PSI 101 Syllabus - American Politics (3 Credits)

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Course Description
An analysis of American political institutions, behavior, and practical concepts.

Text (Required)
ISBN: 0-205-85600-4

Pre-Session Assignment
In Tannahill: Read the Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Chapter 3. Be prepared to discuss the major concepts of the reading.

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of the course, students will have demonstrated the knowledge and skills outlined here:

• Understand and be able to discuss the US Constitution – the foundation of American government
• Understand the design, purpose, and functions of the branches of US government
• Understand the impact of non-governmental organizations on the political process
• Understand and analyze political parties and their platforms
• Develop and use analytical and critical thinking skills to analyze political speech, issues, and punditry to make informed decisions related to American government
• Understand the individual citizens role in government and their impact

Learning Strategies
• Students will read the US Constitution and the Tannahill text to build knowledge of the foundation and architecture of American government
• Students will participate in discussions and debates on current issues to understand partisanship and the impact of non-governmental organizations
• Students will view and/or listen to media germane to the content and be ready to discuss it in class
• Students will create a major presentation on a relevant, current political issue
• Students will work in teams to absorb, analyze, and demonstrate understanding of key concepts
• Students will write a final reflection paper analyzing learning

Methods for Assessment
• Authentic engagement with class content will be assessed through faculty analysis
• The ability of students to interact, communicate, and effectively work with team members will be assessed through faculty observation and student reflection
• Discussions and debates will be assessed by the faculty member, not through the final outcomes or the students personal opinions, but through practical application of the foundation and architecture of American government
• The major project will be assessed by the faculty member and other students relevant to factual interpretation of constitutional precepts
• The final reflection paper will be assessed by the faculty member for authentic reflection of the major components of American government

Policies
• Attendance - This class is experiential, participative, and collaborative. We are in this together. The absence of any one person will be felt by all so please plan to attend all class sessions. If you need to miss a class, contact me prior to the class.
• Grading - Students will earn a final grade of A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, or F based on the average of assessments of all assignments
• Late Assignments - Assignments turned in after the due date will be accepted IF the student contacts the faculty member prior to the assignment due date.
• Academic Integrity - Respect others and always cite the source of any ideas or words which are not your own. This is a strict policy but, more importantly, it is the right thing to do.

Please refer to the online catalog for all other policies.