



North Central Michigan College Master Course Syllabus

PART 1:

Course Name: Introduction to American Government

Course Number: PLS 141

Credit Hrs. 3 Lecture Hrs. 3 Lab Hrs. 0 Clinical Hrs. 0 Variable Hrs. 0

Total Hours of Instruction: 3 Total Contact Hours: 52.8
(Total Contact hour's formula: (lecture hrs. + lab hrs. + clinical hrs) x 17.6)

Course Description:

A survey of the American federal system, including the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, as well as the structure and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Emphasizes institutions and processes pertaining to the electoral system; civil liberties and civil rights; the media and public opinion; and domestic and foreign policy.

PREREQUISITE: none

CO-REQUISITE: none

Course Objectives:

- Describe the foundational elements of American government, including the Constitution, Bill of Rights and federalism.
- Describe the various aspects of political behavior of individuals and groups, including political parties, public opinion, interest groups, media, campaigns and elections.
- Differentiate the structure and powers of the executive, legislative and judicial branches.
- Evaluate recent political and economic developments for their impact on U.S. domestic or foreign policy.
- Apply knowledge of the American political system to civic practice.

Reasonable accommodations can be provided for students with documented disabilities. Please contact Learning Support Services to arrange for these (231)348-6687 or (231)348-6817, Room 533 SCRC.



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PART 2:

Course Objectives and Linked Lumina DQP Outcomes

See *PART 3* of this syllabus for the complete language of each Lumina DQP outcome.

*Please identify the Lumina DQP outcome(s) supported by the course objectives. List each course objectives (from **PART 1**), followed by the corresponding Lumina DQP Outcome number(s) in parentheses.*

- Describe the foundational elements of American government, including the Constitution, Bill of Rights and federalism. (DQP 1)
- Describe the various aspects of political behavior of individuals and groups, including political parties, public opinion, interest groups, media, campaigns and elections. (DQP 6)
- Differentiate the structure and powers of the executive, legislative and judicial branches. (DQP 6)
- Evaluate recent political and economic developments for their impact on U.S. domestic or foreign policy. (DQP 5, 8)
- Apply knowledge of the American political system to civic practice. (DQP 18, 19)



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Suggested Methods of Instruction:

Lecture, collaborative work, simulation, small-group and whole-class discussion

Suggested Methods of Assessment and Evaluation:

May include: individual writing assignments, exams, class participation, and group and individual presentations deriving from class activities.

Adopted Text at Time of Course Adoption/Revision:

Recommended texts:

- Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Carolyn J. Tolbert, and Robert J. Spitzer. *We the People*. 10th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2014.
- Monk, Linda R. *The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution*. New York: Hachette Books, 2004.
- *Issues for Debate in American Public Policy: Selections from CQ Researcher*. Congressional Quarterly. 14th Ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2014.

Topics Covered During the Semester:

Sequence of topics and time allowance are at the discretion of the instructor

WEEK 1:	Overview of Government in America
WEEK 2:	Origins of the Constitution
WEEK 3:	Federalism
WEEK 4:	Civil Liberties
WEEK 5:	Civil Rights
WEEK 6:	Public Opinion and Political Action
WEEK 7:	The Mass Media
WEEK 8:	Political Parties, Campaigns and Voting Behavior
WEEK 9:	Interest Groups
WEEK 10:	The Legislative Branch
WEEK 11:	The Executive Branch
WEEK 12:	The Courts
WEEK 13:	The Federal Bureaucracy
WEEK 14:	Policy
WEEK 15:	Policy
WEEK 16:	The Future of American Democracy

Part 1 & Part 2 approved by CRDAP on: 04 17 15

Part 2 approved by AD:

Date:

Part 2 approved by CRDAP Chair:

Date:

Rev02/15



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PART 3:

LUMINA DQP OUTCOMES – Use this reference sheet for **PART 2** of Master Course Syllabus.

Specialized Knowledge

1. Describes the scope and principal features of the field of study, citing at least some of its core theories and practices, and offers a similar explication of at least one related field.
2. Illustrates contemporary terminology used in the field.
3. Generates substantially error-free products, reconstructions, data, juried exhibits or performances as appropriate to the field.

Broad Integrative Knowledge

4. Describes how existing knowledge or practice is advanced, tested and revised
5. Describes and examines a range of perspectives on key debates and their significance both within the field and in society.
6. Illustrates core concepts of the field while executing analytical, practical or creative tasks.
7. Selects and applies recognized methods of the field in interpreting characteristic discipline-based problems.
8. Assembles evidence relevant to characteristic problems in the field, describes the significance of the evidence, and uses the evidence in analysis of these problems.
9. Describes the ways in which at least two disciplines define, address and interpret the importance of a contemporary challenge or problem in science, the arts, society, human services, economic life or technology.

Intellectual Skills – Analytic Inquiry

10. Identifies, categorizes and distinguishes among elements of ideas, concepts, theories and/or practical approaches to standard problems.

Intellectual Skills – Use of Information Resources

11. Identifies, categorizes, evaluates and cites multiple information resources necessary to engage in projects, papers or performance in his or her program.

Intellectual Skills – Engaging Diverse Perspectives

12. Describes how knowledge from different cultural perspectives would affect his or her interpretations of prominent problems in politics, society, the arts and/or global relations.

Intellectual Skills – Communication Fluency

13. Presents accurate calculations and symbolic operations, and explains how such calculations and operations are used in either his or her specific field of study or in interpreting social and economic trends.
14. Presents substantially error-free prose in both argumentative and narrative forms to general and specialized audiences.

Applied Learning

15. Describes in writing at least one substantial case in which knowledge and skills acquired in academic settings are applied to a challenge in a non-academic setting; applies that learning to the question; and analyzes at least one significant concept or method related to his or her course of study in light of learning outside the classroom.
16. Locates, gathers and organizes evidence on an assigned research topic addressing a course-related question or a question of practice in a work or community setting; offers and examines competing hypotheses in answering the question.

Civic Learning

17. Describes his or her own civic and cultural background, including its origins and development, assumptions, and predispositions.
18. Describes diverse positions, historical and contemporary, on selected democratic values or practices, and presents his or her own position on a specific problem where one or more of these values or practices are involved.
19. Takes an active role in a community context (work, service, co-curricular activities, etc.), and examines the civic issues encountered and the insights gained from the community experience.

The Degree Qualifications Profile was adopted by CRDAP: April 11, 2012