INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide you with an overview of American government, helping you satisfy the prerequisite requirement in this area for UNC’s MPA Program. The course is structured around three units—Foundations, Institutions, and Connections. In unit 1, we investigate the history of the U.S. founding, exploring the origins and evolution of our political values and culture. In unit 2, we focus on the formal institutions of American democracy—Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, and the Bureaucracy. We conclude in unit 3 with exploring the ways in which individuals are engaged and connected with government. Students are encouraged to closely follow current events while participating in this course, and reflect on how the academic material relates to the operations and activities of the American government.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will have knowledge about

1. The foundations of American democracy
2. How political institutions operate in the American system, with a detailed examination of the powers and responsibilities of the Presidency, Congress, Supreme Court, and Bureaucracy
3. The role of state and local governments in the federal system
4. How citizens and groups influence the political process

TEXTBOOK


LECTURES

The lectures presented by the professor were developed from a variety of sources, including the course textbook, other textbooks on American government and state and local government, scholarly research, news sources, and personal experiences.

GRADING

A number of Knowledge Checks are built into the course to assist you in practicing and evaluating your mastery of the material. These activities are not graded.

At the conclusion of each unit, you will take a graded exam. The exams are a combination of 25 multiple choice and true/false items. You have 45 minutes to complete the exam.

You must obtain a score of 70 to move to the next unit. Should you not achieve that score, you will retake the exam. You may take the unit exam (3) up to three times to achieve the passing score. Questions are randomized and a new set of questions will be generated each time. Should you encounter difficulties with the exam, I recommend returning to the video lectures and textbook to review the material.
You must complete the course by the end of week 5 of your first term. If you do not complete the pre-requisite course within this deadline you will not be permitted to register for the next term and must schedule a meeting with the Associate Director of Academic Advising and Student Life.

Should you not complete the unit assessment with a passing grade, we recommend that you review the unit and re-attempt the test after no sooner than 24 hours in order to more fully process the content. As aforementioned, students are not permitted more than 3 attempts. Reach out to the Associate Director of Academic Advising and Student Life if you do not complete the course after 3 attempts with a passing grade of 70% or higher.

If you do not wish to satisfy your pre-requisite through this online course, you are permitted to take the course through an accredited university. If you choose this option, you need to send the title and course description to the Director of Admissions for approval before you begin. No other options are permitted.

Should you have any questions regarding the content as you navigate through the self-paced course you may contact the course instructor listed in your section. If you have any technical issues you may reach out to your Student Support team at 855-672-8621 or at studentsupport@onlinempa.unc.edu