

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

• POS1041 •
3 Credit Hours

12:30 – 1:45 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday

This course is a detailed study of the origin and development of America's unique constitutional democracy and its political institutions, highlighting the federal level of government. It will include information about the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, branches of government, public policy, political ideologies, interest groups, political parties, elections, mass media and other critical components of the political process.

PROFESSOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

SHARI L. MACLACHLAN, Ph.D.

PROFESSOR III

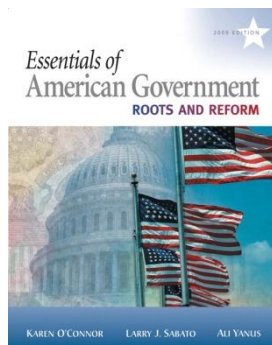
OFFICE: SS 207 / Lake Worth Campus

OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 8:30 – 9:30 a.m., 10:45 – 11 a.m., 12:15 – 12:30 p.m., 1:45 – 3 p.m.

Wednesdays: 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

PHONE: 868-3337 **E-MAIL:** lyess@pbcc.edu



TEXTBOOK:

Essentials of American Government: Roots and Reform
2009 Edition (Ninth Edition)

By Karen O'Connor, Larry J. Sabato & Ali Yanus
New York: Pearson/Longman.

ISBN: 0205662838

ISBN-13: 9780205662838

*Available at PBCC's Lake Worth Campus Bookstore
or at BookSmart in Lake Worth.*

WEB COMPONENT COURSE INFORMATION

This course blends a traditional lecture course with Web components. Your computer must be properly configured to use the Blackboard learning system. Access the course website at <http://epbcc.blackboard.com> and click on the CHECK BROWSER button before logging in. Once your computer is properly configured, log in to the course website:

User Name: Use your PBCC Student ID Number (no hyphens). Your Student ID, which begins with the first letter of your first name followed by eight digits, is found on the back of your student ID card.

Password: Your Blackboard password is your PBCC PIN Number, the same one you use if you register online in PantherWeb.

Computer Requirements

You must have access to a computer that meets basic computer requirements, and prior to enrolling in this class, you should have some basic computer skills, listed at <http://www.pbcc.edu/x10620.xml>. It is strongly recommended that the student taking this course not be a novice computer user.

SLC Computer Lab

If you do not have access to a computer at home, the SLC Computer Lab may be used to complete the online course assignments. Visit the SLC Computer Lab WebPage at <http://www.pbcc.edu/x13669.xml> for location and hours.

Course Requirements

You are expected to read all of the designated textbook chapters, study aids on the course site and any other readings provided by the instructor, attend all scheduled class meetings and complete all discussion board postings and exams on time. The course follows a precise timetable to which you must strictly adhere: All deadlines are clearly listed on this syllabus and throughout the course site. It is YOUR responsibility to meet the assignment deadlines, regardless of family and job obligations, illness, computer problems or other personal matters. All assignments have specific due dates and times. Absolutely no individual exceptions are made to the policies contained in this syllabus.

The course consists of four exams, each with multiple choice and short answer questions, and eight (150-word) discussion board postings, which require that you make a personal statement about the topic area or chapter you're reading at the time the posting is due. There are two optional (extra-credit) research assignments. You take all exams in class during the scheduled class period, submit all postings to the discussion board available on the course site, and submit any optional research project electronically via the assignments link, also available on the course site. Details about and instructions for all assignments are available on the course website, along with reading supplements and study aids. Be sure to familiarize yourself with all of the online course components as soon as possible.

Late Assignment Policy

You must submit all work in this course on time according to the course calendar and take all exams in class and on time, beginning at the start of the class period, on the dates listed. NO discussion board postings will be accepted after the designated deadlines, regardless of the reason. In addition, each online assignment is to be completed in its designated area of the Blackboard course site, and no assignments will be accepted via any other forum, including e-mail. There are absolutely no exceptions to these policies. Likewise, if you miss a test, you will earn a zero.

Under extenuating circumstances, you may take a test prior to the due date and time without penalty, but you must discuss your situation with the instructor early enough so that accommodations may be made. In the event of an unforeseen and legitimate emergency, you must notify the instructor of your situation in person, by e-mail or phone prior to the scheduled start time of the exam. NO MAKE-UPS will be allowed without such prior notification. It is YOUR responsibility to contact the instructor. DO NOT wait until the next day or next scheduled class period to do so. Even with prior notification, make-up exams are provided at the instructor's discretion, and without exception, point penalties will be imposed on any exam taken late, regardless of the reason. Ten points (or one letter grade) will be deducted from your test grade when you take a test late, and an additional 10 points will be deducted for each day after the scheduled date you take it.

Academic Standards

This is a college-level class, and we work in an academic environment. You are always expected to maintain proper decorum and academic standards in the classroom and in the virtual classroom. When you send information to the course site, you must always write in your own words and use complete sentences, proper language, grammar, punctuation and capitalization. Always proofread your work, and never use acronyms, abbreviations or other chat room shortcuts and symbols. On the course site, do not use "I" instead of "I" when referring to yourself and never send "shouting" information or messages written entirely in capital or bold letters.

Student Responsibility Policy

When you attend PBCC, you become subject to its jurisdiction. You are expected to conduct yourself in a responsible manner, in all areas of campus life. By enrolling, you pledge to obey the rules and regulations of the college and are responsible for observing all policies and procedures as published in the student handbook, the catalog and other college publications. You are responsible for preparing for class, participating in class, and completing assignments on time.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

<u>DEADLINE</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS</u>
Thursday, January 8	<p>CLASS MEETING to review syllabus and all course requirements. LOG IN to the course website at http://epbcc.blackboard.com to review all information about the class and Blackboard. GET the textbook.</p>
Tuesday, January 13	<p align="center">Introductory POSTING 1 due before 12:30 p.m. CLASS MEETING to discuss Chapter 1.</p>
Thursday, January 15	<p align="center">READ Chapter 1: The Political Landscape CLASS MEETING to continue Chapter 1 and begin Chapter 2.</p>
Tuesday, January 20	<p align="center">READ Chapter 2: The Constitution CLASS MEETING to continue Chapter 2 and begin Chapter 3.</p>
Thursday, January 22	<p align="center">POSTING 2 on the Constitution due before 1:45 p.m.</p>
Tuesday, January 27	<p align="center">READ Chapter 3: Federalism CLASS MEETING to complete Chapter 3.</p>
Thursday, January 29	<p align="center">FIRST EXAM IN CLASS on Chapters 1, 2 and 3.</p>
Tuesday, February 3	<p align="center">CLASS MEETING to review first exam and begin discussion of Chapter 9. Review Supreme Court Docket for 2008-09 at: http://otd.oyez.org/cases/2008</p>
Thursday, February 5	<p align="center">READ Chapter 9: The Judiciary POSTING 3 on the Judicial Branch due before 1:45 p.m.</p>
Tuesday, February 10	<p align="center">CLASS MEETING to complete Chapter 9 and begin overview of Chapters 4 and 5.</p>

Thursday, February 12	<p align="center">READ Chapter 4: Civil Liberties CLASS MEETING <i>to continue Chapters 4 and 5.</i></p>
Tuesday, February 17	<p align="center">READ Chapter 5: Civil Rights CLASS MEETING <i>to complete Chapters 4 and 5.</i></p>
Thursday, February 19	<p align="center">POSTING 4 on Civil Liberties or Civil Rights <i>due before 1:45 p.m.</i></p>
Tuesday, February 24	<p align="center">SECOND EXAM IN CLASS <i>on Chapters 9, 4 and 5.</i></p>
Wednesday, February 25	<p align="center">First optional (extra-credit) research paper <i>due no later than 11:55 p.m. via Assignments link.</i></p>
Thursday, February 26	<p align="center">READ Chapter 10: Public Opinion CLASS MEETING <i>to review second exam and begin discussion of upcoming chapters</i></p>
Tuesday, March 3	<p align="center">READ Chapter 11: Political Parties and Interest Groups CLASS MEETING <i>to discuss Chapters 10 and 11.</i></p>
Thursday, March 5	<p align="center">READ Chapter 12: Campaigns, Elections and Voting CLASS MEETING <i>to discuss Chapter 12.</i></p>
March 9 - 13	<p align="center">Spring Break: No Classes</p>
Tuesday, March 17	<p align="center">POSTING 5 on Public Opinion, Parties or Interest Groups <i>due before 1:45 p.m.</i></p>
Thursday, March 19	<p align="center">CLASS MEETING <i>to complete Chapter 12 and begin Chapter 6</i></p>
Tuesday, March 24	<p align="center">Student Holiday: No Classes</p>

Thursday, March 26	<p align="center">READ Chapter 6: Congress POSTING 6 on the Legislative Branch <i>due before 1:45 p.m.</i></p>
Tuesday, March 31	<p align="center">CLASS MEETING <i>to complete Chapter 6.</i></p>
Thursday, April 2	<p align="center">THIRD EXAM IN CLASS <i>on Chapters 10, 11, 12 and 6.</i></p>
Tuesday, April 7	<p align="center">READ Chapter 7: The Presidency CLASS MEETING <i>to review third exam</i> <i>and begin discussion of Chapters 7 and 8.</i></p>
Thursday, April 9	<p align="center">READ Chapter 8: Executive Branch and Bureaucracy CLASS MEETING <i>to complete Chapters 7 and 8</i> <i>and begin discussion of policy chapters.</i></p>
Tuesday, April 14	<p align="center">POSTING 7 on the Executive Branch <i>due before 1:45 p.m.</i></p>
Thursday, April 16	<p align="center">READ Chapter 13: Social and Economic Policy CLASS MEETING <i>to continue Chapters 13 and 14.</i></p>
Tuesday, April 21	<p align="center">READ Chapter 14: Foreign and Defense Policy POSTING 8 on Public Policy <i>due before 1:45 p.m.</i></p>
Thursday, April 23	<p align="center">CLASS MEETING <i>to continue Chapters 13 and 14.</i></p>
Tuesday, April 28	<p align="center">CLASS MEETING <i>to complete Chapters 13 and 14.</i></p>
Thursday, April 30	<p align="center">FOURTH EXAM IN CLASS <i>on Chapters 7, 8, 13 and 14.</i></p>
Friday, May 1	<p align="center"><i>Second optional (extra-credit) research paper</i> <i>due no later than 11:55 p.m. via Assignments link.</i></p>

Class Procedures

While it is expected that the basic course requirements will remain unchanged throughout the term, in some instances, data in the textbook may require updating with more current information available through the Internet or other sources. The professor will notify you in class or via course announcements on the website of any updates for which you will be responsible. Thus, you should log in to the course as often as possible, but at least twice per week. In the event of an unforeseen emergency (such as a problem with the college's web server), due dates may be modified for all students accordingly. If it becomes necessary to change any assignments or due dates as listed, the professor will notify you as far in advance as possible.

On class meeting dates, the class is conducted in a lecture/seminar format, so there will be a strong emphasis on participation in classroom discussions and on timely preparation of assignments. The study of American Government is much more interesting when it is understood within the context of what goes on in the "real world." Since the textbook alone may not provide you with enough of this practical context, you should read a daily newspaper or listen to radio or television news programs so that you stay aware of current events. You should apply your knowledge of current events to your discussion board postings so that you are integrating current, real-life events with the information being learned in class, and your grade will be based largely on the connection that you make.

Faculty Contact and Response Time

Outside of class, your primary contact with the professor is through the Blackboard email on the course site. The professor checks the course site daily, including weekends and holidays, and will respond to your inquiries quickly. If you have sent a message and have not received a reply within 24 hours, please resend your message.

Computer Competency Component

Each student will, to the satisfaction of the professor, demonstrate a fundamental understanding of basic computer operations through various exercises and/or assignments, included in this syllabus.

GRADES

Each course requirement has a point value.

Not counting extra credit, there is a maximum of 530 points possible, as follows:

Four Exams (100 points each) = 400 points
Eight Discussion Board Postings (10 points each) = 80 points
Class Attendance and Participation = 50 points
TOTAL = 530 points

If you complete an extra credit assignment, you may earn a maximum of 20 points for each, depending on the quality of your work.

GRADING SCALE

Grades are based on the following scale, and final course grades are determined by the total number of points earned out of 530:

A = 100% - 90%	A = 530 - 475 points
B = 89% - 80%	B = 474 - 422 points
C = 79% - 70%	C = 421 - 369 points
D = 69% - 60%	D = 368 - 316 points
F = 59% and below	F = 315 points and below

Once an assignment or exam is graded, the results will automatically post to your personal gradebook, available on the course website under the MY GRADES icon on the course homepage.

COLLEGE POLICIES

Class Participation and Attendance

On the days designated on the course calendar, you must attend class – on time. According to PBCC policy, in the 2008-09 *Catalog*, "students are expected to attend all classes and activities for courses in which they are registered. Any class meeting missed, regardless of cause, reduces the opportunity for learning and may adversely affect a student's achievement in the course." In this class, attendance and timeliness are measured and calculated as part of your class participation grade. If you walk in more than 15 minutes late or leave more than 15 minutes early, you will be considered absent. Because you cannot participate in the class unless you are present – in body and mind – your attentiveness and conduct will also be taken into consideration in the class participation grade. If you have excessive absences, tardies or conduct problems, the professor reserves the right to disallow you from taking exams or to withdraw or fail you.

Academic Dishonesty

Each registered student is required to complete his or her own work independently and without the assistance of others. Collaboration of any kind with anyone is unacceptable and is considered cheating. Any information obtained from an outside source, including the Internet, must be properly cited and referenced, even if it is paraphrased.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, (1) cheating on an exam, (2) collaborating with others on work to be presented, (3) submitting work previously submitted in another course, (4) plagiarism, and (5) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above actions, including assistance in which work, classroom performance, exam, or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted.

Academic dishonesty, including collaboration and plagiarism, will result in a zero for the assignment or exam in which cheating has occurred. Students who cheat jeopardize their ability to earn a passing grade in this class.

Classroom Etiquette and Student Behavior Guidelines

Students will demonstrate respect for the professor and fellow students. PBCC is an institution of higher education that promotes the free exchange of ideas, but you must adhere to the rules set forth by the professor. Sleeping, conducting of private conversations, and unnecessary disruptions during class ARE NOT tolerated. While you are encouraged to express yourself and your opinions, any e-mail, discussion board message or assignment that you post to the course website must always be professional and academically sound. Sending or posting of any inappropriate or abusive message via any forum is reason for dismissal from the class, and failure to comply with course rules and/or recurring discipline problems may result in dismissal from the class and/or the college.

Disability Support Services

If you have a physical or learning disability, you are advised, in compliance with federal and state laws, that accommodations and services are available through the college's office of Disability Support Services (DSS). It is your responsibility to contact the DSS office on your home campus and to submit appropriate documentation prior to receiving services. It is recommended that you make initial contact with the DSS office within the first two weeks of the term so that you may have every opportunity for reasonable accommodation and success in this course.

Withdrawal Policy

The last day to withdraw from this course with a "W" grade is **Monday, March 30**. It is your responsibility to complete and submit the necessary forms to the Registrar's Office. An official withdrawal would entitle you to a grade of "W" in the course.

PROFESSOR'S DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

Social Science Department
OFFICE: SS 101 PHONE: 868-3326