POLS 2402: Constitutional Law

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3
Lecture Hours/Week: 3
Lab Hours/Week: *
OJT Hours/Week: *
Prerequisites: None
Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: Goal 05 - Hist/Soc/Behav Sci, Goal 09 - Ethical/Civic Resp

Meets MN Transfer Goal Areas 5 and 9. This course provides an appreciation and understanding of the United States Constitution and the role it plays in modern society. The historic basis and development of constitutional concepts and structure are explored. Constitutional limitations on governmental authority over private citizens are discussed and analyzed. Evolving definitions of basic rights and protections for citizens are examined through a study of historic and recent Federal and State Supreme Court decisions. The relationship between citizens and law enforcement is explored in detail.

B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES: 02/10/2014 - Present

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. Recognize the historical antecedents of the Constitution.
2. Understand that the Constitution is a limitation on government.
3. Explain the historic birth of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
4. Understand the concept of separation of powers and the division of federal and state authority.
5. Identify the classes of unprotected speech.
6. Explain the 1st Amendment’s restrictions on police activity.
7. Identify the rules governing custodial interrogation.
8. Know the restrictions on use of improperly obtained confessions.
9. Identify the protections of the 4th and 5th Amendments against compelled self-incrimination.
10. Explain the operation of the 6th Amendment right to counsel.

D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)

1. The learner will show an understanding of the history, structure, and content of the Constitution.
2. The learner will understand the 1st Amendment’s restrictions on police actions.
3. The learner will know the protections provided to citizens under the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 14th Amendments regarding interrogations and confessions.
4. The learner will recognize the impact of the 6th Amendment on the criminal justice process.
5. The learner will understand the impact of Supreme Court decisions on citizens, society, and the police.
E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies

Goal 05 - Hist/Soc/Behav Sci
1. Examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
2. Develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.

Goal 09 - Ethical/Civic Resp
1. Understand and apply core concepts (e.g. politics, rights and obligations, justice, liberty) to specific issues.
2. Recognize the diversity of political motivations and interests of others.
3. Identify ways to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

As noted on course syllabus

G. SPECIAL INFORMATION

None noted