

American Government 1: Theories, Policies and Politics

SSTH 037 059

Credits: 0.5 units / 5 hours / NCAA Approved

Course Description

Students analyze the American federal system of government as outlined by the Constitution of the United States. They study state and local government and examine the structures of the 50 state governments. The constitutional rights guaranteed to American citizens, as well as the relationship of citizens to states, are discussed in detail.

Course Objectives

When you have completed the materials in this course, you should be able to:

1. Summarize the different theories of government.
2. Discuss the ideas of Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and John Locke.
3. Identify the ideals of democracy.
4. Describe the impact of the British political tradition on the American Revolution.
5. Provide a historical account of government in the United States.
6. Understand the principles of the United States Constitution.
7. Evaluate American federalism.
8. Review the functions of state and local government in the United States.
9. Explain the development of political parties in the United States.
10. Note the importance of parties to the political process.
11. Analyze voting patterns and behavior.
12. Explain how elections are conducted in the United States.
13. Discuss the importance of public opinion in American politics.
14. Explore the impact of mass media on the political process.
15. Define each type of interest group.
16. Consider the impact that interest groups have in a democracy.
17. Differentiate between presidential and parliamentary forms of democracy.
18. Compare capitalist, mixed, socialist, and communist economies.
19. Express personal opinions about political issues.

Course Outline

Unit 1: Foundations of Government

Lesson 1: Theories of Government

Lesson 2: Origins of American Government

Unit 2: The United States Constitution

Lesson 3: Principles of the Constitution

Lesson 4: Articles and Amendments

Unit 3: A Federal System

Lesson 5: Federalism

Lesson 6: State Government

Lesson 7: Local Government

Unit 4: Political Processes

Lesson 8: Political Parties

Lesson 9: Voting Patterns

Lesson 10: The Electoral Process

Unit 5: Influencing the Process

Lesson 11: Public Opinion

Lesson 12: Interest Groups

Unit 6: Comparative Systems

Lesson 13: Comparative Political Systems

Lesson 14: Comparative Economics

Required Textbook and Materials

(available through Follett virtual bookstore at <http://highschool.nebraska.bkstr.com>)

Textbook: *Magruder's American Government. 2013 ed.* (ISBN: 9780133240825)