

ILLINOIS VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE



COURSE OUTLINE

DIVISION: Humanities, Fine Arts Social Sciences

COURSE: PSI 1000 American National Government

Date: 04/21/11

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite(s): None

Delivery Method: 3 **Lecture** 0 **Contact Hours** (1 contact = 1 credit hour)
 Seminar 0 **Contact Hours** (1 contact = 1 credit hour)
 Lab 0 **Contact Hours** (2 contact = 1 credit hour)
 Clinical 0 **Contact Hours** (3 contact = 1 credit hour)
 Online
 Blended

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

IAI Equivalent –**Only for Transfer Courses**–go to <http://www.itransfer.org>: S5 904

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course is a basic survey of American national government. 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.

GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS ADDRESSED

[See the last page of this form for more information.]

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

[Choose those goals that apply to this course.]

- x To apply analytical and problem solving skills to personal, social and professional issues and situations.
- x To communicate orally and in writing, socially and interpersonally.
- To develop an awareness of the contributions made to civilization by the diverse cultures of the world.
- To understand and use contemporary technology effectively and to understand its impact on the individual and society.
- x To work and study effectively both individually and in collaboration with others.
- To understand what it means to act ethically and responsibly as an individual in one's career and as a member of society.
- To develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle physically, mentally, and spiritually.
- To appreciate the ongoing values of learning, self-improvement, and career planning.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND RELATED COMPETENCIES:

[Outcomes related to course specific goals.]

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 fields of the social sciences.

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 be able to demonstrate a knowledge of basic principles and applications of law as it relates to human behavior in American society.

Competency 3.1: Students will be able to define what law is and its sources within the American legal system.

Competency 3.2: Students will be able to explain the difference between civil and criminal law.

Competency 3.3: Students will be able to contrast a misdemeanor and a felony.

Outcome #4: Students will gain an overview of civil liberties and rights in America.

Competency 4.1: Students will be able to identify the four major rights in the First Amendment and cite a Supreme Court ruling that explains some part of each of the four rights.

Competency 4.2: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the rights of the accused, including indictment, double jeopardy, jury trial, confrontation, and legal counsel.

Competency 4.3: Students will be able to explain why capital punishment was abolished nationwide in 1972, and the steps now necessary to levy that penalty today.

Competency 4.4: Students will be able to cite four Supreme Court rulings in the relationship between schools and their students.

Outcome #5: Students will gain an overview of the efforts that public opinions, interest groups, and voters make to externally influence our government.

Competency 5.1: Students will be able to define public opinion.

Competency 5.2: Students will be able to define interest group, describe its goals, and cite specific names of groups.

Competency 5.3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of tactics used by interest groups in America in attempting to accomplish their goals.

Competency 5.4: Students will be able to cite characteristics of American voters.

Competency 5.5: 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.

Outcome #6: Students will gain an understanding of political parties, nominations, and elections in exercising internal control on our governmental system.

Competency 6.1: Students will be able to define what a political party is and explain why we have a two-major-party-culture in America.

Competency 6.2: 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 6.3: 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 6.4: Students will be able to cite five methods of campaigning for public office and the three major resources needed.

Competency 6.5: Students will be able to explain four informal rules of campaigning.

COURSE TOPICS AND CONTENT REQUIREMENTS:

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:

Assigned reading
Lecture
Classroom discussion
Use of current events
Audio-visual presentations

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

Textbook: Geer, Schiller, and Segal, Gateways to Democracy, Cengage Publishing, ISBN 978-0-9189-0695-6

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION:**Class Participation – 30%**

Class attendance is required and students should come to class prepared to discuss the materials assigned for that week and to discuss any news items on the United States government they come across that should be raised for discussion. I hope that students will come to class with insightful questions and/or comments about the assigned readings and news stories, and I will also be calling on students at random to answer some questions of my own. Answers to my questions should show that the student has read and understands the class materials and that they have the ability to apply critical thinking skills to those materials. The quality of your contributions is more important than the quantity, but both are expected.

Below are some guidelines that may help you to understand my expectations and how you will be graded on this portion of your grade.

Excellent contributor (A): The student attends class on a regular basis and comes prepared with insightful comments and questions about the course materials. The student also shows a high level of critical thinking in evaluating course materials. The class as a whole benefits highly from this student's contributions.

Good contributor (B): The student attends class on a regular basis and often comes prepared with insightful comments and questions about the course material. The student also shows some critical thinking in evaluating course materials. The class as a whole generally benefits from this student's contributions.

Fair contributor (C): The student attends class more often than not and sometimes comes to class with questions or comments that reflect some insight into the course materials. The student shows some critical thinking in evaluating course materials but often struggles to see beyond personal biases. The class sometimes benefits from this student's contributions.

Unsatisfactory contributor (D): The student comes to class but is unprepared. Comments are not insightful, are extremely bias or do not benefit the class.

Non-contributor (F): The student either does not maintain regular attendance or attends but does not contribute to class discussions.

Study terms – 20%

On my webpage are study questions for each chapter. Doing the study questions is very important as they serve as a partial study guide for exam preparation and can be used on the exam. If you take the time to create good answers, then you should be able to pass the exams without any problems. My notes for this class are available online and some answers may be found in there. Otherwise, you should look to the text or online for the answers. If you are unable to find the answer to a question, ask me in class or email me. **You must cite your sources on your homework each week that you turn it in. If you only use my notes and the text, then simply write that at the top of the homework you turn in. If you use other sources, you must list those sources next to the question for which they were used. You may not use wikis, blogs, encyclopedias or other unreliable sources. Students who do not list their sources will receive one warning and will be given the opportunity to resubmit the questions. After that, homework submitted without sources will receive an automatic grade of zero with no chance for a do over.** These questions, along with class notes, discussions and reading assignments, will be the basis for exams.

Exams–50%

There will be four written exams throughout the semester. The dates and topic materials are listed in the syllabus. **You must bring a blue book with you to class on exam day. Blue books can be purchased in the bookstore for a nominal fee.** Exams will consist of short answer questions.

OTHER REFERENCES

N/A

Course Competency/Assessment Methods Matrix

PSI – American National Government		Assessment Options																																
For each competency/outcome place an “X” below the method of assessment to be used.	Assessment of Student Learning	Article Review	Case Studies	Group Projects	Lab Work	Oral Presentations	Pre-Post Tests	Quizzes	Written Exams	Artifact Self Reflection of Growth	Capstone Projects	Comprehensive Written Exit Exam	Course Embedded Questions	Multi-Media Projects	Observation	Writing Samples	Portfolio Evaluation	Real World Projects	Reflective Journals	Applied Application (skills) Test	Oral Exit Interviews	Accreditation Reviews/Reports	Advisory Council Feedback	Employer Surveys	Graduate Surveys	Internship/Practicum /Site Supervisor Evaluation	Licensing Exam	In Class Feedback	Simulation	Interview	Written Report	Assignment		
	Direct/ Indirect	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	I	I	I	I	D	D								
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.		X							X			X																X					X	
Outcome #2: Students will gain an overview of the content of the Declaration of Independence, and learn the origins and content of the Constitution.									X			X																						X
Outcome #3: Students will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of basic principles and applications of law as it relates to human behavior in American society.									X			X																X					X	
Outcome #4: Students will gain an overview of civil liberties and rights in America.									X			X																X					X	
Outcome #5: Students will gain an overview of the efforts that public opinions, interest groups, and voters make to externally influence our government.									X			X																X					X	
Outcome #6: Students will gain an understanding of political parties, nominations, and elections in exercising internal control on our governmental system.									X			X																X					X	