



A: Division: **INSTRUCTIONAL** Date: **NOVEMBER 1997**
 B: Faculty: **HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES** New Course: **X**
 Department: **POLITICAL SCIENCE** Revision of Course Information form:
 C: **POLI 209** D: **INTRODUCTION TO U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS** E: **3**

Subject & Course No. Descriptive Title Semester Credit

F: Calendar Description: The United States is Canada's largest trading partner, a military ally, a major cultural influence, as well as an important actor in international politics. This course provides students with an introduction to the principal institutions and processes of the U.S. political system including the Presidency, Congress, judiciary, bureaucracy, federalism, political parties, interest groups and electoral system. Students will have an opportunity to examine some of the enduring issues of American politics and the role of the U.S. in international politics.

Summary of Revisions: (Enter date & section) Eg: Section C,E,F

G: Type of instruction: Hrs per week / per semester
 Lecture: 2 Hrs.
 Laboratory: Hrs.
 Seminar: 2 Hrs.
 Clinical Experience: Hrs.
 Field Experience: Hrs.
 Practicum: Hrs.
 Shop: Hrs.
 Studio: Hrs.
 Student Directed Learning: Hrs.
 Other (Specify): Hrs.
 Total: 4 Hrs.

H: Course Prerequisites:
POLI 101

I: Course Corequisites:
None

J: Course for which this Course is a Prerequisite:
None

K: Maximum Class Size:
35

L: College Credit Transfer
 College Credit Non-Transfer
 Non-Credit

M: Transfer Credit: Requested:
 Granted:

Specify Course Equivalents or Unassigned Credit as appropriate:

SFU
 UBC
 UNBC
 UVIC
 Other:

Shawn Taboff
 Course Designer(s)
Marlene Hancock
 Department Chair

P. H. Doyz
 Registrar

Subject and Course Number

N. Textbooks and Materials to be Purchased by Students (Use Bibliographic Form):

Texts and course readings will be selected from the following:

Greenberg, Edward and Benjamin I. Page, The Struggle for Democracy, 2 ed. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1995

Lowi, Theodore J. and Benjamin Ginsberg, American Government: Freedom and Power, 3 ed. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994

Lowi, Theodore, Benjamin Ginsberg and Alice Hearst, Readings For American Government, 3 ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994

O'Connor, Karen and Larry Sabato, American Government: Roots and Reform: Brief Edition, 2 ed. Scarborough: Allyn and Bacon Canada, 1996

Stinebrickner, Bruce, Annual Editions: American Government, Guilford: Dushkin Publishing Group/Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1996

Welch, Susan, et al, American Government, 5 ed. St. Paul: West Publishing Group, 1994

Woll, Peter, American Government: Readings & Cases, 11 ed. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1993

Textbooks will be updated periodically.

Complete Form with Entries Under the Following Headings: O. Course Objectives; P. Course Content; Q. Method of Instruction; R. Course Evaluation

O. Course Objectives

- 1. Students will become familiar with the institutions and processes of the American government: the U.S. constitution, Presidency, Congress, judiciary and bureaucracy; federalism; the U.S. electoral and party system; and interest groups. Students will become familiar with the nature of American political culture and some of the important issues in American politics.**
- 2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complex relationships between the institutions of American government and political processes.**
- 3. Students will be able to apply their understanding of the institutions and processes of American government and politics to an examination of some of the continuing issues in U.S. politics such as the nature of American democracy, race, civil rights and civil liberties, and the role of the U.S. internationally. Students will be able to make comparisons between the American political system and the Canadian political system.**
- 4. Students will be prepared for further study of American politics.**

P. Course Content

Unit One: The Context of American Government and Politics

- Introduction -- the internal environment, the changing external role of the U.S., American political culture: individualism, anti-statism, egalitarianism, and populism
- The U.S. Constitution -- the nature of the original constitutional compromise, the separation of powers, historic constitutional amendments, constitutional change in the U.S.
- The federal system -- evolutionary development, contemporary state-federal relations

Unit Two: The Major Institutions of the National Government

- The Presidency -- the office and the person, presidential power and constraints, the evolving character of the presidency
- The Congress -- lawmaking and representation; the House of Representatives; structure, role, operations; the Senate: structure, role, operations; relations between the Senate and the House; the role of parties in the Congress; relationship with the Presidency, the Congressional Budgetary Office
- The judiciary -- structure of the federal judiciary; judicial review; the functioning of the Supreme Court; selection of the judiciary; judicial activism and restraint; the Supreme Court--civil rights and civil liberties
- The bureaucracy and policy making -- the budgetary process, the role of the presidency, congress and the bureaucracy, domestic policy, foreign policy

Unit Three: The Process of American Politics

- Interest groups -- characteristics of American interest groups; the impact of interest groups; the art of political lobbying -- the National Rifle Association (NRA); the impact of interest groups on American democracy
- Political parties and elections -- the evolution of American political parties, the decline of American political parties; the structure of the electoral system, the role of states in the national electoral system, the national convention, the electoral college

Unit Four: The Enduring Issues of American Politics

- The nature of American democracy -- the founding dream; the criticisms of American democracy; evaluating American democracy
- Civil rights: race and gender -- the continuing issue of race in American politics; American feminism, the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA); concepts of equality, affirmative action; language issues in the United States

P. Course Content (continued)

- Civil liberties -- the freedom of expression; freedom of religion; the right of privacy; property rights, the rights of persons accused of crimes
- The U.S. political economy -- the nature of the American economy, government regulation; government subsidization of industry; poverty in America
- The U.S. role in international politics -- the evolution of U.S. involvement in the international system, the linkage between domestic and foreign policy determination

Q. Method of Instruction

Presentation of the course will involve the use of formal lectures, structured group work by students, and in class discussion of assigned material. Additional readings may be assigned for each unit of the course and placed on reserve in the library. Where appropriate, audio-visual materials and computer instruction will be used.

R. Course Evaluation

Evaluations of a student's performance will be based on a combination of written examinations, a formal research paper, a seminar presentation, and participation. All evaluation elements assigned must be completed by the student.

Midterm Exam	20%
Seminar Presentation	20%
Research Essay	30%
Participation	10%*
Final Exam	20%

* Participation grades for students will be based on a combination of criteria, which will include a selection of the following:

Short in-class tests;
Attendance, participation;
Short research papers;
Book review;
Formal debate;
Instructor evaluation of individual student progress and research skills
Oral examination
Additional assignments