

POLS 105
State and Local Government and Politics
3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County
Common Course Outline

Description

POLS 105 – State and Local Government and Politics: introduces students to the systematic study of government, politics and the legislative process. Students analyze the foundation, development, and exercise of executive power at the state and local levels of government. Students examine the structure of state courts and their role in government, and study how state and local government affects their lives, jobs and community. This course gives special attention to Maryland and Baltimore County Governments.

Co-requisites: ACLT 053 or (ESOL 052 and ESOL 054)

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. explain how to interact with state and local governments in order to solve problems;
2. describe the process of how bills become laws in the Maryland legislature and the role of Delegates and Senators in this process;
3. explain how various states approach civil and voting rights through a diversity lens;
4. compare and contrast how Maryland and Baltimore County governments are different from other state and local governments;
5. describe the structure of Maryland courts and how individuals become judges, including the diversity of judges (social, cultural, ideological);
6. identify the relationships between the American federal, state, and local governments using a variety of technological tools;
7. identify the major features of American State Government Constitutions;
8. explain the role of American State Government Constitutions in structuring state and local governments;
9. discuss how citizens participate in state and local politics, including the importance of public opinion, mass media, voting, and social media;
10. compare and contrast the organization and roles of political parties in influencing state and local politics, elections and government;
11. analyze the roles of political interest groups in influencing state and local politics and government;
12. evaluate the roles and powers of jurisdictional mayors, county executives and state governors in leading local and state governments;
13. explain the structures and functions of typical state and local executive and administrative agencies using a variety of technological tools;
14. illustrate how factors such as money and the media influence and shape political behavior and ethics of political leaders;

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For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

15. analyze the role of global diversity and globalization in state and local governments, in the 21st Century;
16. discuss issues and events affecting the current state and local political environment; and
17. find, evaluate, use and cite valid sources for state and local government policy documents.

Major Topics

- I. Governments
 - a. Governors, State Agencies, Money and Budgets
 - b. Legislative Bodies- How laws are created
 - c. County Government
 - d. County Executives, County Councils and County Agencies
 - e. Municipal Governments, City Councils and City Agencies
 - f. Judicial systems, Criminal Justice
- II. People, Politics and Political Behavior
 - a. Political Ideology
 - b. Interest Groups and Political Parties
 - c. Media and Public Opinion
 - d. Campaigns, Elections and Voting
 - e. Redistricting
- III. Public Policy Process
 - a. Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations
 - b. Financing State and Local Government
 - c. State and Local Government Policy Making
 - d. Effects of Government on Communities

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- Two examinations, including analytical essay questions.
- Participation in five collaborations, debates, oral presentations and/or online discussion forums about current political events and topics.
- A research assignment or project on a selected topic of interest and approved by the instructor.

Written Assignments: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources.

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