

## COURSE SYLLABUS

<b>LAST REVIEW</b>	Spring 2021
<b>COURSE TITLE</b>	American Government
<b>COURSE NUMBER</b>	POSC 0111
<b>DIVISION</b>	Social and Behavioral Sciences & Public Services
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Political Science
<b>CIP CODE</b>	24.0101
<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>	3
<b>CONTACT HOURS/WEEK</b>	Class: 3
<b>PREREQUISITES</b>	None
<b>COURSE PLACEMENT</b>	Students must meet the correct placement measure for this course. Information may be found at: <a href="https://www.kckcc.edu/admissions/information/mandatory-evaluation-placement.html">https://www.kckcc.edu/admissions/information/mandatory-evaluation-placement.html</a>

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Study of the historical backgrounds, governing principles, institutions, domestic and foreign policy goals of the National Government of the United States.

### KANSAS SYSTEMWIDE TRANSFER: POL1020

The learning outcomes and competencies detailed in this course outline or syllabus meet or exceed the learning outcomes and competencies specified by the Kansas Core Outcomes Groups project for this course as approved by the Kansas Board of Regents.

#### General Education Learning Outcome

- Basic Skills for Communication
- Mathematics
- Humanities
- Natural and Physical Sciences
- Social and Behavioral Sciences

#### Institutional Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Computation and Financial Literacy
- Critical Reasoning
- Technology and Information Literacy
- Community and Civic Responsibility
- Personal and Interpersonal Skills

#### TEXTBOOKS

<http://kckccbookstore.com/>

#### METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

A variety of instructional methods may be used depending on content area. These include but are not limited to: lecture, multimedia, cooperative/collaborative learning, labs and

demonstrations, projects and presentations, speeches, debates, panels, conferencing, performances, and learning experiences outside the classroom. Methodology will be selected to best meet student needs.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

- I. American Political Culture: Seeking a More Perfect Union
  - A. Political Culture: The Core Principles of American Government ( Liberty, Equality, Self-Government, Individualism, Unity and Diversity )
    - 1. Core ideals are symbolic and do not match reality
    - 2. Core ideals shape expectations and define boundaries
  - B. America's Core Values: Liberty, Equality and Self- Government
  - C. Politics: The Resolution of Conflict
  - D. Political Power: The Control of Policy
    - 1. Democracy promotes self-government
    - 2. Constitutionalism restricts the lawful use of power
    - 3. Capitalism distributes economic costs and benefits
  - E. Theories of Political Power
    - 1. Majoritarianism: Government by the People
    - 2. Pluralism: Government by Groups
    - 3. Elitism: Government by a Few
    - 4. Bureaucratic Rule: Government by Administrators
  - F. The Political System Model and the Course Organization
- II. Constitutional Democracy: Promoting Liberty & Self-Government
  - A. The Colonial and Revolutionary Experience
    - 1. British Tradition of Common Law
    - 2. John Locke and the Declaration of Independence
    - 3. Weakness under the Articles of Confederation
  - B. Negotiating Toward a Constitution
    - 1. The Great Compromise results in Bicameral Legislature
    - 2. The North-South Compromise
    - 3. National vs. State Sovereignty
  - C. Protecting Liberty: Limited Government
    - 1. Separation of Powers
    - 2. System of Checks and Balances
    - 3. Federalism Shares Power with States
  - D. Providing for Self-Government
  - E. Constitutional Government Today
- III. Federalism: Forging a Nation
  - A. Federalism: National and State Sovereignty
    - 1. Enumerated and Implied Powers
    - 2. Reserved Powers of the States
    - 3. Federalism vs. Confederacy vs. Unitary Form
  - B. Federalism in Historical Perspective

- C. Federalism Today
- D. Setting the Boundaries of Federal - State Power

#### IV. Civil Liberties: Protecting Individual Rights

- A. Freedom of Expression
- B. Freedom of Religion
- C. The Right of Privacy
- D. Rights of Persons Accused of Crimes
- E. Rights and the War on Terrorism
- F. The Courts and a Free Society

#### V. Equal Rights: Struggling Toward Fairness

- A. The Struggle for Equality
- B. Equality Under the Law
  - 1. Reasonable Basis Test
  - 2. Strict Scrutiny Test and Suspect Classifications
  - 3. Intermediate Scrutiny Test
- C. Equality of Result
  - 1. De jure vs. De facto discrimination
  - 2. Affirmative Action
  - 3. School Busing
- D. Persistent Discrimination: Superficial Differences, Deep Divisions

#### VI. Public Opinion and Political Socialization: Shaping the People's Voice

- A. The Nature of Public Opinion
- B. Political Socialization: How Americans Learn Their Politics
  - 1. The Primacy Principle
  - 2. The Structuring Principle
  - 3. Age Cohort Tendency in Transformations
- C. Frames of Reference: How Americans Think Politically
  - 1. Cultural Thinking
  - 2. Ideological Thinking
    - a. Conservatives
    - b. Liberals
    - c. Populists
    - d. Libertarians
  - 3. Group Thinking
  - 4. Partisan Thinking
- D. The Influence of Public Opinion on Policy

#### VII. Political Participation and Voting: Expressing the Popular Will

- A. Voter Participation
- B. Other Conventional Forms of Participation
- C. Unconventional Forms of Participation
  - 1. Activism
  - 2. Social Movements
  - 3. Protest Politics

D. Participation and the Potential for Influence

VIII. Political Parties, Candidates and Campaigns: Defining the Voter's Choice

- A. Party Competition and Majority Rule: The History of U.S. Political Parties:
- B. Electoral and Party Systems
- C. Party Organizations
- D. The Candidate-Centered Campaign
- E. Parties, Candidates and the Public's Influence

IX. Interest Groups: Organizing for Influence

- A. Political Parties vs. Interest Groups
- B. The Interest Group System 1. Economic Groups 2. Citizen Groups 3. Governmental Interest Groups
- C. Inside Lobbying: Seeking Influence Through Official Contacts
- D. Outside Lobbying: Seeking Influence Through Public Pressure
- E. The Interest Group System: Indispensable but Biased

X. The News Media: Communicating Political Images

- A. The Development of the News Media: From Partisanship to Objective Journalism
- B. Freedom and Conformity in the American News Media
- C. The News Media as a Link: Roles the Press Can and Cannot Perform
- D. Organizing the Public in the Media Age

XI. Congress - Balancing National Goals and Local Interests

- A. Congress as a Career: Election to Congress
- B. Congressional Leadership
- C. The Committee System
- D. How a Bill Becomes a Law
- E. The Policymaking Role of Congress
- F. Local Constituencies vs. Majoritarian Interests
- G. Too Much Pluralism?

XII. The Presidency: Leading the Nation

- A. Foundations of the Modern Presidency
- B. Choosing the President
- C. Staffing the Presidency and the Executive Branch
- D. Factors in Presidential Leadership

XIII. The Federal Bureaucracy: Administering the Government

- A. The Federal Bureaucracy: Form, Personnel & Activities
- B. Development of the Federal Bureaucracy: Politics and Administration
- C. The Bureaucratic Power Imperative
- D. Bureaucratic Accountability
- E. Reinventing Government

XIV. The Judiciary: Applying the Law

- A. The Federal Judicial Court System
- B. Federal Court Appointees
- C. The Nature of Judicial Decision Making
- D. Political Influences on Judicial Decisions
- E. Judicial Power and Democratic Government

XV. Economic and Environmental Policy: Contributing to Prosperity

- A. Government as Regulator of the Economy
- B. Government as Protector of the Environment
- C. Government as Promoter of Economic Interests
  - 1. Fiscal Policy
  - 2. Monetary Policy

XVI. Welfare and Education Policy: Providing for Personal Security and Need

- A. Poverty in America
- B. The Politics and Policies of Social Welfare
- C. Individual Benefit Programs
- D. Education as Equality of Opportunity: The American Way
- E. Culture, Politics and Social Welfare

XVII. Foreign Policy and Defense Policy: Protecting the American Way

- A. The Roots of U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy
- B. The Process of Foreign and Military Policymaking
- C. The Military Dimension of National Security Policy
- D. The Economic Dimension of National Security Policy
- E. A New World

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will:

- A. CLO #1 The student will be able to discuss the relationship between government, politics, and power in the United States Democracy and the roles that people can play to affect policy and action.
  - 1. The student will be able to examine the breadth of the impact of government on the average citizen's life.
- B. CLO #2 The student will be able to explain the idea that the United States Constitution is a living document as it is interpreted and changed to reflect the conditions of the times throughout history.
  - 1. The student will be able to explore the relationship between government, politics, democracy, and power.
  - 2. The student will be able to examine the origins and political foundation of the United States Declaration of Independence and Constitution.
  - 3. The student will be able to state the causes of the American Revolution.
  - 4. The student will be able to explain why the American Revolution is consistent with British constitutional values.

5. The student will be able to list the main weaknesses of the government of the United States that operated under Articles of Confederation.
  6. The student will be able to identify the four major compromises agreed to by the participants at the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention.
  7. The student will be able to indicate the votes in the “big four” states for and against the adoption of the new constitution.
- C. CLO #3 The student will be able to explain the challenges the U.S. Constitution has weathered during crisis situations like Watergate. Discuss constitutional and historical origins of impeachment.
1. The student will be able to discuss the impact of government of your life.
  2. The student will be able to state the titles held by persons elected to leadership positions in both U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.
  3. The student will be able to identify the five major support systems of the President of the United States.
  4. The student will be able to explain how procedural rights differ from substantive rights.
  5. The student will be able to discuss the process of selecting a supreme court judge.
- D. CLO #4 The student will be able to explain political socialization, citizen participation, and the role of the media and government in the United States Democracy.
1. The student will be able to describe the changing role of the United States in the contemporary world.
  2. The student will be able to understand the role of human rights in American foreign policy.
  3. The student will be able to discuss the role of the national security council in the executive department.
  4. The student will be able to discuss the foreign policy process within the State Department.
  5. The student will be able to discuss opening up world trade through GATT and WTO.
  6. The student will be able to discuss Keynesian economics in national politics.
  7. The student will be able to discuss the national debt and its impact on federal policy.
  8. The student will be able to define judicial review.
- E. CLO #5 The student will be able to discuss the role of interest groups and the political parties.
1. The student will be able to indicate values held by each of the two major political parties in the United States.
- F. CLO #6 The student will be able to describe the organization of the U.S. Congress, its leadership, structure, and committee system; discuss how a bill becomes law; explain the relationship between Congress and President.
1. The student will be able to trace the steps involved when a bill becomes a law in the U.S. Congress.
  2. The student will be able to state the main aspects of the congressional support staff and describe their general duties.
  3. The student will be able to list the major steps involved in the formation of the U.S.

national budget from its beginning in the Office of Management and Budget to its final passage by Congress

4. The student will be able to identify constitutional duties of the chief executive officer of the United States, and indicate whether they make high, moderate, or low demands on the office.
  5. The student will be able to describe the composition of a “typical” U.S. board or commission, and the general powers given to such a board or commission by congress.
  6. The student will be able to explain the process by which a person is nominated and appointed to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court bench.
  7. The student will be able to present the main points in the judicial review case, Marbury vs. Madison.
- G. CLO #7 The student will be able to explain the Supreme Court as an institution; evaluate the effectiveness of the current justice system; explain the role the Bill of Rights plays in guaranteeing due process of law to those accused of a crime as they go through the judicial system.
1. The student will be able to explain how an amendment is added to the U.S. Constitution.
  2. The student will be able to discuss the impact of government on your life.

## **ASSESSMENT OF COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES**

Student progress is evaluated through both formative and summative assessment methods. Specific details may be found in the instructor’s course information document.

## **COLLEGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

*Student Handbook*

<https://www.kckcc.edu/files/docs/student-resources/student-handbook-and-code-of-conduct.pdf>

*College Catalog*

<https://www.kckcc.edu/academics/catalog/index.html>

*College Policies and Statements*

<https://www.kckcc.edu/about/policies-statements/index.html>

*Accessibility and Accommodations*

<https://www.kckcc.edu/academics/resources/student-accessibility-support-services/index.html>.