

# SYLLABUS

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**Code:** POLI 105

**Title:** American National Government

**Institute:** Business and Social Science

**Department:** Political Science

**Course Description:** This course will introduce you to the American political system and its workings. We will begin by reviewing the theory of republican government (or what is also known as democracy) as laid down by the Founding Fathers in such documents as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist Papers. We will then examine the means by which these documents allow republican government to operate: namely the three branches of government known as the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. We will also examine the electoral process and look at the ways in which citizens can affect the political process when they do choose to participate. Finally, we will look at the public policy process and explore some of the ways in which public policy affects our lives, both individually and collectively.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Corequisites:** None

**Prerequisites or Corequisites:** None

**Credits:** 3

**Lecture Hours:** 3

**Lab/Studio Hours:** 0

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**Required Textbook/Materials:**

Instructor will inform students on Day 1 of class.

**Additional Time Requirements:**

For information on Brookdale's policy on credit hour requirements and outside class student work refer to [Academic Credit Hour Policy](#).

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Summarize the content of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights
- Describe the three branches of government and how they check and balance one another
- Evaluate the electoral process and how candidates are selected to represent us at the federal level (the Congress and the Presidency)
- Compare the political platforms and ideological differences of the Republican and Democratic parties
- Describe interest group politics and explain how an interest group works
- Describe public policy
- Identify the workings of the legislative process

**Grading Standard:**

0-64=F 65-69=D 70-76=C 77-79=C+ 80-82=B- 83-86=B 87-89=B+ 90-92=A- 93-100=A

Please see individual instructor addendums for additional grading standards and/or policies.

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## **Course Content:**

**TOPICS – UNIT 1:** The Founding Documents: Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights

- Inalienable rights
- Life, Liberty, Pursuit of Happiness
- Equality
- Popular Sovereignty
- Grievances against Monarchy
- Branches of Government: Legislative, Executive, Judicial
- Checks and Balances
- Federalist #51
- Habeas Corpus
- Ex-Post Facto
- Republican Government
- Expressed Powers
- Amendment Procedures
- Supremacy Clause
- Civil Liberties
- Due Process Clause
- Establishment Clause

**TOPICS – UNIT 2:** Federalism, Civil Liberties, Civil Rights

- Two sovereigns
- Federal powers
- State powers
- Dual Federalism
- Cooperative Federalism
- Regulated Federalism
- New Federalism
- Civil Liberties: Amendments 1-10
- Rights and privileges
- Civil Rights: Amendments 13 and 14
- Civil Rights Act
- Voting Rights Act
- 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment
- Plessy v. Ferguson
- Brown v. Board of Education
- Affirmative Action

**TOPICS – UNIT 3:** The Three Branches of Government: Legislative, Executive, Judicial

- Congress
- Committee System
- Lawmaking process
- Open and Closed debate
- House Vote
- Senate Vote
- Filibuster
- Conference Committee
- Veto Override
- Presidential Veto
- Commander-in-Chief
- Head of State
- Head of Government
- Appointment powers
- Executive Office of President

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- Formal presidential powers
- Informal presidential powers
- Justice
- Dispute Settlement
- Plaintiff v. Defendant
- U.S. Trial Courts (district courts)
- U.S. Appellate Courts (circuit courts)
- U.S. Supreme Court
- Judicial Review
- Legal precedent
- Solicitor General

## **TOPICS – UNIT 4:** Political Parties, Elections, Interest Groups

- Two party system
- History of Republican Party
- History of Democratic Party
- Party platforms
- Third Parties
- Functions of political parties
- Theory of voting
- Pluralism
- Elitism
- Single member districts
- Gerrymandering
- Plurality voting
- Electoral realignment
- Electoral College
- Special Interest Groups
- Public Interest Groups
- Factions
- Federalist #10
- Going Public
- Lobbying
- Hard and Soft money
- PACs
- 527s

## **TOPICS – UNIT 5:** Public Policy

- Goals and sanctions: content of public policy
- Types of public policy
- Promotional techniques
- Distributive techniques
- Redistributive techniques
- Contributory policy
- Non-contributory policy
- Monetary Policy
- Fiscal policy
- Social Security
- Medicare and Medicaid
- Welfare state

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## **Department Policies:**

- Attendance is mandatory and being on time is imperative.
- Lateness and/or early departure are not acceptable behaviors and will be penalized.
- Cheating and/or plagiarism are unacceptable and will be dealt with accordingly, including severe penalties and disciplinary action.
- Electric devices are not permitted during class.
- Students are expected to be *attentive* and *courteous* to everyone in the class. Rudeness and other disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Rude behavior includes inappropriate talking, sleeping, reading unrelated material, texting, etc. If a student is engaging in rude conduct, they will be dismissed from class and further penalties will follow.
- Reading the textbook is required. Supplemental readings may be required.
- Paying close attention to relevant current events is necessary.
- Students are supposed to be fully engaged in all aspects of the course.

## **College Policies:**

As an academic institution, Brookdale facilitates the free exchange of ideas, upholds the virtues of civil discourse, and honors diverse perspectives informed by credible sources. Our College values all students and strives for inclusion and safety regardless of a student's disability, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, country of origin, immigration status, religious affiliation, political orientation, socioeconomic standing, and veteran status. For additional information, support services, and engagement opportunities, please visit [www.brookdalecc.edu/support](http://www.brookdalecc.edu/support).

For information regarding:

- ◆ Brookdale's Academic Integrity Code
- ◆ Student Conduct Code
- ◆ Student Grade Appeal Process

Please refer to the [BCC STUDENT HANDBOOK AND BCC CATALOG](#).

## **NOTIFICATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Brookdale Community College offers reasonable accommodations and/or services to persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who wish to self-identify must contact the Disabilities Services Office at 732-224-2730 (voice) or 732-842-4211 (TTY) to provide appropriate documentation of the disability, and request specific accommodations or services. If a student qualifies, reasonable accommodations and/or services, which are appropriate for the college level and are recommended in the documentation, can be approved.

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT/LABS:**

See the Tutoring Center for information <https://www.brookdalecc.edu/academic-tutoring/tutoring-center/>.

## **MENTAL HEALTH:**

- Mental Health Crisis Support: From a campus phone, dial 5555 or 732-224-2329 from an external line; off-hours calls will be forwarded to BCC police (2222 from a campus phone)
- Psychological Counseling Services: 732-224-2986 (to schedule an appointment during regular hours)

*The syllabus is intended to give student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the faculty member reserves the right to modify, supplement, and make changes as the need arises.*