

Date Prepared: January 06

COURSE OUTLINE

New Revised

Effective Date: Spring 06

1. **COURSE PREFIX NUMBER:** PLS 135 **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

2. **COURSE TITLE:** American National Politics

3. **PREREQUISITES:**

English placement recommendation for English 111 and satisfactory completion of English 1 and 4 if required by reading placement test. Co-requisite: English 5 and English 107 if recommended by reading placement test.

4. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Teaches political institutions and processes of the national government of the United States, focuses on the Congress, presidency, and the courts, and on their inter-relationships. Gives attention to public opinion; suffrage, elections, political parties, interest groups, civil rights, domestic policy and foreign relations. Lecture 3 hours per week.

5. **CONTENT:** (Major Headings)

- a. The nature of Politics and Government
- b. Constitutional Development and Interpretation
- c. Civil Rights and Liberties
- d. Citizenship Participation and Responsibilities
- e. Political Institutions
- f. Domestic Policy
- g. Economic Policy

6. **GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

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

- a. Be challenged to think critically about the American political process and how it affects his or her life. Special attention will be given to how citizens can acquire and use knowledge of the political system to pursue both their own interests and the public good.
- b. Demonstrate knowledge and understand:
 1. The origins of the American system of government and the principles embodied in our federal constitution;
 2. The operation and performance of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government;
 3. The roles and responsibilities of citizens in a representative democracy;
 4. The barriers to objective information about our government and ways by which they can be overcome;
 5. The function of political parties, interest groups, and the media in the electoral and the political process;

6. The federal government's responsibilities for, and approach to social, regulatory, and economic policy-making;
7. The changes and adaptations in our political institutions and practices made in response to new circumstances and demands.
8. The evaluation and information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.
9. the drawing of appropriate conclusions and inferences
10. The determination whether certain conclusions or consequences are supported by the information provided.
11. The evaluation of the strengths and relevance of arguments on a particular question or issue.