GLendale Community College
Political Science 101

Introduction to Government

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I. Course Rationale
This course is an introduction to the principles and problems of government in the United States, with emphasis on the Federal government and national politics. Among the topics covered are ideologies, the Constitution, the structure and powers of the Federal Government, the roles of political parties and interest groups, and the role of mass media—especially television—in election campaigns and the formulation of public policy.

II. Prerequisites
Recommended preparation: Eligibility for English 120 or ESL 151.

III. Course Objectives Include:
1. Understanding the cultural, ideological, and economic foundations of the American Constitution.
2. Understanding how the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches formulate public policies.
3. Understanding the role of political parties, private organizations and institutions in shaping public policies.
4. Understanding the role of mass media, especially television, in conducting political campaigns and influencing social and economic developments.
5. Understanding how major domestic and foreign policy issues are debated and resolved in the American democratic process.

IV. Student Learning Outcomes
As a result of taking this class, students will be able to:
1. Describe the historical background and contemporary functions of the Federal Government, as well as the role of civic organizations and the media.
2. Critically analyze and evaluate American political institutions and processes.

V. Course Materials

* Videotapes: Hours of video material, selected portions of documentaries, as well as television news coverage of current issues, will supplement the reading.
VI. Attendance and Participation
Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Having more than 3 absences, unless cleared by the instructor, can lead to a lower grade. If a student wishes to withdraw, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the Office of Admissions and Records before the deadline. Failure to do so may lead to a failing grade. In addition to attendance, critical thinking and active participation in class discussions is strongly encouraged.

VII. Examinations and Grades
There are two one-hour exams and a two-and-a-half hour final exam. All exams are a combination of multiple choice and essay questions. All exams are worth a maximum of 100 points. No grades can be dropped. The final grade will be an average of the three exam grades, according to the following percentage scale:

- 90 to 100 = A
- 80 to 89 = B
- 60 to 79 = C
- 50 to 59 = D
- 0 to 49 = F

VIII. Students with Disabilities
All students requiring accommodations are responsible for making arrangements in a timely manner with the Center for Students with Disabilities.

IX. Examination Make-Up Policy
Make-up exams are allowed only if the instructor is convinced that there was a good reason to miss the regularly scheduled exam.

X. Academic Dishonesty Policy
All students are expected to do their own work. All forms of cheating and plagiarism are absolutely forbidden. This is the official policy of Glendale Community College and the instructor of this course. Students found to be using unauthorized materials on exams, copying from other students’ exams, copying other written material without proper credit to the original author, or cheating in any other way, will have the particular assignment marked F and may receive a failing grade for the course.

XI. Special Interactive Video Format
The format of the course features an innovative combination of lecture/discussion and interactive video. Specially edited videotapes on major issues, elections, foreign policy, etc., will be viewed in class to supplement the textbook.

XII. Major Topics and Reading Assignments

**Introduction:** View and discuss television news reports and debates concerning current issues.

**PART I: Ideologies and the U.S. Constitution**
Chapter 1: "Democracy and American Politics"
Chapter 2: "The Constitution"

Examination # 1
PART II: Political Parties, Elections, and the Role of Mass Media
Chapter 6: "The News Media"
Chapter 9: "Political Parties"
Chapter 10: "Participation, Voting, and Elections"

Examination # 2

PART III: Roles & Functions of the Congress & Presidency in the Context of Specific Domestic & Foreign Policy Issues
Chapter 11: "Congress"
Chapter 12: "The Presidency"
Chapter 18: "Foreign Policy and National Defense"

Examination #3 (Final)