

NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY

PLS 211 U. S. GOVERNMENT I (3 CR.)

COURSE INFORMATION

This course teaches an in depth understanding of the American political system. It includes topics of democracy, the Constitution, Federalism, political behavior, civil liberties and civil rights. **This is a Passport Transfer Course.** Lecture 3 hours per week.

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVE

The general course objective is to introduce the student to the American political system. It is intended for liberal arts transfer students who need three semester hours of political science.

ENTRY LEVEL COMPETENCY

Students should have the ability to use the English language correctly and effectively as demonstrated on appropriate English proficiency examination.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- A. define the concept of democracy, direct and representative democracy, and to understand the philosophical concept of U. S. democracy
- B. describe the origin and history of the U. S. Constitution and how the Constitution has adapted to our changing society
- C. define the concept of Federalism and how the distribution of power between the national and state governments affords possibilities for conflict or cooperation
- D. develop possibilities of individual and group participation and why such participation is vital to a free political system
- E. understand how public officials, the media, interest groups and political parties compete for setting the political or public agenda
- F. understand the principles of elections, campaigns, voting motivation and PACs
- G. understand the application of individual rights and the central role of the Supreme Court in its interpretation of these rights

MAJOR TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- A. American democracy and politics
- B. The Constitution
- C. Federalism
- D. Public Opinion
- E. Political Parties
- F. Voting and Elections
- G. The Campaign Process
- H. The Media
- I. Interest Groups
- J. Civil Liberties

K. Civil Rights