

Washtenaw Community College Comprehensive Report

PLS 112 Introduction to American Government Effective Term: Fall 2017

Course Cover

Division: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Department: Social Science

Discipline: Political Science

Course Number: 112

Org Number: 11750

Full Course Title: Introduction to American Government

Transcript Title: Intro to American Government

Is Consultation with other department(s) required: No

Publish in the Following: College Catalog , Time Schedule , Web Page

Reason for Submission: Three Year Review / Assessment Report

Change Information:

Consultation with all departments affected by this course is required.

Outcomes/Assessment

Objectives/Evaluation

Rationale: PLS 112 is up for its three year syllabus review and in need of streamlining.

Proposed Start Semester: Fall 2017

Course Description: This class studies the forms and functions of American government with emphasis on national government. The decision-making process in Congress, the Presidency and the federal court system are studied. The course also examines the relationship of political parties and public opinion to the electoral process.

Course Credit Hours

Variable hours: No

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours: Instructor: 45 **Student:** 45

Lab: Instructor: 0 **Student:** 0

Clinical: Instructor: 0 **Student:** 0

Total Contact Hours: Instructor: 45 **Student:** 45

Repeatable for Credit: NO

Grading Methods: Letter Grades

Audit

Are lectures, labs, or clinicals offered as separate sections?: NO (same sections)

College-Level Reading and Writing

College-level Reading & Writing

College-Level Math

Requisites

General Education

MACRAO

MACRAO Social Science

General Education Area 5 - Social and Behavioral Science

Assoc in Applied Sci - Area 5

Assoc in Science - Area 5

Assoc in Arts - Area 5

Michigan Transfer Agreement - MTA

MTA Social Science

Request Course Transfer

Proposed For:

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the purposes, values, and models of democratic political systems

Assessment 1

Assessment Tool: Departmental exam

Assessment Date: Winter 2017

Assessment Cycle: Every Three Years

Course section(s)/other population: Random sample of one-half of all sections including all teaching modalities.

Number students to be assessed: All students in selected sections

How the assessment will be scored: Answer key and departmentally-developed rubric

Standard of success to be used for this assessment: 70% of the students will score 70% or higher on the outcome related questions

Who will score and analyze the data: Departmental faculty will score and analyze the data

2. Summarize the Constitution's major principles of government

Assessment 1

Assessment Tool: Departmental exam

Assessment Date: Winter 2017

Assessment Cycle: Every Three Years

Course section(s)/other population: Random sample of one-half of all sections including all teaching modalities.

Number students to be assessed: All students in selected sections

How the assessment will be scored: Answer key and departmentally-developed rubric

Standard of success to be used for this assessment: 70% of the students will score 70% or higher on the outcome related questions

Who will score and analyze the data: Departmental faculty will score and analyze the data

3. Identify the basic institutions of American government and their powers and purposes in the American political system

Assessment 1

Assessment Tool: Departmental exam

Assessment Date: Winter 2017

Assessment Cycle: Every Three Years

Course section(s)/other population: Random sample of one-half of all sections including all teaching modalities.

Number students to be assessed: All students in selected sections

How the assessment will be scored: Answer key and departmentally-developed rubric

Standard of success to be used for this assessment: 70% of the students will score 70% or higher on the outcome related questions

Who will score and analyze the data: Departmental faculty will score and analyze the data

4. Define civil liberties and civil rights and identify important cases where the Courts have applied and expanded civil liberties and civil rights

Assessment 1

Assessment Tool: Departmental exam

Assessment Date: Winter 2017

Assessment Cycle: Every Three Years

Course section(s)/other population: Random sample of one-half of all sections including all teaching modalities.

Number students to be assessed: All students in selected sections

How the assessment will be scored: Answer key and departmentally-developed rubric

Standard of success to be used for this assessment: 70% of the students will score 70% or higher on the outcome related questions

Who will score and analyze the data: Departmental faculty will score and analyze the data

5. Identify the role of public opinion, the media, interest groups, political parties, and elections in the U.S. political system

Assessment 1

Assessment Tool: Departmental exam

Assessment Date: Winter 2017

Assessment Cycle: Every Three Years

Course section(s)/other population: Random sample of one-half of all sections including all teaching modalities.

Number students to be assessed: All students in selected sections

How the assessment will be scored: Answer key and departmentally-developed rubric

Standard of success to be used for this assessment: 70% of the students will score 70% or higher on the outcome related questions

Who will score and analyze the data: Departmental faculty will score and analyze the data

Course Objectives

1. Describe the major purposes of government.
2. Identify important American political values.
3. Define common American ideological positions, such as "conservative" and "liberal."
4. Explain the typology of government based on rule of one, the few, and the many.
5. Compare and contrast the different types of democracy (majoritarian, constitutional, egalitarian) and how they differ from pluralist and elitist models of government.
6. Explain the historical, political, and social origins of the U.S. Constitution.
7. Describe the system of government established under the Articles of Confederation.
8. Describe the major weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.
9. List some of the major debates and compromises made at the Constitutional Convention.
10. Discuss the Constitution's major principles of government (popular sovereignty, representative government, separation of powers, checks and balances).
11. Describe how the Constitution divides governing powers in our federal system and the evolving roles of the states and national government over the years.
12. Describe the powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
13. List the constitutional requirements for members of the House and Senate, the President, and federal judges.
14. Compare the role of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate in the constitutional framework.
15. Describe reapportionment and redistricting in U.S. House.
16. Identify the power of incumbency.
17. Explain how the powers and responsibilities of the presidency and executive branch have expanded over time.
18. Describe how federal judges are appointed and the factors considered in selecting federal judges.
19. Describe the basic organization of the federal court system.
20. Define the terms civil liberties and civil rights and explain how they differ.
21. Describe the freedoms and due process guarantees in the Bill of Rights and how courts have interpreted and applied these guarantees over time.
22. Explain the constitutional basis for our civil rights and how the Court's interpretation of "equal protection" has evolved over time.
23. Identify significant Supreme Court decisions in the area of civil liberties and civil rights.
24. Identify the role of public opinion in a democracy.
25. Explain how public opinion polls are conducted and used in the political process.
26. Describe the role of the media in a democracy.
27. Understand how the news media cover politics and its significance.
28. Explain what an interest group is, why interest groups form, and the role interest groups play in American politics.
29. Identify the most important functions of political parties.
30. Explain why the United States has a two party system and why most other democracies have multi-party systems.
31. Explain why the U.S. uses the Electoral College to select the President and describe how it works.
32. Describe the difference between nominating and general election campaigns.
33. Identify the major factors influencing voter turnout and vote choice.

34. Develop a better understanding for why civic engagement is important in the U.S. political system.

New Resources for Course

Course Textbooks/Resources

Textbooks
Manuals
Periodicals
Software

Equipment/Facilities

Level I classroom

<u>Reviewer</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>
Faculty Preparer: <i>Donna Wasserman</i>	<i>Faculty Preparer</i>	<i>Dec 07, 2016</i>
Department Chair/Area Director: <i>Gregg Heidebrink</i>	<i>Recommend Approval</i>	<i>Dec 16, 2016</i>
Dean: <i>Kristin Good</i>	<i>Recommend Approval</i>	<i>Dec 19, 2016</i>
Curriculum Committee Chair: <i>David Wooten</i>	<i>Recommend Approval</i>	<i>Feb 08, 2017</i>
Assessment Committee Chair: <i>Ruth Walsh</i>	<i>Recommend Approval</i>	<i>Feb 09, 2017</i>
Vice President for Instruction: <i>Bill Abernethy</i>	<i>Approve</i>	<i>Feb 09, 2017</i>