

Date Prepared: January 06

## COURSE OUTLINE

New       Revised

Effective Date: Spring 06

1. **COURSE PREFIX NUMBER:** PLS 211      **CREDIT HOURS:** 3
2. **COURSE TITLE:** United States Government I
3. **PREREQUISITES:** English placement recommendation for English 111 and satisfactory completion of English 4 if required by reading placement test. Co-requisite: English 5 and English 107 if recommended by reading placement test.
4. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Teaches structure, operation, and process of national, state, and local governments. Includes an in-depth study of the three branches of government and Public Policy. PLS 21 and 212 need not be taken in sequence. Lecture 3 hours per week.
5. **CONTENT:** (Major Headings)
  - a. Historical Background and Development of the American Constitution
  - b. Federalism
  - c. The Bill of Rights and Civil Liberties
  - d. The Distribution of Powers and Relationships within the Branches of the National Government (Executive, Legislative, Judicial)
  - e. The Bureaucracy
6. **GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

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

  - a. Examine the origins of the American system of government and the development of our federal Constitution.
  - b. Develop an appreciation of the Constitution's stability and adaptability to a changing America.
  - c. Examine the origins and development of the Bill of Rights.
  - d. Examine the responsibilities and performance of the Executive, Legislative, and Executive branches of government.
  - e. Evaluate the federal bureaucracy in terms of its purpose, and to examine efforts to improve its operation.
  - f. Encourage the student to develop the habit of following the work of our government at the national, state, and local levels.
  - g. Demonstrate increased comprehension of how our political system works, and to practice and learn to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses with some degree of objectivity.
  - h. Evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.
  - i. Draw appropriate conclusions and inferences.
  - j. Determine whether certain conclusions or consequences are supported by the information provided.
  - k. Evaluate the strengths and relevance of arguments on a particular question or issue.