Course Description

Organization, principles and actual working of the American National Government in all of its branches. This course will introduce the student to some of the major social, ideological and economic features of American society that affect politics, the demands for government activity this environment generates, and the basic decision-making processes through which these pressures are converted into laws and public policies. Finally, we will look at the way in which the benefits and burdens from these governmental policies are distributed among the various individuals, social groups and institutions in the United States.

Prerequisites: None

Signature Question: How do people understand and engage in community life?

LEARNING GOALS
The following goals are the primary learning objectives for this course. Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:

1. Describe the major components of the US government, including the Constitution and its interpretation, federalism and the branches of government.
2. Examine key public policies and learn the roles of citizens, groups, and elections in the making of public policy.
3. Demonstrate the capacity to analyze current debates over the purpose for government and the political controversies in American history.
4. Understand and take principled positions on the fundamental issues affecting students, the general public, and the nation at-large.

Assigned Readings

Outline and Assignments

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<td><strong>II. Institutions and Processes</strong></td>
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Approximately one class will be spent on most course topics. But deviation from the order and time devoted to each topic is likely.

**Assessment of Learning:** Your achievements of the course learning objectives will be assessed and evaluated in the following ways:

- 3 Exams of about 120 minutes each
- 1 Visit to an Oshkosh City Common Council meeting and watching 2 televised or on-line replays of two other local government meetings (School Board,
Winnebago County Board, Plan Commission, Parks Board, Sustainability Board, Redevelopment Authority, or Traffic Review Board).

- Regular attendance and an active role in several of the in-class discussions each week.
- A final report on Local Governance in Oshkosh that examines the major issues and policy-making process on our city.
- A retrospective evaluation of the course content and presentation.

Course Requirements

1) Examinations (60%): Three exams based on lectures, discussion and the readings will be given. Examinations are made up of multiple-choice questions. The content of these exams will not be cumulative and the test dates will be on the Friday of each of the three weeks of Interim.

2) Participation (10%): A significant part of each class period will be devoted to a discussion of the basic issues covered. Regular student attendance is expected and involvement in class discussions can improve your final grade by as much as one letter. Oral participation will be supplemented with several unannounced short quizzes supported by the materials provided in the CQ Student Study Site.

4) Project Paper (20%): Students will write a five (5) page that examines their initial experience with local government in action and then discusses the role of elected councils and community members in the urban policy making process. This paper should be submitted to the class D2L Dropbox.

5) Post-Test (5%): Students will take a pre-test and a post-test. The first test will establish a benchmark for the student’s general knowledge upon entering the class and the second will evaluate the student’s learning by the end of the semester.

6) Course Retrospective (5%): Students will write a short 1 to 2 page evaluative paper that examines the strengths and weaknesses of the course from their own perspective and then explain what they think they learned about government and politics from the class over the semester.

Community Experience Expectations:
All class members will attend in person the January 22nd Oshkosh City Council meeting and then view at least two other local government meetings by cable television or by online video streaming. Everyone will read the program agenda for each meeting, examine the issues that are being discussed, identify the meeting’s participants, and follow the deliberations and legislative enactments. Finally, students will report on the meetings they witnessed and critically evaluate the structure and processes of local government.
Students are expected to abide by the UW Oshkosh Student Academic and Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures during their Quest III Community Experience. Other policies that may be relevant to the Community Experience in this course are described in the online Quest III Handbook. Students should also respect the opinions expressed by other citizens at public meetings and become adequately versed in the Common Council’s civic codes.

Community Partner Profile
The City of Oshkosh operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The council is the legislative and policy making body of the City. The Common Council is a broad policy-making body, while the City Manager performs all the administrative duties required for the successful operation of the city.

The Common Council appoints the City Manager who is the city’s Chief Executive Officer. The Manager is responsible for planning, organizing, spending, and directing the activities of the municipality. The Council is comparable to the Board of Directors of a private corporation. The Council establishes policy, enacts ordinances, adopts the annual budget, and confirms the mayor’s appointments to various city advisory commissions, committees, boards, and authorities. The Council also holds hearings and conducts investigations on matters of public interest. This seven-member legislative body, including its titular Mayor Steve Cummings, is elected at-large for two-year terms.

The City of Oshkosh provides services to the community twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. Under the general operations direction of City Manager Mark Rohloff, city government is presently comprised of 620 full and part time employees, of which 13 are officials or administrators, 43 are supervisors/managers, 196 are involved in protective services, 64 are professionals, 52 are paraprofessionals, 154 are public works employees and 98 are office or clerical staff workers.

City of Oshkosh Municipal Government,
215 Church Avenue, P.O. Box 1130, Oshkosh WI.
City Hall Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm
Phone: (920) 236-5000
Common Council Schedule, Agendas, Codes, and Citizen Input-
http://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/

Oshkosh Community Media Services
CitiCable 10- Government Programming; CATV 2 Community
www.OshkoshCommunityMedia.org

Additional University and Course Policies

Academic Honesty: A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Assignments are designed to work on these very things. Taking others’ work as your own, quoting or paraphrasing without attribution, and other forms of academic dishonesty short-circuit the learning process and are not acceptable. Two general rules should be kept in mind: all quoted and paraphrased material must be cited
and when something is not common knowledge, it should be cited. Plagiarism is using others’ ideas without giving them credit. Most of it is inadvertent; some is intentional; some covers a small amount of text, others involve a whole paper. If you have plagiarized, University rules require me to meet with you, to show you what I believe has occurred and ask for your explanation or justification. Examples of academic dishonesty and possible sanctions are here (see UWS 14.03 and 14.04): https://www.uwosh.edu/stuaff/images/Chapter%20UWS%202014.pdf

Disability Accommodations: It is the policy and practice of UW Oshkosh to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion, please notify me as soon as possible. You can also contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 920-424-3100 or dean1@uwosh.edu. For more information, visit the Services for Students with Disabilities website at http://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/disability-services.

Attendance Policy: Class attendance is required. Accommodations will be made for University-recognized reasons like illness, family emergency, religious holiday, or University-sanctioned events. Every unexcused absence after your first two will reduce your class participation score.

Political Science majors (and prospective majors): You should be taking Political Methodology (PS 245) in your sophomore year (or, if you cannot, in the first semester of your junior year at the latest). PS 245 is a prerequisite for our capstone course Political Analysis (PS 401) and cannot be taken concurrently with PS 245. You should save all your graded work from this class and the others in the major.

Disclosure Statement: Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990: https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/.

Early Alert: Emails are sent to students enrolled in undergraduate courses each semester. These emails will indicate if a student is at risk of failing a course for one of the following reasons: Class attendance, nonparticipation or poor preparation, Habitually late to class, Incomplete/missing assignments, test/quiz scores.

Note: If any major changes are made to this schedule and these policies, I will announce them in class and via your UW Oshkosh email account and make a revised syllabus available.