

**NVCC COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY**

**CONSTITUTIONAL LAW BS 240 (3 CR)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Surveys state and federal constitutional provisions pertinent to the relations between state and federal governments. Examines separation of powers, delegation of powers, interstate relations, commerce powers, civil rights, and liberties. Gives consideration to the establishment and interpretation of federal, state, and local regulations which implement public policy.

Lecture 3 hours per week.

**GENERAL COURSE PURPOSE**

PBS 240 is a one-semester course designed to familiarize the student with the Constitution of the United States, the Supreme Court, and the State and Federal systems in this country. This course surveys state and federal constitutional provisions pertinent to the relationships between state and federal governments. The course gives consideration to the establishment and interpretation of federal, state and local regulations, which implement public policy.

**ENTRY LEVEL COMPETENCIES**

No prerequisites or co-requisites. Students should be able to read and comprehend college level instructional materials.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to;

- A. Be familiar with the Constitution of the United States.
- B. Understand the separation of powers, delegation of powers, interstate relations, and the commerce power.
- C. Understand civil rights and liberties as they impact on public policy.

**MAJOR TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED**

- I. The Structure of Government: Nation and States in the Federal System
  - A. Separation of Powers: The President, Congress and the Court
    1. The authority to make national policy
    2. The conflict between legislative authority and executive authority
    3. The nature and sources of the Supreme Court's authority
  - B. National Powers and Local Activities: Origins and Recurrent Themes
    1. Commerce Power
    2. Taxing Power
    3. Spending Power
    4. War, Foreign Affairs, and Federalism
  - C. State Regulation and the National Economy
    1. Constitutional Limits
    2. Congressional ordering of Federal-State relationship

II. Individual Rights

- A. The Bill of Rights
  - 1. Freedom of Expression
  - 2. Establishment" and "Free Exercise" of Religion
  - 3. The Contents of Due Process
    - a. Substantive—The Rise of Judicial Intervention
    - b. Procedural—The Purpose and Impact
- B. Equal Protection
  - 1. Race
  - 2. Gender
- C. Constitutional Restraints on Private Conduct
  - 1. The Problem of State Action
  - 2. Regulation of Political Speech
  - 3. Maintenance of Local Peace and Order
  - 4. Symbolic Expression

III. Freedom of Expression: Additional Problems

- A. Damage to Reputation – The Right to Privacy
- B. Obscenity
- C. Regulatory Methods and the First Amendment
  - 1. Prior Restraint
  - 2. Censorship
- D. The Right to Silence – Legislative and Grand Jury Investigations