

COURSE DESCRIPTION (Group C)

Course code	Course group	Volume in ECTS credits	Course valid from	Course valid to	Reg. No.
POD5011	C	4	2011 06 01	2013 06 01	

Course type (compulsory or optional)	Optional
Course level (study cycle)	Master
Semester the course is delivered	Autumn
Study form (face-to-face or distant)	Face-to-face

Course title in Lithuanian

Jungtinių Amerikos Valstijų politika

Course title in English

Politics of The United States of America

Short course annotation in Lithuanian

Kursą sudaro kelios pagrindinės dalys. Pirmoje dalyje susipažįstama su JAV politikos vystymusi, atkreipiant dėmesį į JAV valstybės kūrimo pamatus, konstitucijos kūrimą, pilietines teises ir laisves, politinę kultūrą, federalizmą. Antroje dalyje kalbama apie pagrindines institucijas: kongresą (jo siekį ir galimybes balansuoti nacionalinius bei vietinius interesus, vaidmenų politikos kūrimo ir vykdymo procese), prezidentą (tautos lyderį, jo galias ir pareigas), biurokratiją (vyriausybės administracijos sistemą, atskaitomybę ir problemas) bei teismų sistemą. Trečioje dalyje kalbama apie kampanijas ir rinkimus, partijas bei interesų grupes, žiniasklaidą bei viešąją nuomonę. Ketvirtoje dalyje diskutuojama apie tam tikrų politikos krypčių formavimą ir plėtojimą: ekonomikos ir aplinkosaugos, socialinės gerovės ir švietimo, užsienio ir saugumo politikos.

Short course annotation in English

The course has two primary objectives. First, it should provide students with a base knowledge of USA politics and the United States system of government. Second, it should contribute to the students overall intellectual skills and ability to think in a critical manner. To accomplish these mentioned things, the course requires students to engage in different types of assignments and activities that will help develop students' knowledge of American politics, understanding of the processes that make up the U.S. political system.

Prerequisites for entering the course

Students should have some basic knowledge of political science which is possible to get by having the following bachelor courses: Introduction to Political Science, Introduction to International Relations.

Course aim

The course aims at providing students with a base knowledge of USA politics, and helps them to be able to analyze, understand and critically evaluate different political processes and events in USA politics.

Links between study programme outcomes, course outcomes and criteria of learning achievement evaluation

Study programme outcomes	Course outcomes	Criteria of learning achievement evaluation
1. To analyze the issues of International relations by using the special theories, concepts and terms.	To develop the basic knowledge of U.S. policy and governance system.	Knowledge of the underlying facts, information, and the sources of information about the U.S. system of governance structure, key institutions, policy making and marketing institutions and policies and their evolution.

	To be able to understand the processes those take place in the U.S. political system.	The ability to clearly distinguish in the U.S. political system processes the participants, their motives, causes of the processes, their possible consequences.
	To be able to think critically about U.S. domestic and foreign policies and to effectively communicate your ideas to others.	The ability to analyze U.S. policy, highlighting both positive and negative aspects, and the ability to describe your observations at the essay genre.
	Learn how to perform the analysis of public policy of a certain state.	Learning to write the analysis or to make oral presentation of the analysis of U.S. policy in the chosen field, highlighting key policies on major policy issues, strengths and weaknesses, and change, its causes, and more.
2. To develop students' skills to gather, update and to apply the newest scientific knowledge, and analyze basic issues arising in the area of professional activities	To be able to understand the various debates and historical events that influenced the formation of the U.S. political system, institutional structure and the prevailing inter-institutional relations, communications between the public and the citizens.	Ability to explain what, why and how is the U.S. policy formed, what themes dominated the debate and why; why, in order to understand the current U.S. policy, it is important to know the history of the United States of certain stages and events
	Learn to identify the most important U.S. policy on key issues and explain their causes.	Learning to identify the various U.S. policies, the most important problems and the circumstances of their formation; to explain the factors influencing them, and government solutions under consideration as well as possible consequences.

Link between course outcomes and content

Course outcomes	Content (topics)
To develop the basic knowledge of U.S. policy and governance system.	U.S. policy development: the U.S. nation-building foundation (core values and political ideals), the constitution-making (document design considerations, the most important authors and their goals, document structure, content and longevity). Civil rights and freedom (the consolidation process, the obstacles and conflicts, achievements), the political culture. Federalism (as a nation-building tool, and a historical perspective and current behavior).

To be able to understand the processes those take place in the U.S. political system.	Congress (the desire and ability to balance national and local interests, the roles of policy making and implementation process). President (leader of the nation, its power and position). B. Obama, Bush. W. Bush and B. Clinton's presidency, the comparison. Bureaucracy (government administration, and accountability issues), and the judiciary (the power of its formation, interpretation and application of the laws).
To be able to think critically about U.S. domestic and foreign policies and to effectively communicate your ideas to others.	Political campaigns and elections (the main trends and features), parties and interest groups (the organization and influence). U.S. media and public opinion.
Learn how to perform the analysis of public policy of a certain state.	U.S. economic and environmental policies. U.S. social welfare and health policy. U.S. education and the migration policy.
To be able to understand the various debates and historical events that influenced the formation of the U.S. political system, institutional structure and the prevailing inter-institutional relations, communications between the public and the citizens.	U.S. foreign and security policy-making, policies and implementation.
Learn to identify the most important U.S. policy on key issues and explain their causes.	Discussion about current U.S. foreign policy decisions in the selected period of problematic situations, and identification of problems. Discussion about the U.S. health care reform issues.

Study (teaching and learning) methods

Lectures; seminars and discussions; group work and presentations; individual creative writing assignments (essays, commentaries, research papers, etc.).

Methods of learning achievement assessment

Homework, speeches, presentations, colloquium and exam

Distribution of workload for students (contact and independent work hours)

Lectures: 30 hrs. Teamwork (discussion, the varied tasks): 15hrs., Individual work: 75 hours.

Structure of cumulative score and value of its constituent parts

Mid-term exam - 25 percent. of the final grade, participation in discussions and homework is -25 percent. of the final grade, final exam - 50 percent. of the final grade.

Recommended reference materials

No.	Publication year	Authors of publication and title	Publishing house	Number of copies in		
				University library	Self-study rooms	Other libraries
<i>Basic materials</i>						
1.	2008	Milkis Sydney M. <i>American Government: balancing democracy and rights.</i>	Cambridge University Press		1	

		Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.				
2.	2005	Patterson Thomas E. <i>We the People: A Concise Introduction to American Politics.</i>	Mc Grow Hill	1	1	
3.	2006	Dresang Dennis L., Gosling James J. <i>Politics and Policy in American States and Communities</i>	Pearson & Longman		1	
4.	2003	Fiorina Morris P., Peterson Paule E., and Johnson B. <i>The New American Democracy</i>	Longman		1	
Supplementary materials						
1.	2005	Wilentz S. <i>The Rise of American Democracy.</i>	W. W. Norton & Company			
2.	2011	Chomsky N. Hegemonija arba išlikimas : Amerikos siekis viešpatauti pasaulyje	Kitos knygos			
3.	2004	Alterman, Eric. The book on Bush : how George W. Bush (mis)leads America	Penguin Books			
4.	2004	Lieven, Anatol. America right or wrong : an anatomy of American nationalism	Oxford University Press			
5.	2006	B. Obama. The Audacity of Hope.	Three Rivers Press			
6.	2004	B Clinton. My Life.	Alfred A. Knopf			

Course programme designed by

Dr. Ingrida Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė, VMU, Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy, Department of Political Science