Course description and objectives:

As Americans, we live under a constitutional form of government as defined by the United States Constitution. The legislative enactments, executive decisions and judicial rulings made by the three branches of the federal government have broad implications for how we define, experience and express our roles as citizens in a democracy.

Our constitutional form of government provides for distinct roles for both the federal government and the 50 states under the concept of federalism. States, in turn, through their legislatures, influence the affairs of the 97,000 local governments. All of these inter-related government activities seek to “form a more perfect union” for 33 million Americans.

As major shifts and changes occur in the geographic, political and social landscapes of America we look to our federal government for rational solutions to major challenges including immigration, the environment, voting rights, civil rights, global conflicts and our relationships with the rest of the world. At the same time, our government appears so polarized by party preferences and political ideology that even the most basic constitutional functions are continually mired in conflicts.

This class – POLI 101-02- counts toward the College’s General Education Social Science Requirement. At the end of the semester students should be able to (a) apply social science concepts, model or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions; (b) identify and explain the central principles, institutions, procedures and decision-making processes of the American political system; (c) evaluate the basic strengths and weakness of the American political system through the application of political concepts and ideas; (d) relate historical events and/or developments to contemporary political issues, debates and outcomes in the United States and (e) develop an analytical, social scientific disposition toward American politics. These learning outcomes will be assessed using the grading procedures outlined below with the indicated procedures for each.
Course Requirements

1. Regular class attendance is expected of all students and will constitute 10% of your final grade. Attendance will be recorded on a daily sign-in sheet. Absences will be excused only if they are officially validated.

2. Expectations for class participation include reading assignments prior to class, joining in class discussions, respecting the opinions of others and turning in assignments on time. Late assignments without prior approval from the Instructor will incur a grade penalty of ½ a letter grade for each day that the assignment is late.

3. The use of electronic devices (including cell phones) for personal use during class is prohibited.

4. Students who are receiving services through the Center for Disability Services, are scheduled to travel with an athletic team or participate in a student government related or other official off-campus activity during the semester must present a letter of verification signed by the appropriate college official.

5. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the services of the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants are available to assist with overall development of papers, sentence structure, source documentation, etc.

6. Students who plan personal (i.e., non-emergency) off-campus trips prior to a scheduled exam (ex. Midterm or Final) will not receive excused absences nor the opportunity to make up the exam.

7. The College Honor Code is in effect at all times throughout the semester. Academic dishonesty (lying, cheating, attempting cheating or plagiarism) are violations of the Honor Code that, when identified, are reported to the Dean of Students, investigated and may result in sanctions, including dismissal from the College. Willful violations during class, including repeated unauthorized use of cell phones in the classroom, is a violation of the Honor Code and may result in expulsion from the class.

8. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize posted office hours and/or schedule appointments to discuss assignments or readings.

Grading

Grades will be based on a four part required research paper that examines a current political issue, a Midterm Examination, a Final Examination and class participation as follows:

1. Research paper, Part 1 10%
2. Research paper, Part 2 10%
3. Research paper, Part 3 10%
4. Research paper, Part 4 10%
5. Midterm Examination 25%
6. Final Examination 25%
7. Class attendance/participation 10%

Required Reading

There is not an assigned textbook. Students are required to become familiar with the United States Constitution from which several assignments may be made. The recommended version (available in the

You will receive periodic handouts on specific topics as defined by the instructor. You are strongly encouraged to keep abreast of contemporary political and social issues, many of which may be topics of class discussions. National newspapers including *The New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal* are available on-line at no charge. Local and state political news is reported in the *Charleston Post and Courier* and Columbia’s *State Newspaper*.

**Course Outline**

**January 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu 8</td>
<td>Introductions and semester overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 10</td>
<td>Syllabus and semester review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 15</td>
<td>Handout: and Discussion - Who are “We The People”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 17</td>
<td>The Historic Foundations of American Government - Handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 22</td>
<td>The Historic Foundations – Interest and Conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 24</td>
<td>The Historic Foundations – Conflicts and compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 29</td>
<td>Developing a Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 31</td>
<td>The U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**February 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu 5</td>
<td>The U.S. Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 7</td>
<td>Federalism (Handout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 12</td>
<td>The Legislative Branch – Constitutional powers and authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 14</td>
<td>The U.S. House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 19</td>
<td>The U.S. House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 21</td>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu 26</td>
<td>The U.S. Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th 28</td>
<td>The Executive Branch- Constitutional powers and authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**March 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu 5</td>
<td>The Executive Branch – The Presidency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Th  7          The Office of The President

**Paper Two Due**

Tu  12         The Office of the President
Th  14         The Federal cabinets
Tu  19         Spring Break
Th  21         Spring Break
Tu  26         The Federal cabinets

**Paper Three Due**

Th  28         The Federal cabinets

**April 2019**

Tu  2          The Federal Executive Agencies
Th  4          The Federal Regulatory Agencies
Tu  9          The Government Corporations
Th  11         The Judicial Branch- Constitutional powers and authority

**Paper Four Due**

Tu  16         The U.S. Supreme Court
Th  18         The U.S. Supreme Court
Tu  23         Last Day of Spring Semester
Th  25         **Final Examination**

**8 A.M. - 11 A.M.**

Maybank 207

**Required Assignment**

The purpose of this assignment is to study a current political issue that is a source of conflict between the various branches of government and the issues and mechanisms that are utilized to seek resolution.

The focus this semester is immigration. With the exception of Native Americans, all persons living in the United States are descendants from immigrants or from slaves who were brought to this country against their will. The country is often referred to as a “nation of immigrants.” Following the Civil War, several states passed immigration laws. In response, the U.S. Supreme Court in 1875 declared the regulation of immigration to be a federal responsibility.

Beginning with the 1790 Naturalization Act the U.S. has passed dozens of major immigration laws, each of which reflects the nation’s views of who should have access to citizenship, in what time period and
under what conditions. In 2002, the Department of Homeland Security was established by an act of Congress to coordinate the U.S. immigration laws and activities.

The election of President Donald Trump in 2016 issued in a new focus on U.S. immigration with his campaign promise to build a border wall to stem immigration specifically from Mexico. The President’s insistence in accomplishing that goal is currently a major conflict with Congress and has led to a shutdown of the U.S. government.

Your assignment this semester is to study the issues involved in this conflict, research the role of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in this issue and draw your own conclusion about whether building a border wall is a rational and reasonable solution to the current immigration issue. You will write four papers on this issue as follows:

1. Read the President’s January 2017 Inauguration speech. Describe his stated promise regarding building the wall, its location, the reasons why it is necessary and who would pay for it.
2. Describe the current “wall” and the role and current operations of the Department of Homeland Security’s Border Patrol in securing the southern border.
3. Describe the budget conflict between the President and the Congress on funding for the wall that led to the government shutdown. Create a specific timeline of budget proposals from the Senate, the House of Representatives and the President that led to the shutdown. Describe the President’s speech to the nation on Tuesday January 8, 2018, including the figures used by the President to make his case. Describe the response from the Democratic legislative leaders.
4. State if the conflict is currently resolved, the length of time it took to be resolved and the essential nature of the agreement. Finally, provide your view and take a pro or con position on whether you agree or disagree with the resolution and state your reasons for your position.

You will be provided a specific template for each paper.