American Government

Course Description
This course is a study of national governmental institutions with emphasis on the constitution, the functions of executive, legislative and judicial branches, civil liberties and the role of the electorate.

Prerequisite: ENG 101.

3.0 Cr (3 lect/pres, 0 lab, 0 other)

Text and References

Course Focus
The purpose of this course is to help you gain a better understanding of the reasons for government and its place in your life. We will focus on the role of government in history, organization and operation of local, state, and national government. You will study the U.S. Constitution with particular emphasis on the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The course is intended to enable students to become active citizens in the democratic process.

PSC 201 Core Curriculum Competencies
All courses approved for the general education core curriculum help students develop communication skills and/or critical thinking.

This course develops communication skills through at least four written discussion assignments on various topics in American Government. In addition, students will be required to complete all reading assignments and communicate their learning through class discussion and tests.

This course develops critical thinking skills through the reading and interpretation of Supreme Court briefs and discussions. Written assignments will reflect students’ critical thinking on the procedural and substantive view
of key problems. In addition, discussion assignments will include such topics as mass media political influence, media bias, party functions, and political ideologies.

Course Goals
The following list of course goals will be addressed in the course. These goals are directly related to the performance objectives. (*designates a CRUCIAL goal)

1. Indicate procedural and substantive view key problems
2. Compare and contrast presidents
3. Define key terms
4. Distinguish categorical grants and block grants
5. Contrast competing federalism views
6. Rationalize bill of rights and constitution ratification
7. Discuss constitutional change processes
8. Summarize constitution article provisions
9. Describe constitutional convention compromises
10. Process federal judiciary appointment
11. Explain key concepts
12. List local government units
13. Outline substantive view principles
14. List procedural democracy principles
15. Illustrate democracy changes
16. Arrange government types
17. Characterize liberals and conservatives
18. Construct American political ideologies
19. Sketch ideological stances
20. Discern government purposes
21. Analyze government framework
22. Describe globalization affects
23. Sketch Supreme Court system
24. List minor party functions
25. Name presidential powers and duties
26. Name presidential crisis management skills
27. Explain declining popularity
28. Illustrate election process
29. Chronicle bill introduction and law making process
30. Profile interest groups
31. Assess voting patterns
32. Explain presidential campaign financing
33. Trace nineteenth and twentieth centuries power balance shift
34. Summarize republican and democratic ideological and organizational differences
35. Outline federal system advantages and disadvantages
36. Trace major political party histories
37. Describe political party functions
38. Evaluate media political contribution
39. Indicate mass media political influence
40. Assess media bias validity
41. Discuss media and private ownership consequences
42. Examine government media regulations
43. Outline mass media development
44. Characterize social or demographic linked political values
45. Contrast democracy models
46. Trace political campaigning evolution

Student Contributions
Students are expected to be fully prepared for class by completing all reading assignments in full before the class session. Attendance is a critical factor to success in this class as lecture will enhance students understanding of reading assignments.

Course Evaluation
Your final grade for the course will be determined by the average of all exam/test/quiz scores and completion of all required assignments. See CLASS INFORMATION Section for specific details about scoring procedures and due dates.

TCL's grading scale is:
90 - 100 = A
80 - 89 = B
70 - 79 = C
60 - 69 = D
Below 60 = F

Course Schedule
The class meets for 3 lecture/presentation hours per week. The content will be introduced in the same order as they are listed in the course goal section. The content goals will be finished in a varied manner.

Developed/Revised: November 11, 2010

ADA STATEMENT
The Technical College of the Lowcountry provides access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. To request disability accommodation, contact the counselor for students with disabilities at (843) 525-8228 during the first ten business days of the academic term.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
There is no tolerance at TCL for academic dishonesty and misconduct. The College expects all students to conduct themselves with dignity and to maintain high standards of responsible citizenship.

It is the student’s responsibility to address any questions regarding what might constitute academic misconduct to the course instructor for further clarification.

The College adheres to the Student Code for the South Carolina Technical College System. Copies of the Student Code and Grievance Procedure are provided in the TCL Student Handbook, the Division Office, and the Learning Resources Center.
ATTENDANCE
The College’s statement of policy indicates that students must attend ninety percent of total class hours or they will be in violation of the attendance policy.

- Students not physically attending class during the first ten calendar days from the start of the semester must be dropped from the class for NOT ATTENDING.
- Students taking an online/internet class must sign in and communicate with the instructor within the first ten calendar days from the start of the semester to indicate attendance in the class. Students not attending class during the first ten calendar days from the start of the semester must be dropped from the class for NOT ATTENDING.
- Reinstatement requires the signature of the division dean.

In the event it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from the course OR if a student stops attending class, it is the student’s responsibility to initiate and complete the necessary paperwork. Withdrawing from class may have consequences associated with financial aid and time to completion.

When a student exceeds the allowed absences; the student is in violation of the attendance policy. The instructor MUST withdrawal the student with a grade of “W”, “WP”, or “WF” depending on the date the student exceeded the allowed absences and the student’s progress up to the last date of attendance or

- Under extenuating circumstances and at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the class, allow the student to continue in the class and make-up the work. This exception must be documented at the time the allowed absences are exceeded.
- Absences are counted from the first day of class. There are no "excused" absences. All absences are counted, regardless of the reason for the absence.
  - A student must take the final exam or be excused from the final exam in order to earn a non-withdrawal grade.
  - A copy of TCL’s STATEMENT OF POLICY NUMBER: 3-1-307 CLASS ATTENDANCE (WITHDRAWAL) is on file in the Division Office and in the Learning Resources Center.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER
In case weather conditions are so severe that operation of the College may clearly pose a hardship on students and staff traveling to the College, notification of closing will be made through the following radio and television stations: WYKZ 98.7, WGCO 98.3, WGZO 103.1, WFXH 106.1, WWVV 106.9, WLOW 107.9, WGZR 104.9, WFXH 1130 AM, WLVH 101.1, WSO 1230 AM, WAEV 97.3, WTOC TV, WTGS TV, WJWJ TV, and WSAV TV. Students, faculty and staff are highly encouraged to opt in to the Emergency Text Message Alert System. www.tcl.edu/textalert.asp

EXTRA:

Emergency Text Message Alert
Students, faculty and staff are highly encouraged to opt in to the Emergency Text Message Alert System. Participants receive immediate notification of emergency events and weather cancelations via text messaging on their cell phones. Participants can also opt in to receive non-emergency news and announcements. Go to www.tcl.edu. On the homepage, click on “emergency TextAlert at TCL” and fill out the form or go to www.tcl.edu/textalert.asp

GRADING METHODOLOGY
The final grade must be 70 or more (a grade “C” or better) in order to pass the course and progress to the next course. Students absent from an examination or presentation will receive a “0” grade for the examination
unless other arrangements are made with the individual instructor prior to the examination or presentation day or on the examination or presentation day before the test/presentation is scheduled to be given.

The student is responsible for notifying the instructor for the reason of the absence. It is also the responsibility of the student to contact the appropriate instructor to arrange to make up the examination. Arrangements may be completed by telephone.

If the instructor is not available, a message should be left on the instructor’s voice mail AND with another member of the faculty or administrative assistant. The make-up exam will be scheduled and the instructor will decide the method of examination. Messages sent by other students are unacceptable.