

POL 110 – U.S. Government

Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to American government and politics. It is designed to familiarize students with the origins and evolution of American national government, its basic institutions, and its fundamental decision-making processes with regard to domestic and foreign policy. It covers the basic terms and facts relating to government, the functions and development of the U.S. branches of government, including the role of parties and interest groups, and the value preferences within American society which affect the formation of public policy. It also develops a basic understanding of how federal, state, and local governments interact in the U.S. political system.

Instructional Materials

Wilson, J. Q., Dilulio, J. J., & Bose M. (2014). *American government: Brief version*. (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Identify informed opinions on issues and questions involving the U.S. government, national political processes, policy making, and the notion of democracy.
2. Employ terminology used to study political science and American government.
3. Distinguish between civil rights and civil liberties in the context of Supreme Court protection of freedom of expression.
4. Explain why the separation of powers and federalism became key parts of the Constitution even though they made the system less democratic and less efficient.
5. Develop reasoned written and spoken presentations on issues and questions involving the U.S. government and national political processes using information in the course.
6. Infer a theory why the U.S. has only two major political parties.
7. Explain why interest groups play such an important role in the American political process.
8. Describe the basic values of American political culture.
9. Explain how the federal system of government works.
10. Explore different perspectives on issues and questions about the U.S. government and national political processes.
11. Describe the importance of an informed, effective citizenship for the national government and political processes.
12. Use concepts from our study of U.S. national government and politics (such as models of democracy) to discuss government and politics in state, local, and international contexts.
13. Examine the evolution of presidential power in military affairs.
14. Use technology and information resources to research issues in the field of U.S. government and politics.
15. Write clearly and concisely about U.S. government and politics using proper writing mechanics.