POLI 313B U.S. Politics: Public Policy, the Constitution and Civil Liberties

Instructor Spring 2022: Dr. Colin Bennett

Course delivery: In the Spring 2022 term, this course will be delivered on campus and face-to-face.

Course description:
Most of the enduring and contentious issues in contemporary US politics are shaped profoundly by the Constitution and by the interpretation of that document by the US Supreme Court. Political Science 313B introduces students to US politics through the perspective of some of those issues: affirmative action, LGBT rights, abortion, gun rights, capital punishment, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and privacy. By the end of the course, you should have gained a solid appreciation of the US constitutional system, and the operation of legislative, judicial and executive institutions within that system. Through the cases and controversies, you will learn not just about the Constitution and the Supreme Court, but also about federalism, the separation of powers, the legislative process, group politics, political culture and about a range of other agencies that constitute the US political system and shape public policy.

Prerequisites: None

Course outcomes/objectives:
- Develop research, writing and analytical skills
- Build independent research skills
- Understand the American Constitutional system and the legislative, judicial and executive systems within that system
- Understand the agencies, such as, federalism, separation of powers, group politics and political culture which constitute the U.S. political system and shape public policy

Topics may include:
U.S. Supreme Court
U.S. Constitutional system
Contemporary policy issues

This summary provides an overall sense of the course and is not considered an official course outline. Detailed course outlines will be available for all registered students on the first day of class.