



COURSE SYLLABUS

1. Information about the programme

1.1 Higher Education Institution	Babeş-Bolyai University
1.2 Faculty	European Studies Faculty
1.3 Department	International Relations and German Studies
1.4 Field of study	American Studies
1.5 Study level	BA
1.6 Programme of study/ Qualification	American Studies

2. Information about the discipline

2.1 Module	American Political System						
2.2 Course holder	Lecturer Gabriel Gherasim PhD						
2.3 Seminar holder	Lecturer Gabriel Gherasim PhD						
2.4 Year of study	2	2.5 Semester	1	2.6. Type of assessment ¹	E.	2.7 Type of module ²	OB

3. Total estimated time (teaching hours per semester)

3.1 No. of hours per week	4	3.1 of which for course	2	3.3 of which for seminar	2
3.4 Total no. of hours in the curriculum	56	3.5 of which for course	28	3.6 of which for seminar	28
Time distribution: 11 conventional hours					11
Study by using handbook, reader, bibliography and course notes					3
Additional library/specialised online research, field research					3
Preparation of seminars/laboratories, homework, projects, portfolios and essays					2
Tutoring					1
Examinations					1.50
Other activities:					0.50
3.7 Total no. of hours for individual study	3				
3.8 Total no. of hours per semester	154				
3.9 No. of ETCS credit points	6				

4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

4.1 of curriculum	• none
4.2 of competencies	• none

¹ E - exam, ME - multi-term examinations, C - collocutional examination/assessment test

² OB - core module, OP - elective module, F - extracurricular module

5. Conditions (where applicable)

5.1 For the development of the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none
5.2 For the development of the seminar/laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none

6. Specific skills acquired

Professional skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral, written and electronic communication of specialized information, in the language in which the major is taught (English)
Interdisciplinary skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying team building techniques; developing interpersonal communication skills and taking on specific roles during team work • Searching for, identifying and using efficient learning methods and techniques; awareness of the extrinsic and intrinsic motivations for continuous learning

7. Course objectives (based on list of acquired skills)

7.1 General objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral, written and electronic communication in English of specialized information on the organization and functioning of various American political institutions.
7.2 Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying team building methods so that set groups of students can communicate and argue, in the spirit of 'checks and balances', about the functioning of American political institutions. • Identifying and using efficient learning methods and techniques to discover the principles according to which the American political system functions; awareness of the fact that understanding these mechanisms could lead to the practical use of efficient ways of implementing them.

8. Contents

8.1 Lecture	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Introduction: political systems. The democratic political system	Interactive lecture	
2. General characteristics of the American Constitutional Government	Interactive lecture	
3. The Union and the States. The American Federalism	Interactive lecture	
4. The Executive: President and Vice-president	Interactive lecture	
5. The Executive: The Cabinet and Bureaucracy	Interactive lecture	
6. The Legislative: Structure and Organization	Interactive lecture	
7. The Legislative: Congressional Powers and Activities	Interactive lecture	
8. The Judicial: The Federal Court System	Interactive lecture	

9. The Judicial: The US Supreme Court	Interactive lecture	
10. Political Parties in the United States	Interactive lecture	
11. The Interest Groups	Interactive lecture	
12. Elections and Voting in the United States	Interactive lecture	
13. Mass Media and Politics in the United States	Interactive lecture	
14. General overview of the American political system	Interactive lecture	

Bibliography:

- **Kryzaneck, Michael**, *Angry, Bored, Confused. A Citizen Handbook of American Politics*, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999.
- **Manuel, Paul Christopher & Cammisa, Anne Marie**, *Checks and Balances? How a Parliamentary System Could Change American Politics*, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999.
- **Peele, Gillian et al (eds.)**, *Developments in American Politics*, New York: Chatham House Publishers, 1998.
- **Wilson, Graham**, *Only in America? The Politics of the United States in Comparative Perspective*, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1998.
- **Davis, Richard & Owen, Diana**, *New Media and American Politics*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- **Bibby, John F.**, *Politics, Parties, and Elections in America*, Third Edition, Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1996.
- **McKay, David**, *American Politics and Society*, Sixth Edition, Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, vols. I-III, Detroit: UXL Publishing, 2005.
- **Gherasim, Gabriel C.**, “Hoping Becomes a President. Rhetoric and Political Vision in Barack H. Obama”, *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Studia Europaea*, nr. 2/2009, pp. 79 – 92.

8.2 Seminar / Laboratory	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Introduction to political systems	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
2. The constitutional roles of powers in America	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
3. General characteristics of the American government	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
4. The first branch of American government – the Executive (I)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
5. The first branch of American government – the Executive (II)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
6. The second branch of American government – the Congress (I)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
7. The second branch of American government – the Congress (II)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
8. The third branch of American government – the Supreme Court and general courts (I)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
9. The third branch of American government – the Supreme Court and general courts (II)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
10. Political parties in America (I)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions

11. Political parties in America (II)	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
12. Elections and procedures of voting	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
13. Presidential elections. Nominating campaigns and general elections	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions
14. General overview of the American political system	Interpreting the organization and functioning of American political institutions	Open questions

Bibliography:

1. Introduction. Political systems. The democratic political system
 - **Dahl, Robert**, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, Yale University Press, 1972;
 - **Easton, David**, *A System Analysis of Political Life*, New York: Wiley, 1965;
2. American ideals and institutions. Constitutional roles of powers in America
 - *Constitutional Role of the Legislative Branch*, in **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, vol. 2, pp. 217-238;
 - *Constitutional Role of the Judicial Branch*, in **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, vol. 3, pp. 395-414;
3. General characteristics of the American Government
 - *Constitutional Role of the Executive Branch*, in **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, vol. 1, pp. 37-60;
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 1-18;
4. The first branch of American Government: The Presidency (I)
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 19-36, 61-112;
5. The first branch of American Government: The Presidency (II)
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 1, pp. 113-178;
6. The second branch of American Government: The Congress (I)
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 2, pp. 197-216, 239-282;
7. The second branch of American Government: The Congress (II)
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 2, pp. 283-358;
8. The third branch of American Government: The US Supreme Court and Federal Courts
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 3, pp. 379-394, 415-454;
9. The third branch of American Government: The US Supreme Court and Federal Courts
 - **Brannen, Daniel E. Jr.**, *Checks and Balances. The Three Branches of American Government*, UXL Publishing, 2005, vol. 3, pp. 455-512;
10. Political parties in America (I)
 - **Sandy Maisel, L.**, *American Political Parties and Elections. A very short introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 28-90;
 - **Bibby, John F.**, *Politics, Parties and Elections in America*, 3rd edition, Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1996, pp. 51-126;
11. Political parties in America (II)
 - **Bibby, John F.**, *Politics, Parties and Elections in America*, 3rd edition, Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1996, pp. 313-368;
12. Elections and the procedures of voting
 - **Bibby, John F.**, *Politics, Parties and Elections in America*, 3rd edition, Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1996, pp. 127-156, 253-312;
13. Presidential elections. Nominating campaigns and general elections
 - **Bibby, John F.**, *Politics, Parties and Elections in America*, 3rd edition, Chicago: Nelson-Hall

Publishers, 1996, pp. 157-252;
 14. Conclusions and general overview on the American political system

9. The correspondence between the content of the course and the expectations of the academic community, professional associations and representative employers in the field:

It is well-known that American political institutions are examples of efficient organisation and functioning all over the world. Therefore, local political institutions could use knowledge gathered by the students at the end of this class for a better and more efficient organisation of their own specific activities.

10. Assessment

Type of activity	10.1 Assessment criteria	10.2 Assessment methods	10.3 Percentage of the final grade
10.4 Course	Questions about the course lectures and seminars based on the meaning of technical terms and the organisation and functioning of American political institutions.	Written exam	67%
10.5 Seminar	Based on the bibliography, the students will answer precise questions concerning the meaning of technical terms and the organization and functioning of American political institutions.	Assessment scale of the students' answers to open questions	33%
10.6 Minimum standard:			
The minimum grade of 5 results from adding the grade for the written exam to the seminar grade, according to the percentages specified above.			

Date

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Course holder signature

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Seminar holder signature

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Date of departmental approval

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Head of department signature

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