



RANGER COLLEGE

COURSE SYLLABUS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

3 Credit Hours

INSTRUCTOR: KATHY KENNEDY

INSTRUCTOR: Kathy Kennedy  
EMAIL: kkennedy@rangercollege.edu (no Blackboard email)

### **COURSE STRUCTURE AND CREDITS**

Credit: 3 semester hours

Days/Time: Online

Online Office Hours: M-F (noon)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights. Three lecture hours per week.

Credit: 3 semester hours

### **EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.
- Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
- Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
- Analyze the election process.
- Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

### **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**

Wilson, James Q. American Government. Brief Version, thirteenth edition. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company. **TEXAS**

### **CORE CURRICULUM STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Through the Texas Core Curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning.

## **PREREQUISITES**

There are no prerequisites for this course; however, it is considered to be a sophomore level course that has a lot of writing demands. To set yourself up for success, it is highly recommended that you enroll in the basic English courses prior to taking this one.

## **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

This course includes papers, exams, discussions, and a project.

### **Methods of Assessment**

#### Exams:

There are three exams. Each exam is worth 50 points. You will have two attempts at each exam.

#### Final Exam:

The final is worth 200 points. It is comprehensive. It must be proctored.

#### Discussions:

There are three. Each one is worth 50 points. Discussions must include research, a works cited, and they must be a minimum of 300 words.

#### Project:

The Film Project is worth 200 points.

Mini-Essays: are worth 75 points each. There are three essays (one for each unit). The minimum word count is 500. Each Mini-Essay requires research and documentation for that research.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

## 1. Course etiquette

- **Email** – Please allow 48 hours for a reply via e-mail. There may be periods where it may take longer to get a reply (such as weekends and holidays). Again, be patient and allow me time to get back to you. To begin an email, please word it in the following way:

Dear Mrs. Kennedy,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in your \_\_\_\_\_ course.

- **Communication Dialogue** – Personal attacks, racial or ethnic slurs, outbursts or other inappropriate forms of communication will result in immediate removal from the class and possibly from the college (see academic freedom statement). Think about what you are saying, before you hit the send or submit button.
- **Personal Requests** – I am happy to assist you with any questions you may have about the course, about the news, or even college life in general. However, personal requests for exemptions to course policies will not be granted unless there is a legitimate reason. It is a form of discrimination by the instructor to grant exceptions without basis. Any exceptions made may require documentation and will only be considered in advance of a deadline. Please refrain from asking the instructor to engage in unprofessional or unethical behavior, such requests will be ignored.

2. Late work policy- ample time has been allotted to complete each Unit activity. All assignments are expected on or before the deadline indicated in the syllabus. I am certainly willing to work with you through extenuating personal circumstances should the need arise to submit a late essay. Any student that needs to submit a late paper must contact me in advance of the deadline for approval and to make alternative arrangements. You may be required to provide some form

of written documentation in order to substantiate a request to submit a late assignment.

3. Online attendance- as a minimum expectation, you should login to the course and check your e-mail at least twice per week. You are free to work ahead at your own pace. However, be sure to avoid falling behind. Each unit deadline will serve as a benchmark for your overall progress in the course. Remember, the distance education environment requires a high degree of self-discipline and intrinsic motivation. Time management is something many students struggle with, so make a schedule for this course and stick to it. Trying to work on all the assignments just ahead of a deadline is the recipe for disaster.

#### 4. Announcements

There are frequent updates posted in the course announcements. This is the primary avenue of communication for this course. Each student is expected to read the information and keep current with the course. Many frequently asked questions are addressed via announcements and some may contain vital course information. These are official course communications, so bear in mind that you will be held accountable for the information provided.

#### 5. Academic Honesty

Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Ranger Student Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Students are expected to complete all course work by their own efforts and in their own words.

When you cite or paraphrase another author, you are required to properly acknowledge all sources with a parenthetical citation in the body text and provide a bibliographic listing on a works cited page. If you have any questions about citations, contact me immediately. Any attempt to submit work that is not a product of your own efforts will result in a zero for that assignment. In addition, you may face

disciplinary action by the college administration leading up to expulsion from the college.

#### 6. Statement of academic freedom

The collegiate environment is one that promotes tolerance, understanding, communication and equality. Use the guidelines below in your interactions with the instructor and your peers:

Students are provided with the opportunity to demonstrate their comprehension of political issues and express their understanding of key points in this course. Academic freedom will be protected and respected by all students and the instructor. However, there are some limitations on free speech. Hateful, sexist, racist, hurtful, or otherwise obscene comments that are intended, as a personal attack will not be tolerated. Additionally, any dialogue that does not specifically pertain to the topic at hand will not receive an audience. At the instructor's discretion, a student that violates these guidelines may be removed from the course and possibly from the college.

#### 7. Dropping a class

If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. Do not simply stop attending the course. The withdrawal request must be received in the Registrar's Office. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an "F." If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a "W" (Withdraw) in each class dropped

#### 8. Instructor's rights

The instructor reserves the right to modify any course requirements and calendar due dates as necessary to manage and conduct this course. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor and seeking clarification of any requirement that is not understood.

#### 9. ADA Information

If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires accommodations, please contact the College's Special Services.

#### 10. Non-discrimination Statement

Admissions, employment, and program policies of Ranger College are nondiscriminatory in regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, disability, and national origin.

11. Early Alert System- the instructor complies with the Ranger College Early Alert system.