SYLLABUS

DATE OF LAST REVIEW: 02/2013
CIP CODE: 24.0101
SEMESTER: Departmental Syllabus
COURSE TITLE: American Government
COURSE NUMBER: POSC-0111
CREDIT HOURS: 3
INSTRUCTOR: Departmental Syllabus
OFFICE LOCATION: Departmental Syllabus
OFFICE HOURS: Departmental Syllabus
TELEPHONE: Departmental Syllabus
EMAIL: KCKCC- “issued email accounts are the official means for electronically communicating with our students.”
PREREQUISITE(S): None

REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS: Please check with the KCKCC bookstore, http://www.kckccbookstore.com/, for the required texts for your particular class.

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

METHOD 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.

CORE OUTCOMES MISSION STATEMENT: The Core Outcomes Project is an academic initiative of the Kansas Board of Regents that brings together faculty for the purpose of developing core outcomes and competencies for general education courses from the state’s universities, community colleges, and technical colleges. Common core outcomes and competencies contribute to the state’s system of higher education by creating a seamless pathway for students by improving articulation and transfer between state institutions, facilitating communication within disciplines among the state’s faculty, and communicating to the state’s secondary schools the expectations of college-level curriculum that could result in improvements in college preparedness of students.

CORE OUTCOMES SYLLABI: The learning outcomes and competencies detailed in this syllabus meet or exceed the learning outcomes and competencies specified by the Kansas Core Outcomes Project for this course, as sanctioned by the Kansas Board of Regents.
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
   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

EXPECTED LEARNER OUTCOMES:

A. 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.
B. 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.
C. 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.
D. The student will be able to explain political socialization, citizen participation, and the role of the media and government in the United States Democracy.
E. The student will be able to discuss the role of interest groups and the political parties.
F. 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.
G. 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.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

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.

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.

2. The student will be able to explore the relationship between government, politics, democracy, and power.
3. The student will be able to examine the origins and political foundation of the United States Declaration of Independence and Constitution.
4. The student will be able to state the causes of the American Revolution.
5. The student will be able to explain why the American Revolution is consistent with British constitutional values.
6. The student will be able to list the main weaknesses of the government of the United States that operated under Articles of Confederation.
7. The student will be able to identify the four major compromises agreed to by the participants at the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention.
8. The student will be able to indicate the votes in the “big four” states for and against the adoption of the new constitution.

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.

9. The student will be able to discuss the impact of government of your life.
10. 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.
11. The student will be able to identify the five major support systems of the President of the United States.
12. The student will be able to explain how procedural rights differ from substantive rights.
13. The student will be able to discuss the process of selecting a supreme court judge.

The student will be able to explain political socialization, citizen participation, and the role of the media and government in the United States Democracy.
14. The student will be able to describe the changing role of the United States in the contemporary world.
15. The student will be able to understand the role of human rights in American foreign policy.
16. The student will be able to discuss the role of the national security council in the executive department.
17. The student will be able to discuss the foreign policy process within the State Department.
18. The student will be able to discuss opening up world trade through GATT and WTO.
19. The student will be able to discuss Keynesian economics in national politics.
20. The student will be able to discuss the national debt and its impact on federal policy.
21. The student will be able to define judicial review.

The student will be able to discuss the role of interest groups and the political parties.
22. The student will be able to indicate values held by each of the two major political parties in the United States.

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.
23. The student will be able to trace the steps involved when a bill becomes a law in the U.S. Congress.
24. The student will be able to state the main aspects of the congressional support staff and describe their general duties.
25. 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.
26. 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.
27. 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.
28. 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.
29. The student will be able to present the main points in the judicial review case, Marbury vs. Madison.

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.
30. The student will be able to explain how an amendment is added to the U.S. Constitution.
31. The student will be able to discuss the impact of government on your life.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER OUTCOMES:
Student progress is evaluated by means of class participation, out-of-class written assignments, multiple-choice examination on chapters covered and special reports make on current stand and local events.

SPECIAL NOTES:
This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Material included is intended to provide an outline of the course and rules that the instructor will adhere to in evaluating the student’s progress. However, this syllabus is not intended to be a legal contract. Questions regarding the syllabus are welcome any time.

Kansas City Kansas Community College is committed to an appreciation of diversity with respect for the differences among the diverse groups comprising our students, faculty, and staff that is free of bigotry and discrimination. Kansas City Kansas Community College is committed to providing a multicultural education and environment that reflects and respects diversity and that seeks to increase understanding.

Kansas City Kansas Community College offers equal educational opportunity to all students as well as serving as an equal opportunity employer for all personnel. Various laws, including Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, require the college’s policy on non-discrimination be administered without regard to race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, physical handicap, or veteran status and that such policy be made known.

*Kansas City Kansas Community College complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodations due to a documented disability, please contact Director of Academic Resource Center, in Room 3354 or call (913) 288-7670.*
Learning Outcomes

Discipline knowledge and content mastery is expected of all graduates. More specifically, KCKCC is committed to the Learning Outcomes listed below. We believe that competence in the Learning Outcomes is essential for the success of graduates and will enhance their ability to become contributing members of our increasingly complex world. These areas of knowledge and skills are equally valid for all KCKCC graduates, whether they transfer to a four-year college or pursue a career after leaving college.

General Education Learning Outcomes

Communication Learning Outcomes

The learner will have the ability to express, interpret, and modify ideas/information effectively (both written and oral), including but not limited to reading text accurately and correctly; writing with a clear purpose and effective organization; speaking effectively using appropriate styles that suit the message, purpose, and content; and employing active listening techniques.

Computation Learning Outcomes

The learner will have the ability to understand and apply mathematical concepts and reasoning using numerical data.

Critical Reasoning Learning Outcomes

The learner will understand inductive and deductive reasoning and have the ability to define problems and use data (qualitative and quantitative) to make complex decisions utilizing analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills.

Technology and Information Management Learning Outcomes

The learner will have the ability to define, collect, organize, analyze, and evaluate information from a variety of sources. The learner will also have the ability to understand basic technology concepts and functionality in order to use technology as a tool to locate and retrieve information.

Community and Civil Responsibility Learning Outcomes

The learner will demonstrate knowledge, awareness, and understanding of diverse ideas, values, and perspectives of a culturally diverse world; an understanding of the ethical issues and values that are prerequisites for making sound judgments and decisions; a recognition of the obligation to become actively involved as a contributing member of the community; and a sensitivity to the awareness of aesthetic expression.

Personal and interpersonal Skills Learning Outcomes

The learner will have the ability to work cooperatively and productively with others; to understand and evaluate his/her capabilities; to manage his/her personal growth by setting realistic and appropriate goals.
Social and Behavioral Sciences
Student Success Strategies

Know your teacher’s name.

Turn off your electronic devices in class/make paying attention to the work of the class your only concern.

Miss class only when you cannot attend/acquire missed information and materials ASAP.

Know your syllabus.

Know the attendance policy.

Know the requirements for tests and assignments.

Know information about final exam and make-up exams.

Know instructor’s position on use of Wikipedia or other online sources.

Know the instructor’s preferred writing style (APA, MLA, etc.).

Always know your grade.

Contact your teacher ASAP with concerns or questions.

Know the benefits of the academic resource center.

Know if your course has a practicum, service learning component, or other exception.

Use an academic planner.

Know the course withdrawal policy.

Know your instructor’s office hours and make appointments when necessary.

Know the school’s scholastic honesty policy.

Be familiar with the course learning objectives, course competencies, and the college’s 21st century learning outcomes for general education.