



MAYLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Welcomes You To

POL 120.90 & 92
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT
3 credit hours, 3 contact hours

SPRING 2007

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A study of the origins, development, structure, and functions of American national government. Topics include the constitutional framework, federalism, the three branches of government, civil rights and liberties, political participation and behavior, and policy formation. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and participatory processes of the American political system.

Prerequisite: RED 090

Corequisite: None

Instructor: Rhonda Gunter
Office Location: Room 245 Gwaltney Hall (main building) MCC
MCC Telephone: 828-765-7351 or 800-462-9526 (ext 261)
E-mail Address: rgunter@mayland.edu
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm
Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 to 2:00 pm
Other times by appointment

COURSE INFORMATION: This class meets Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 am until 12:30 pm on the North Carolina Information Highway. Section 90 meets in Room P115 on the MCC campus and Section 92 at the Yancey Learning Center.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Karen O'Connor & Larry Sabato, Essentials of American Government: Continuity and Change, 2006 edition
- Joseph F. Trimmer, A Guide to MLA Documentation, 7th edition

LRC RESOURCES: You will need access to online and other resources, such as newspapers and weekly news periodicals, available in the Learning Resources Center at Mayland Community College. If you don't have these at home, you will need to schedule time at MCC to consult these resources for current events and for your research assignments.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: That students understand that government, politics, and public policy in the US are a "balancing act" involving constant adjustments among conflicting interests and goals. Our class discussions and the assignments given over the semester will all underscore this reality.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Class attendance is mandatory. There are no "excused" or "unexcused" absences. As a positive incentive, each student begins the semester with an attendance score of 160 points. If you miss no class or only one, you will maintain that 160; however, five (5) points will be deducted for each absence beyond the first one. Two (2) points will be deducted for days on which you are tardy or depart early.

ASSESSMENTS: There will be a quiz on each chapter. These assessments will be on material from the textbook and class lectures. Of these twelve quizzes, the top ten scores will count towards your final grade for the class.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS: A documented research paper is required, as are evaluations of current events news articles. Separate guidelines will be distributed for these two course components.

COURSE EVALUATION: Students' final grades will be determined based upon the number of points accumulated during the semester from the four different component categories.

COURSE COMPONENT	POINTS POSSIBLE	YOUR POINTS	
Ten Quizzes @ 36 points each (10 out of the 12 quizzes available)	360 points (10 at 36 each)	----- ----- (subtotal) -----	
Documented Research Paper	240 points	(subtotal) -----	
Ten Current Events Evaluations @ 24 points each (10 of 12 modules)	240 points	----- ----- (subtotal) -----	
Attendance: classes missed (after 1 st) @ 5 pts & tardies/ early departures @ 2 pts	160 points	Days Missed? (subtotal) -----	
TOTAL	1000 points		
A = 901-1000	B = 801-900	C = 701-800	D = 601-700

It is also possible to accumulate "extra-credit" points with various assignments over the semester - perhaps locating info about government services or officials. These will be added to your total.

Mission Statement and Competencies for the General Education Core at MCC

This course directly supports the mission statement and competencies for the General Ed core courses in the Division of Arts and Sciences:

Mayland Community College's General Education core courses will provide the essential body of knowledge and skills that enable all degree-level students to perform competently as employees and as contributing members of society. Graduates of all degree programs at Mayland Community College will have completed the general education core. That core encompasses the essential knowledge and skills that enable all degree-level students to perform competently as employees and as contributing members of society. Upon completion of the general education core, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

1. Effective communication in speaking and listening situations needed for college, personal, and work successes
2. Effective communication in writing and reading situations needed for college, personal, and work successes
3. Logical, critical, and creative thinking to evaluate evidence and reach a conclusion
4. Application of basic computer use skills
5. Application of fundamental math skills
6. Basic awareness of the diversity of various world groups from both historical and contemporary contexts

Academic Integrity: The policy adopted by the MCC Board of Trustees and contained in the Student Code of Conduct reads: "Students are expected to perform honest academic work and follow established College policies and procedures." By enrolling at MCC, you agreed to abide by this code of academic integrity, and you are held to a high standard in POL 120. Evidence of plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or the entire course.

We will strive to be a **LEARNING COMMUNITY** in this class, and your personal assistance is vital. Please support your classmates as they learn. Disruptive or antisocial behavior will not be tolerated.

- ◆ If you are tardy, please enter quietly to avoid disturbing the class. I ask you not to leave the classroom during class. Time out of class may bring notations of "tardy."
- ◆ Please refrain from talking, rustling papers, or otherwise disturbing others during class. Please turn off your cell phone, audio apparatus, etc., for our class period.
- ◆ No beverages, snacks, or tobacco products are permitted in our ITV classrooms.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL: Should you be unable to complete this course for any reason, you need to be familiar with MCC's WITHDRAWAL POLICY. The dates for Spring Semester 2007 are:

- UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL through Tuesday, 13 February 2007
- CONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL through Tuesday, 27 March 2007
- EMERGENCY WITHDRAWAL ONLY through the last day of class

Administrative Withdrawal: *If a student has not been in contact with the instructor and has not attended class for a consecutive two-week period, an administrative withdrawal will be submitted by the instructor. This withdrawal is “WF” for “withdrew failing,” so you are encouraged to follow the official withdrawal route.*

Any student requesting special accommodations for this course due to a disability should apply for services through the SOAR Office or the Counseling Center, which will document the disability. A counselor will then determine which accommodations, if any, the student needs for success in this course.

COURSE SCHEDULE: Please prepare for class discussion by reading each chapter as assigned. Remember that in college classes, for every hour in class, you should spend at least two to three hours outside class reading, writing, and studying.

We will keep to our schedule as closely as possible; however, we may make adjustments to suit the needs of this particular class. Weather may be a factor as well, causing delays, cancellations and make-ups. **If MCC holds classes on an Option B “snow schedule,” this class meets 12:10 to 1:10 pm.**

Tuesday, 8 January 2007	SYLLABUS REVIEW AND COURSE INTRODUCTION
Thursday, 10 January 2007	Chapter 1: The Political Landscape
Thursday, 18 January 2007	Chapter 2: The Constitution
Tuesday, 30 January 2007	Chapter 3: Federalism
Thursday, 1 February 2007	TOPICS FOR DOCUMENTED RESEARCH PAPERS DUE
Tuesday, 6 February 2007	Chapter 4: Civil Liberties
Thursday, 15 February 2007	Chapter 5: Civil Rights
Thursday, 22 February 2007	Chapter 6: Congress
Thursday, 1 March 2007	PROPOSALS FOR DOCUMENTED RESEARCH PAPERS DUE
Tues/Thurs, 6/8 March 2007	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
Tuesday, 13 March 2007	Chapter 7: The Presidency
Tuesday, 20 March 2007	Chapter 8: The Bureaucracy
Thursday, 29 March 2007	Chapter 9: The Judiciary
Tuesday, 3 April 2007	DOCUMENTED RESEARCH PAPERS DUE
Thursday, 5 April 2007	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – NO CLASS
Tuesday, 10 April 2007	Chapter 10: Public Opinion and the News Media
Tuesday, 17 April 2007	Chapter 11: Political Parties and Interest Groups
Thursday, 26 April 2007	Chapter 12: Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
Tuesday, 8 May 2007	LAST DAY OF CLASS