


Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
Core Category: Govt Effective Fall 2009

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
Effective Fall     

RECEIVED OCT 24 2008

1. Department: POLS College: CLASS
2. Faculty Contact Person: James Thurmond Telephone: 3-7622 Email: jthurmond@uh.edu
3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
POLS / 1107 / Federal and Texas Constitutions
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
POLS / 1107 / FEDERAL AND TEXAS CONSTITUTION
  - SCH: 1.00 Level: FR CIP Code: 4510020001 Lect Hrs: 1 Lab Hrs: 0
4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
If Yes, please complete:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
     /      /
  - Course ID:      Effective Date (currently active row):
6. Authorized Degree Program(s): All
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No
  - Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)
7. Grade Option: S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)
8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
     /      /     
  - Course ID:      Effective Date (currently active row):
9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
Cr: 1. (1-0). Prerequisites: ~~(By permission only. Enrollment limited to students who have completed 6 hours of Core Government.)~~ Description (30 words max.): Introduction to the history and politics of the United States and Texas Constitutions. Emphasis on the functions, structure, characteristics, impacts, amendment procedures and political philosophy that underlies written constitutions.
10. Dean's Signature:  Date: 10/29/08  
Print/Type Name: Dr. Sarah Fishman

U N I V E R S I T Y *of* H O U S T O N

### CORE CURRICULUM COURSE REQUEST

Originating Department/College: Political Science/CLASS

Person making request: James Thurmond

Telephone: 713-743-7622

E-mail: jththurmond@uh.edu

Dean's signature: [REDACTED]

Date: 10/24/08

#### I. General Information:

**Course number and title:** POLS-1107 Federal and Texas Constitutions

**Catalog description:** Introduction to the history and politics of the United States and Texas Constitutions. Emphasis on the functions, structure, characteristics, impacts, amendment procedures and political philosophy that underlies written constitutions.  
**Category of Core** for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
- American History
- Government
- Humanities
- Visual/Performing Arts Critical
- Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
- Natural Sciences
- Social/Behavioral Sciences
- Writing in the Disciplines (IDO)

#### II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):

Call ext. 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at [www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum](http://www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum)

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

SVP. Effective 5/2/08. Replaces all previous forms, which may no longer be used.

### Attachment – Core Curriculum Course Request for POLS- 1107

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see Guidelines)? Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.**

POLS-1107 is being created to assist our students in fulfilling the State mandated Core Government requirement. This course will be offered in addition to our pre-existing Core Government courses (POLS-1336 & POLS-1337) to be used as a supplement for students who have completed 6 hours of Government courses, but have not satisfied the statutory requirement for study of the federal and state constitutions.

This course familiarizes students with the following points concerning both the U.S. Constitution and the Texas Constitution:

- The Functions Performed by Written Constitutions
- Historical Origins
- The Politics of Constitution Writing/Ratification
- Basic Structure – Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Articles, etc.
- Characteristics – Length, Level of Detail, Predominance of Inherent or Enumerated Powers, etc.
- Amendment Procedures
- Impact on Political Outcomes and Activities

Students will understand the political philosophy that underlies written constitutions, and the ways in which constitutions contribute to and support democratic governance.

- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.**

We review exam results, professor comments, and end-of-semester evaluations to determine course effectiveness.

- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.**

We may improve the course by taking one or more actions: 1) modify the course syllabus to include/exclude additional readings; 2) modify the emphasis placed upon particular sub-topics during the semester.

**Political Science 1107  
U.S. and Texas Constitutions  
Syllabus**

This one hour course provides students with familiarity with the Constitution of the United States and the Texas Constitution. Students will gain an understanding of the following:

- The history of written, legally binding constitutions
- The history of the U.S. Constitution
- The history of the Texas Constitution
- The nature and functions of Constitutions
- The Characteristics of the U.S. Constitution
- Basic Principles and Political Impacts of the U.S. Constitution
- The Characteristics of the Texas Constitution
- Basic Principles and Political Impacts of the Texas Constitution

The readings for this course are:

- Gregory R. Weiher, "The U.S. Constitution and the Texas Constitution"
- Gregory R. Weiher, "Judicial Federalism"
- *The People and American Government*, Chapter 2, "The Constitution"
- Donald Lutz, "**The Texas Constitution**", in *Perspectives on American and Texas Politics*

This course is offered on a pass-fail basis. Passage in the course is accomplished by completing the on-line, multiple-choice examination with a score of 70% or better.