

**Political Science 111-470 (3 Credits)**  
**American Government**  
**Online: March 14- May 7 (7.5 weeks)**

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**Instructor Information**

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**Office Hours** Mondays-Thursdays 2:00-3:00 and by appointment

**Other Helpful Contacts**

Help with Desire2Learn: <http://www.rrcc.edu/online-learning>  
Desire2Learn Helpdesk: <http://help.cccs.edu> 1-888-800-9198  
Accessibility Services: <http://www.rrcc.edu/accessibility-services>  
Succeed, Thrive & Matter: [YOUrrcc.edu](http://YOUrrcc.edu)

**Required Text and Materials**

The required text for this course is Bardes, Shelley, and Schmidt *American Government and Politics Today the Essentials (2017-2018 edition)*, which is available in the bookstore. It includes a code to access some resources that we will be using in the course. If you have an edition without a code, you may purchase a code online. In addition, you will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader. This is preloaded on many computers, or you can obtain a free copy at <http://www.adobe.com>.

**Important Dates**

Here are some important dates that you may want to bear in mind.

Application deadline for <b>Spring Graduation</b>	February 6th
<b>No classes</b> ; All-College Development Day	April 16th
<b>No classes</b> ; Spring Break (Lakewood and Arvada campus open)	March 25-31st
Graduation Ceremony	March 18th

**Course Description**

Includes the background of the U.S. Constitution, the philosophy of American government, general principles of the Constitution, federalism, and civil liberties. Examines public opinion and citizen participation, political parties, interest groups, the electoral process, and the structure and functions of the national government.

**GT PATHWAYS STATEMENT, CONTENT CRITERIA, COMPETENCIES, AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways Course Statement:

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has approved **POS 111** for inclusion in the Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways program in the GT-SS1 category. For transferring students, successful completion with a minimum C– grade guarantees transfer and application of credit in this GT Pathways category. For more information on the GT Pathways program, go to <https://highered.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/gtpathways/curriculum.html>.

## **GT-SS1: ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL SYSTEM CONTENT CRITERIA**

Students should be able to:

- a. Demonstrate knowledge of economic or political systems.
- b. Use the social science to analyze and interpret issues.
- c. Explain diverse perspectives and groups.

## **GT-SS1 COMPETENCIES & STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **Competency: Critical Thinking:**

Students should be able to:

1. **Explain an Issue**
  - a. Use information to describe a problem or issue and/or articulate a question related to the topic.
  
2. **Utilize Context**
  - a. Evaluate the relevance of context when presenting a position.
  - b. Identify assumptions.
  - c. Analyze one's own and others' assumptions.
  
5. **Understand Implications and Make Conclusions**
  - a. Establish a conclusion that is tied to the range of information presented.
  - b. Reflect on implications and consequences of stated conclusion.

### **Competency: Civic Engagement:**

Students should be able to:

2. **Civic Knowledge**
  - a. Connect disciplinary knowledge to civic engagement through one's own participation in civic life, politics, and/or government.

## **REQUIRED COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Distinguish between traditional and behavioral approaches to the study of politics.
2. Discuss general approaches to the study of politics such as political philosophy, political ideologies, and political systems.
3. Analyze theories, actors, and practices of international relations.
4. Examine comparative political systems.
5. Discuss international political economy

## **Course Objectives**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of historical developments of early republic, democratic theory, federalism, and institutionalism.
2. Examine key elements of the United States Constitution and changes related to judicial interpretations as well as socio-economic developments.
3. Evaluate political parties, the electoral process, and interest groups.
4. Analyze public opinion and the Media.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of civil liberties and civil rights.
6. Examine the three branches of government.
7. Interpret public policy themes and issues.

## **Course Structure**

This course is an introduction to the field of American Government. Our focus will be on understanding the principles behind our American government as well as the workings of the political system. We will begin by looking at the ideas that have shaped American political ideologies and the structure of government, including the Constitution. We will then turn to an examination of the development of civil rights and civil liberties. Next we will look at how political opinion is interpreted and mediated within the American political system. Then we will look at the main institutions of government, the Presidency, Congress, the courts and the bureaucracy. Finally, we will take a brief look at public policy issues and outcomes.

The course is divided into 4 sections:

Section 1 (Week 1-2) The American System Chapters 1,2,3

Section 2 (Week 3) Civil Rights and Liberties Chapter 4, 5

Section 3 (Week 4-5) People and Politics Chapter 6,7,8,9,10

Section 4 (Week 6-7) Political Institutions Chapter 11,12,13,14

## **GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **Current Event Discussion**

You are required to introduce and lead four current event discussions during our 7.5 weeks. To prepare for this assignment, find articles/events that are relevant, credible and pertinent to what we are learning in class. Things you may want to cover during you discussion (**word count 250-300**):

1. Where did you find the information? Is this source credible? What type of news do they usually cover?
2. What is the title of your article? Give us a quick summary.
3. Why did you choose this article? Why did it stand out to you?
4. How does it relate to what we are covering in class (directly or indirectly)?

For each Section, students must report and discuss one current event or topic that relates to that unit's theme.

For Section 1, look for an article or an event that deals with the political ideology (conservatives v. liberals), the constitution (the interpretation of its articles/amendments) or federalism (the division of power and challenges between the national government and state government).

For Section 2, look for an article or an event that relates to civil rights or civil liberties.

For Section 3, look for an article or an event that relates to public opinion, interest groups, parties, the election or the media.

For Section 4, look for an article or an event that relates to the institution: Congress, President, bureaucracy or the courts.

**MINDTAP Wrap-It Up and Focus Assignment:** Each week you will have the opportunity to complete several Wrap-it assignments. The quiz will take approximately 30 minutes. I will drop the three lowest scores from your final grade. Wrap-It Up are reading quizzes. There are 25 questions and you may use your book and notes to complete this reading quiz. You can use 1 hint per question to help you answer the 25 questions. I will drop the 3 lowest tests from your final grade. There are a total of 14 Wrap it up reading quizzes. All the quizzes will be due Sunday May 5th at 11:59 pm.

**Weekly DISCUSSION:** Threaded discussions are an integral part of the course. There are discussions for each unit. You will be required to post an answer to each question by Thursday 11:59 PM (when applicable word count 200-300) and post at least one response to the postings of others by Sunday 11:59 PM (when applicable word 50-100 Each unit's discussion is worth up to 5 points: 3 for initial postings and 2 for responses). In addition, each section you are responsible for posting one current event discussion (a total of 4 current events that are approximately 250-300 words each)- please see CURRENT EVENT DISCUSSION p. 3 for details.

**Final Reflection Paper:** At the end of the class, you will submit a 2-3 page paper providing an overview of the enumerated and elastic powers of either the three branches or federal government v. local government or the three political values and discuss which one you think is the most influential/powerful and why. This paper is due Monday Dec 10<sup>th</sup> at the end of the semester in D2L Assignment Folder.

The possible points and percentages for each assignment are as follows:

Quizzes (14 reading quizzes) 35%

Final Reflection paper ("The three branches /Federalism/Political Values") 15%

Current Event Discussion 15%

Weekly discussions 35%

The grading scale is as follows:

90-100 percent A

80-89 percent B

70-79 percent C

60-69 percent D

Below 60 percent F

**Expectations**

All assignments must be turned in on time unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Late homework will be penalized one point if less than 24 hours late and 2 points for each additional day it is late. Exams cannot be turned in late without prior approval by the instructor.

Civility is expected in all communications, including threaded discussions and e-mails. Any communications which are vulgar, harassing, defamatory, or contain personal attacks on a member of the class may be penalized with a deduction of points, being isolated from participating in discussions, dismissal from the class, or other sanctions deemed appropriate. Please feel free to say "OUCH" when words and opinions that are expressed are intentionally or unintentionally hurtful and offensive.

**Contact Information**

Remember that I am here to help you succeed, so please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance. If you have a question that might benefit others as well, please post it in the threaded discussion area. Otherwise, there are a number of ways to contact me.

## READING AND ASSIGNMENT Schedule

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### Section 1: The American System

#### Week 1 & 2 March 14-March 31

##### ASSIGNMENTS

- Sunday 3/17 Introduction post
  
- Discussion 1
  - Thursday 3/21 Discussion post
  - Sunday 3/24 Response
  
- Discussion 2
  - Thursday 3/28 Discussion post
  - Sunday 3/31 Response
  
- Sun 3/31 Current event #1
- Sunday 5/5 all MINDTAP Wrap it up quizzes due

##### READING

- Chapter 1 Democratic Republic
  - Chapter 2 The Constitution
  - Chapter 3 Federalism
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### Section 2: Civil Rights and Liberties

#### Week 3 3/31-4/7

##### ASSIGNMENTS

- Discussion 3
  - Thursday 4/4 Discussion post
  - Sunday 4/7 Response
  
- Sunday 11/7 Current event #2
- Sunday 5/5 all MINDTAP Wrap it up quizzes due

##### READING

- Chapter 4 Civil Liberties
  - Chapter 5 Civil Rights
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### Section 3: People and Politics

#### Week 4 & 5 4/5-4/21

##### ASSIGNMENTS

- Discussion 4
  - Thursday 4/11 Discussion post
  - Sunday 4/14 Response
  
- Discussion 5
  - Thursday 4/18 Discussion post
  - Sunday 4/21 Response

- Sun 4/21 Current event #3
- Sunday 5/5 all MINDTAP Wrap it up quizzes due

#### READING

- Chapter 6 Public Opinion /Socialization
- Chapter 7 Interest Groups
- Chapter 8 Political Parties
- Chapter 9 Campaign & Elections
- Chapter 10 The Media

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### **Section 4: Political Institutions**

#### **Week 6 & 7 Nov. 26- Dec. 9**

#### ASSIGNMENTS

- Discussion 6
  - Thursday 4/25 Discussion post
  - Sunday 4/28 Response
- Sunday 4/28 Current Event #4
- Tuesday 5/7 11:59 pm Reflection Paper (D2I Assignment box)
- Sunday 5/5 all MINDTAP Wrap it up quizzes due

#### READING

- Chapter 11The Congress
- Chapter 12The President
- Chapter 13The Bureaucracy
- Chapter 14 The Courts

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**Notice of Non-discrimination** Red Rocks Community College is committed to diversity in its people and programs. The College is an equal opportunity educational institution and does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, religion, age, national origin, or ancestry, or any other category protected by applicable law. Please direct discrimination inquiries to: Executive Director of Human Resources, Red Rocks Community College, Office of Human Resources, 13300 W 6th Avenue, Lakewood, CO 80228, 303-914-6298. Incidents of bias or discrimination may also be reported via the electronic Report a Concern form (<https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RedRocksCC>).

**Report a Concern** RRCC cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. You should refer individuals for whom you have a concern, who are exhibiting behaviors that pose a threat to safety, or those that cause a significant disruption to the RRCC community by completing the electronic form to report a concern (<https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RedRocksCC>). Please see the Behavioral Intervention Team website for more information (<http://www.rrcc.edu/behavioral-intervention-team>). **NOTE: In cases where a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or RRCC Campus Police at 303-914-6394.**

**RRCC Syllabus Disability Statement ADA/AA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** Red Rocks Community College is committed to access for students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and need assistance or are interested in requesting accommodations, please contact Accessibility Services. Faculty are not obligated to provide accommodations without proper notification by Accessibility Services and accommodations are not retroactive. Students may contact the Accessibility staff by telephone or email to make an intake appointment at 303-914-6733, 720-336-3893 (VP) or by emailing Accessibility Services ([access@rrcc.edu](mailto:access@rrcc.edu)). Accessibility Services is located in Suite 1182 at the Lakewood campus and services are also available at the Arvada campus. More information is available at the Accessibility Services website ([www.rrcc.edu/accessibility-services](http://www.rrcc.edu/accessibility-services)).

**Mandatory Reporting** Our College is committed to preserving a safe and welcoming educational environment for all students. As part of this effort, I have an obligation to report certain issues relating to the health and safety of campus community members. I must report to the appropriate College officials any allegation of discrimination or harassment. Sexual misconduct (which includes sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, non-consensual sexual intercourse, and sexual exploitation) is considered a form of discrimination.

In addition to reporting all discrimination and harassment claims, I must report all allegations of dating violence or domestic violence, child abuse or neglect, and/or credible threats of harm to yourself or others. Such reports may trigger contact from a College official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like more information, you may reach the Title IX/EO Coordinator, Executive Director of Human Resources at 303-914-6298. Further information may be found on the college Human Resources website (<http://www.rrcc.edu/human-resources/sexual-misconduct>).

**Academic Calendar** The current RRCC Academic Calendar is your most accurate source of academic events and deadlines <http://www.rrcc.edu/academic-calendar>.



**Academic Misconduct** Academic misconduct consists of plagiarizing, cheating, or committing any other form of academic misconduct including, but not limited to, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of information, and/or helping someone else violate reasonable standards for academic behavior. Students who engage in any type of academic dishonesty are subject to both academic consequences (as determined by the instructor) and to disciplinary action (as outlined in the RRCC disciplinary procedures), according to the current Student Handbook (<http://www.rrcc.edu/student-life/handbook>).

**Activate and use your student email account** RRCC communicates with students via email only through their college-issued student email address. For access information and instructions for setting up your account, please see the student email website (<http://www.rrcc.edu/admissions/student-email>).

**Campus Closure Information** Did you know RRCC is exempt from the State Inclement Weather Policy and may remain open while other state government offices close? When either of the RRCC campuses are required to close due to bad weather or emergency conditions, you can learn about it via local news media, the RRCC website, or by calling the campus closure line at 303-914-6600.

**Campus Maps** Campus maps for both the Lakewood campus and the Arvada campus are available to help locate your classrooms and other campus services (<http://www.rrcc.edu/campus-maps/lakewood-interior> and <http://www.rrcc.edu/campus-maps/arvada>).

**Lost and Found** Lost and found is located with the Campus Police department at the Lakewood campus (303-914-6394) and with the Welcome Desk at the Arvada Campus (303-914-6010).

**RRCC Catalog** For additional college policies, please see the current RRCC Catalog (<http://www.rrcc.edu/catalogs/17-18/>).

**Student Handbook** The current RRCC Student Handbook is your most current source of dates, resources, contacts, and policies (<http://www.rrcc.edu/student-life/handbook>).

**What to do in an emergency – Standard Response Protocols** RRCC follows the standard response protocols visible in each in classroom and around both campuses. The RRCC Emergency Management Plan and additional useful information are available via the RRCC Police Department homepage. **To report an emergency, contact 911.**