of our federal and state governments, as set up in the Constitutions.</td>
<td>Class Discussion&lt;br&gt;Written Exam&lt;br&gt;Quiz</td>
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<td>Describe the links between citizens and government. In this, they should articulate key concepts about voting, political parties, campaigns, and other forms of political participation.</td>
<td>Class Discussion&lt;br&gt;Written Exam&lt;br&gt;Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize (1) the structure and interactions of the presidency, congress, bureaucracy, and courts and (2) how the institutions are intended to respond to citizen inputs.</td>
<td>Class Discussion&lt;br&gt;Written Exam&lt;br&gt;Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examine practices and processes that describe how governmental institutions work and interact to create domestic and foreign policy.</td>
<td>Class Discussion&lt;br&gt;Written Exam&lt;br&gt;Quiz</td>
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Demonstrate the effect government has on your daily life.

Class Discussion
Written Exam
Research Project

III. COURSE OUTLINE WITH UNIT OBJECTIVES

A. Unit One: The Environment of our System

1. Origins of the American System. Students will:
   a. Define the word “politics.”
   b. Define “ideology” and its component parts, beliefs and values.
   c. Identify the key components of three classic ideologies (Classical Conservatism, Classical Liberalism, Classical Socialism).
   d. Examine what Classic Liberalism is, why it is the “American” ideology, and why it makes the United States unique as the world’s most classically liberal nation.
   e. Describe the difference between a democracy and a republic
   f. Explain the contributions of Rousseau, Locke, Montesquieu, and Newton to the American version of democracy.

2. The Constitution. Students should be able to:
   a. List the weaknesses of our first national government, the Articles of Confederation and why certain leaders felt it was necessary to create a new government (patriots, merchants)
   b. Explain how the framers of the Constitution were pragmatic politicians who in large part drafted the Constitution to solve practical problems of governance, identify the key parts of the Constitution, both in the main body and the Amendments (the 7 articles and, at a minimum, the first 10 amendments and the Civil War Amendments).
   c. Identify the major sections of the Missouri Constitution (especially Articles 1-4 and 12).

3. Federalism. Students should be able to:
   a. Define federalism and understand why it was included in the Constitution.
   b. Describe the clauses in the Constitution relevant to the power of the central government in the state-federal relationship (supremacy clause, full faith and credit, privileges and immunities, elastic, commerce, etc.).
   c. Describe the clauses in the Constitution relevant to the power of the state governments in the state-federal relationship (enumerated powers, 10th amendment, 11th amendment, etc.).
   d. Explain the importance of McCulloch v. Maryland.
   e. Explain the concept of “devolution” in the state-federal relationship.
   f. Apply the modern relevance of federalism and its implications.
B. Unit Two: Links Between the Government and the Governed

1. Political Participation. Students should be able to:
   a. Define political participation.
   b. Discover why some people are more likely to participate in politics than others.
   c. Explain why Americans, in general, participate at lower rates than people in other democratic countries (most nations have very different political party systems).
   d. Explain why Americans now participate at lower rates than Americans of forty years ago (should include possible explanations as well as the argument that the decline in participation is overblown).
   e. Explain why some interest groups are more “successful” than others (explain the difference between economic interest groups and public interest groups).
   f. Identify the ways in which interest groups influence the policymaking process (lobbying, grassroots lobbying, etc.).

2. Public Opinion and the News Media. Students should be able to:
   a. Explain the role public opinion should play in governing a representative democracy (be conversant with the terms “delegate,” “trustee,” and “politico”).
   b. Describe the possible flaws in public opinion polling and how to be a careful consumer of such polls (understand sampling, question wording, survey design, margin of error).
   c. Describe the problems with the coverage of politics by the news media (overemphasis on scandal and sensational events).
   d. Explain how politicians use the news media (use of staged events, trial balloons and leaks, extensive PR staff).
   e. Examine how the news media have changed politics (image over substance).

3. Political parties. Students should be able to:
   a. Define a political party and distinguish it from an interest group.
   b. Explain the functions served by parties in a representative democracy.
   c. Describe how the Progressive Era reforms and how they weakened parties in the United States.
   d. Explain the difference between choosing representatives from single member, simple plurality districts (and states in the case of Senators) and proportional representation.
   e. Explain why we have a predominantly two-party system in the United States.
   f. Describe the role third parties have historically played in the United States.
4. Campaigns. Students should be able to:
   a. Explain the criteria for a good election (turnout, absence of fraud and demagoguery, be informational, influence what government does).
   b. Analyze recent elections by the criteria for a good election.
   c. Explain what the Electoral College is and how it works.
   d. Recognize the current state of campaign finance law in the United States (should know the FECA amendments of 1973, Buckley v. Valeo, Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, McConnell v. FEC, more recent developments).

C. Unit Three: Institutions and Issues
1. Congress. Students should be able to:
   a. Explain the local orientation of members of Congress (which means that they should know Congress is better at serving local interests than the national interest and why that is the case).
   b. Describe the structure of the House and Senate.
   c. Demonstrate the process of how a bill becomes a law.
   d. Explain the passage of the annual budget is Congress’s biggest job and know how that process works.

2. Executive Branch. Students should be able to:
   a. Recognize who can legally become president and contrast it with the far more limited (demographically) group of people who have actually served as president.
   b. List the functions, or jobs, of the president.
   c. Distinguish between the formal (constitutional) and informal (evolved) powers of the president.
   d. Explain why the president is much more effective as a foreign policy leader than a domestic policy leader.
   e. Recite the characteristics and functions of the bureaucracy, as well as the manner in which it fits into a democratic society.

3. The Courts. Students should be able to:
   a. Explain the primary function (adjudicating) and primary objective (protect civil liberties) of courts.
   b. Answer important questions about the design of the federal judiciary through an understanding of Hamilton’s Federalists papers on the subject (why permanent tenure in office, why selection by the president and confirmation by the senate, why a small, collegial court).
   c. Describe the design of the federal judiciary (district, circuit, supreme courts); understand how the Supreme Court functions.
   d. Define judicial review and be able to explain the importance of Marbury v. Madison.
e. List the factors which influence Supreme Court decisions (the Constitution, the law, personal views of the justices, public opinion).

f. Describe the limits on the power of the Supreme Court (the president, the Congress, the Constitution, judicial restraint).

g. Explain the difference between civil rights and civil liberties.

h. Define selective incorporation.

i. Identify the constitutional amendments that bear on our most important right, voting (15, 17, 19, 23, 24, 26).

4. Policy. Students should be able to:
   a. Explain what type of economic system the United States has.
   b. Explain why the government is involved in regulating the economy.
   c. Explain the difference between fiscal and economic policy.
   d. Assess the foreign policy goals of the United States.
   e. Describe the process of making foreign policy in a democracy.
   f. Differentiate between the country’s military and economic tools for making foreign policy.
   g. Examine the ways in which political institutions and the attitudes of the general public interact in the production of both foreign and domestic policy.

IV. METHOD(S) OF INSTRUCTION

   A. Lecture
   B. Class Discussion
   C. Student Presentations
   D. Media
   E. Reading of textbook, books and articles as assigned

V. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S)


VI. REQUIRED MATERIALS

Portfolio
VII. SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES

A. Library Resources: present offerings and anticipated texts, journals, video/audio tapes, software, etc.

B. Other

VIII. METHOD OF EVALUATION (basis for determining course grade)

A. Exams: There will be four exams given during the semester. The tests will consist of true-false, multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

B. Research Project: Students will prepare a five-eight page research paper which may be also presented to the class in an appropriate format. Topics may be student selected but must be instructor approved.

C. Quizzes: Students will be expected to learn how to analyze and understand their readings and lecture notes.

D. Grading Scale:
   A= 100-90%
   B= 89-80%
   C=79-70%
   D=69-60%
   F=59-0%

IX. ADA STATEMENT

Any student requiring special accommodations should inform the instructor and the Coordinator of Disability Support Services (Library; phone 636-797-3000, ext. 169).

X. ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

All students are responsible for complying with campus policies as stated in the Student Handbook (see College Website, http://www.jeffco.edu/jeffco/index.php?option=com_weblinks&catid=26&Itemid=84