



**BAKER COLLEGE**  
**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**  
**POL 3010 AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS**  
**3 Semester Hours**

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**Student Learning Outcomes and Enabling Objectives**

1. Acquire knowledge and understanding of the political science discipline.
  - (a) Identify and explain the subfields of political science.
  - (b) Analyze different interpretations of the nature of politics.
  - (c) Analyze arguments about why politics matters.
  - (d) Analyze the relationship between political science and other social science disciplines, especially history, economics, and geography.
2. Explain and utilize political concepts, terms, and perspectives, e.g. liberalism, republicanism, power, sovereignty, democracy, legislature, executive, judiciary etc.
  - (a) Apply political concepts, terms and perspectives in writing, e.g. through the discussion board, the research essay, and the primary sources exam.
  - (b) Apply political concepts, terms and perspectives orally, e.g. through regular class engagement and the research presentation.
3. Examine primary sources relevant to the study of U.S. government and politics.
  - (a) Identify repositories for and types of primary sources particular to U.S. government and politics, e.g. founding documents of the United States, federal and state records, advocacy reports, opinion polls, election statistics, etc.
  - (b) Evaluate primary sources systematically in order to establish reliability, sufficiency, and utility.
4. Evaluate and some theoretical perspectives relevant to the study of U.S. government and politics, e.g. the relevance of public opinion for policy making; the effectiveness of the executive, legislature, and judiciary; and schools of thought on constitutional interpretation etc.
5. Acquire knowledge and understanding of major events and developments in U.S. history that have shaped American political systems and political philosophies.
6. Examine the constitutional dimension of U.S. government and politics.
  - (a) Analyze the origins and development of the Constitution.
  - (b) Analyze debates emanating from the Bill of Rights.
  - (c) Analyze the principles and operation of federalism in the United States.
7. Examine representation and participation in U.S. government and politics.
  - (a) Analyze theories of representation and participation.
  - (b) Analyze voting behavior.
  - (c) Analyze political parties and the party system.
  - (d) Analyze the functions and effects of the media.

- (e) Analyze the role and impact of interest groups.
  - 8. Examine the executive in U.S. government and politics.
    - (a) Analyze the arrangements for and outcomes of presidential elections.
    - (b) Analyze the functions of the presidency and the components of presidential leadership.
    - (c) Analyze the exercise of and constraints on presidential power.
    - (d) Analyze the functions, organization, and processes of the federal bureaucracy.
  - 9. Examine the legislature in U.S. government and politics.
    - (a) Analyze the arrangements for and outcomes of congressional elections
    - (b) Analyze the functions, organization, and processes of Congress.
  - 10. Examine the judiciary in U.S. government and politics.
    - (a) Analyze the functions, organization, and processes of the Supreme Court.
    - (b) Analyze the influence of Supreme Court decisions.
    - (c) Analyze the protection of civil liberties.
  - 11. Examine the formulation and implementation of domestic policy.
    - (a) Analyze aspects of economic policy, including institutions and mechanisms of economic policy, and the performance of the U.S. economy since c.1980.
    - (b) Analyze social policy, especially immigration and identity, affirmative action, LGBT issues, and poverty and welfare.
  - 12. Examine the formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy.
    - (a) Analyze approaches to foreign policy analysis, including bureaucratic politics, the military-industrial-congressional complex, public opinion, and leadership personality and cognition.
    - (b) Analyze the foundations of U.S. global power and evaluate debates about U.S. decline.
  - 13. Examine state and local politics in Michigan.
    - (a) Analyze the State Constitution of Michigan and evaluate debates about constitutional reform.
    - (b) Analyze recent controversies in Michigan politics, e.g. affirmative action, same-sex marriage, immigration, and infrastructure.
  - 14. Develop domain-specific and transferable skills.
    - (a) Improve critical thinking (analysis and synthesis of arguments).
    - (b) Improve competence in composition (arguments supported by evidence and theoretical perspectives, and characterized by sound structure, precise spelling and grammar, and accurate referencing).
    - (c) Improve competence in presentation (arguments supported by evidence and theoretical perspectives, and characterized by sound structure, effective use of Information and Communication Technology, confident articulation, and accurate referencing).
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These SLOs are not approved for experiential credit.

**Effective: Fall 2017**