

**RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE**

**POLI 101 – Introduction to Political Science**

**I. Basic Course Information**

A. Course number and Title: POLI 101 Introduction to Political Science

B. New or Modified Course: Modified

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Fall Year: 2023

**D. Effective Term: Fall 2024**

E. Sponsoring Department: Humanities, Social Sciences, Social Work & Education

F. Semester Credit Hours: **3**

G. Weekly Contact Hours: 3

Lecture: 3

Laboratory: 0

Out of class student work per week: 6

H. ☐ Prerequisite (s):

☐ Corequisite (s):

☒ Prerequisite (s) and Corequisite (s): Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher.

I. Additional Fees: None

J. Name and E-Mail Address of Department Chair and Divisional Dean at time of approval: Dr. Isabel Gutierrez-Bergman ([Isabel.Gutierrez@raritanval.edu](mailto:Isabel.Gutierrez@raritanval.edu))  
Dr. Patrice Marks ([Patrice.Marks@raritanval.edu](mailto:Patrice.Marks@raritanval.edu))

**II. Catalog Description**

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher.

As a general introduction to the study of politics and government, the course first considers the ideas of four major political philosophers and their contrasting views of the nature and purpose of government.

Additional topics to be examined include the basic institutions of government, such as executives, legislatures and courts, followed by political culture, parties, electoral systems, participation, the role of various media, nationalism and revolution.

### **III. Statement of Course Need**

- A. This course serves as a basic component in undergraduate liberal arts education, and transfers to most four-year institutions. It is one of two introductory level courses in Political Science, and is a prerequisite for further study in that field and the other social sciences. It provides a general introduction to the study of politics, political philosophy and government institutions, especially those outside of the United States. It also prepares students transferring to four-year institutions for further study in fields such as teacher training, history, the social sciences, public administration and pre-law.
- B. No lab component
- C. Transferability
  - 1. This course transfers as a general education elective.
  - 2. This course transfers as a social science elective
  - 3. This course transfers as a liberal arts elective

### **IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum**

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course serves as a General Education course in Social Sciences.
- D. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, [www.njtransfer.org](http://www.njtransfer.org); b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

### **V. Outline of Course Content**

- A. General introduction to study of government and politics
- B. Acquaintance with development of political systems historically
- C. Examination of current issues and controversies in comparative and historical perspective.
- D. Consideration of the theories of Aristotle, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmund Burke and Karl Marx
- E. Comparative study of the basic and most common institutions of governments, such as chief executives, legislatures, judicial and legal systems and bureaucracies.
- F. Introduction to the basic terms and concepts most commonly used in the study of government and politics.
- G. Examination of the development of political culture and political socialization
- H. Examination of political culture, political socialization and revolution
- I. Multiethnic and religiously pluralistic societies and the influence of nationalism

## **VI. A. Course Learning Outcomes:**

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply comparative methods in the introductory study of government and politics (GE 5 \*)
2. Compare and analyze contrasting or conflicting theories in political philosophy
3. Effectively communicate ideas in essays and research projects (GE 1)
4. Understand the basic vocabulary, philosophical questions and methods of analysis in the field of political science (GE 1, 5, \*)
5. Examine contemporary political problems, controversies and conflicts in a larger historical perspective, including recurrent questions of who should rule, how power is best distributed, and the principles which should underlie the just political society (GE 5, 7, ER \*)
6. Evaluate and identify enduring and recurring political processes and phenomena beyond the contemporary world (GE 7)

\* (Embedded Critical Thinking)

## **B. Assessment Instruments**

1. lecture/discussion
2. small-group work
3. student oral presentations
4. essays
5. term papers
6. homework assignments from textbook
7. quizzes
8. participation

## **VII. Grade Determinants**

- A. essays
- B. projects and/or research papers
- C. exams
- D. presentations
- E. article summaries
- F. discussion participation
- G. book review

Primary formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning that may be used in the course:

- A. lecture/discussion

- B. small-group work
- C. student oral presentations
- D. student collaboration

## **VIII. Texts and Materials**

1. Open Education Resources
2. Textbook: *Political Science: A Comparative Introduction*, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed., by Hague, Harrop & McCormick
3. *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon, abridged and edited by David Womersly
4. Supplementary articles and printed materials relevant to the course

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

## **IX. Resources**

N/A

## **X. Honors Options [if relevant]**

N/A