

Hagerstown Community College
MASTER SYLLABUS DOCUMENT

COURSE: POL 202, Constitutional Law, 3 credits

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Eric Schwartz

SEMESTER/YEAR: Spring 2017

ROOM:

HOURS:

OFFICE:

PHONE:

OFFICE HOURS:

EMAIL:

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is a study of constitutional law as it has developed through interpretations of the United States Supreme Court. Subjects include the interaction and interplay of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches of the government and the powers and limitations under the US Constitution. Prerequisites: American Government, POL 101.

TEXTBOOKS: Stephens, Jr., Otis H. and John M. Scheb II. American Constitutional Law: Sources of Power and Restraint. Vol. I. 6th ed. United States: Cengage/Wadsworth, 2015.

Stephens, Jr., Otis H. and John M. Scheb II. American Constitutional Law: Civil Rights and Liberties. Vol. II. 6th ed. United States: Cengage/Wadsworth, 2015.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: This course will assist the student to:

- A. Expand their understanding of the powers and limitations of the federal government and the meaning of civil liberties included in the Constitution.
- B. Develop a basic understanding of the federal court system and the role and powers of the United States Supreme Court.
- C. Acquire the critical skills to read, interpret, and evaluate Supreme Court opinions and decisions.
- D. Learn to think critically, learn to analyze and understand constitutional issues and concepts.

TOTAL HOURS OF COURSEWORK:

To earn one academic credit at HCC, students are required to complete a minimum of 37.5 clock hours (45 fifty-minute “academic” hours) of coursework per semester. Those hours of coursework may be completed through a combination of hours within the classroom and hours outside the classroom. Certain courses may require more than the 37.5 minimum hours of coursework per credit.

For most classes, students should expect to do at least 1 - 2 hours of coursework outside of class for each hour of in-class coursework.

COURSE CONTENT OBJECTIVES: This course will assist the student to:

- A. Understand the following principles and themes as related to constitutional law:
1. Fundamental understanding of the United States Constitution
 2. Role of the United States Supreme Court
 3. Powers of Congress
 4. Powers of the President
 5. Growth of administrative agencies and the modern administrative state
 6. Expansion of federal power
 7. Presence of civil liberties in the Constitution
 8. Protection of property rights in the Constitution
 9. First Amendment: Freedom of speech and separation of church and state
 10. Fourth Amendment and other criminal protections
 11. Equal protection and due process
 12. Learn to read, understand, and critique Supreme Court opinions

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES: The requirements for this course include:

- A. There will be written assignments to be completed; the papers will be due and will be discussed in the following class. For example, the written assignment handed out on January 25, 2016 must be completed and handed in at the beginning of the next scheduled class. The questions should be fully answered, exploring both sides of the question and defending a particular conclusion. APA style should be followed. A copy of the style guide is posted on the Moodle site for this class. Not following the style will negatively affect the student's grade. The papers should be at least two pages and no more than three pages. Late papers will not be accepted.
- B. Supreme Court Cases/Issues Assignments – A written and oral presentation on a current constitutional issue or significant Supreme Court decision is required. Topic/issue must be approved by the Instructor. Due date for written project is April 20, 2016. In class presentations will be presented in class on April 25.
- C. Quizzes: There will be at least 10 quizzes.
- D. Participation: Students will be expected to engage in class discussion about the subject matter. Participation will be graded with each class. A grade of "Good," "Average," or "Unacceptable" will be given following each class. The points of these levels will be 100, 80, and 60 respectively.
- E. Grading: The written assignments will make up 15% of the final grade. The written project and oral presentation on a constitutional issue or Supreme Court case(s) will count as 20% of the final grade. Quizzes will count for 20% of the grade. Attendance/participation will count for 25% of the grade. The final exam will count for 20% of the grade.

COURSE POLICIES: All students are expected to:

- A. Attend all classes and be on time. A student missing class three times will be asked meet the instructor during office hours. The college attendance policy can be found in the College Catalog.

In the case of absence because of emergency or participation in official College functions, it is the student's responsibility to confer with the instructor about the absence and missed course work. Furthermore, it is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from any class that s/he ceases to attend. Failure to do so will result in the recording of an "F" grade.

- B. Complete class assignments on time and actively participate in class discussions. Be respectful of the class.
- C. Ask questions every time you need clarification.
- D. **MAKE SURE ALL CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE TURNED OFF DURING CLASS.**
- E. Keep up to date with national news. Be able to utilize this information as we discuss the principles of the United States Constitution.
- F. Submit assignments when due (**all written assignments are due at the beginning of class**).
- G. Instructor reserves right to modify syllabus as appropriate.
- H. The provisions of the Hagerstown Community College Code of Student Conduct will be strictly followed. For more information regarding general policy and the Honor Code, please consult the College Guide or see the instructor.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the course content and/or evaluation procedures as deemed necessary.

College Grading Scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students may receive reasonable accommodations if they have a diagnosed disability and present appropriate documentation. Students seeking accommodations are required to contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) office as early as possible. Students may contact a DSS staff member for an appointment at dss@hagerstowncc.edu or at 240-500-2530.