Teacher Appointment Criteria
POLS Y103 – Introduction to American Government

Statement of Intent

This document is intended to be a planning resource for the prospective instructor and the IPFW Department Representative (“faculty liaison”) who mentors and supervises the IPFW Dual-Credit Program. There may be one department representative as a liaison, different liaisons for different instructors, or the chair of the department can serve as the liaison as necessary.

This is a basic course covering the system of American politics and government. The course is designed to provide the following student outcomes: a) an understanding of the foundations of a republican government; b) knowledge of the presidency, Congress, the judiciary, and federalism; c) a preliminary understanding of how political research is conducted; d) an understanding of issues such as civil liberties and civil rights, political parties, interest groups, and elections; and e) the role that citizens can play in a democratic political system. By the end of the course, students should better understand the American political system, the fundamental issues that it faces, the processes involved in the operation of governments, the organizations involved in the political system, and the diversity of American society and its representation in the political system. At the end of the semester, students should be able to: synthesize information; distinguish between fact, interpretation based on fact, and opinion; and defend with evidence their ideas, views, and opinions on political issues. Potential dual-credit instructors should also be aware that their Y103 courses must be structured such that they satisfy all of the criteria in the “Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing”, and most of the standards in the “Written Communication”, section of the statewide general education requirements (please see the relevant documents for details).

Requirements

1. The choice of an appropriate college-level textbook to be used in this course is important. The IPFW Department of Political Science, through its department representative (or the chair of the department as a default option), reserves the right to approve the primary textbook to be used in this course. Specifically, the department requires all instructors of, and textbooks for, POLS Y103 to cover the following subjects: the Constitution, federalism, Congress, the presidency and bureaucracy, the judiciary, civil rights and civil liberties, political parties, interest groups, public opinion, and elections. Because the AP US Government test covers public policy, dual-credit teachers are strongly encouraged, but not required, to address this subject.
2. All dual-credit instructors for Introduction to American Politics are considered to be adjunct instructors in the Department of Political Science, and thus their appointment to this position must be approved by the members of the department. Completing an application (see point 3) to teach in the dual-credit program does not imply that it will be approved, and some applications may take a considerable amount of time to process or require a number of revisions to be approved. No plans to teach POLS Y103 should be made by the teacher or school administrators until an explicit statement of final approval is received from the department.

According to the standards set by the department, the minimum qualification for adjunct instructors to teach POLS Y103 is the completion of a master’s degree in political science or an equivalent number of graduate credits in the discipline. At the department’s discretion, a professional degree (e.g., JD, MPA, MPP) or master’s degree in a related field (e.g., international relations, security studies) may also be used to satisfy this requirement. Applicants may also be approved if they meet the Higher Learning Commission-mandated minimum standard of possession of a master’s degree (or higher) in some field unrelated to political science and at least eighteen graduate credit hours in the discipline.

3. All applications to teach in the dual-credit program must include a cover letter (expression of interest), a complete application form, a professional resume, a full set of transcripts of undergraduate and graduate classes, a detailed syllabus for the proposed Y103 course, and three letters of support or recommendation. At a minimum, the syllabus must contain information about the course’s textbook, assignments and exams, grading procedures and standards, weekly readings and other course activities, and information about relevant course policies (e.g., academic misconduct penalties).

4. The departmental representative may visit the classroom twice during the course of any semester to observe (and, upon invitation to do so, participate in) the class session. These visits may be either announced or unannounced.

5. The department reserves the right to prepare a comprehensive exam to test the knowledge of students in the class to determine if they have achieved a necessary level of knowledge. The department also reserves the right to accept other evidence of such mastery, including AP exam results.