

**EDISON STATE COLLEGE**

**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
NEW/EXPERIMENTAL COURSE PROPOSAL FORM**

**TO:** CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
**FROM:** Dr. Marsa B. Detscher  
**PRESENTER:** Dr. Rodney Dennison  
**DATE:** September 17, 2009

Is the course being offered first as an experimental course?  yes  no

Course Name, including prefix and number: POS 2141 Urban Government and Politics

Verified with VPAA office?  yes  no

Class credits: 3 Lab credits: Combined lab & class credits:

Chose one:  Degree core requirement  Elective  General education

Repeatable for duplicate credit? (i.e., applied music courses)  yes  no

Prerequisites: POS 2112 State and Local Politics, or professor approval

Classification:  AA  PSV  PSAV  BAS  BS

ICS Code: Banner Major Code:

Major Restriction?  yes  no (meaning only declared majors may take the course)

Indicate all modalities in which the course may be taught:  Class Lecture  Clinical  
 Laboratory  Lecture/Lab Combined  Accelerated  Internship  
 Practicum  WebCT Internet  WebCT Class Lecture  WebCT Laboratory  
 WebCt Blended Learning  WebCT Lecture/Lab Combined

Course fee amount, if any: TBD (Attach course fee worksheet)

**NOTE:** Course fees are presented to the District Board of Trustees in November. If approved, fees take effect the following fall term.

**JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRICULUM ACTION, OTHER EXPLANATORY INFORMATION:** This course is proposed in response to an increased student interest in the field of political science; the number of students claiming a major or minor in political science has grown in recent years. This course provides students direct exposure to local government structures and functions in a format one cannot experience in the classroom.

ESC can coordinate course delivery with an existing Lee County program, Lee GROWS – Government Resource and Orientation Workshop Series for a large portion of the course. There is a requirement for additional coordination with the Lee School Board. This collaboration with local governments addresses ESC objectives to engage the community in the campus experience and develop partnerships with community leaders and organizations that promote educational and professional opportunities for students.

This course involves three components: introduction/preparation, field study, and reflection. The introductory component prepares the student for the field experience. The Lee GROWS program provides a large portion of the field study component in a structured series of field trips over a five-week period. Field trips take place all day on five consecutive Tuesdays or Thursdays and involve various county governmental operations. A separate half-day session at the School Board concludes the field experience. The reflection component is a term paper that makes the connection between academics and real life.

The course includes a total of 42 direct contact hours as follows:

- Lecture/introduction                      3 hours (delivered on-campus or online)
- Field study                                      39 hours (5 7-hour days, one 4-hour day)

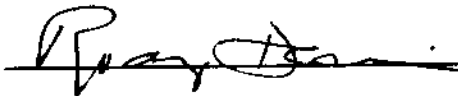
Field experience for the five full-day sessions is coordinated through Lee County and begins in downtown Fort Myers. The half-day session at the School Board would take place at the District offices.

**TERM IN WHICH PROPOSED ACTION WILL TAKE EFFECT: Spring 2010**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (if required)**

**FACULTY ENDORSEMENTS/COMMENTS:**

DEPARTMENT CHAIR OR PROGRAM COORDINATOR ENDORSEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ASSOCIATE/ACADEMIC DEAN ENDORSEMENT:  DATE: 9/18/09

STUDENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

After review and signing this proposal, the District Dean will return this proposal to the Department Chair or Program Coordinator.

DISTRICT DEAN OF INSTRUCTION ENDORSEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Department Chair/ Program Coordinator will send this proposal along with any other proposals from his/her department being submitted for review by the Curriculum Committee to the office of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs by the Friday before the next scheduled Curriculum Committee meeting.

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TERM IN WHICH PROPOSED ACTION WILL TAKE EFFECT: Spring 2010 (For any term other than fall of the academic year following submission, approval of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs is required.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (if required)

FACULTY ENDORSEMENTS/COMMENTS: *Dr. Marsa Detacher has my full endorsement in support of this course offering. Exposing students within a structured academic environment to local government form and function supports our mission in preparing students for active participation in government. Additionally - an effective partnership with*

DEPARTMENT CHAIR OR PROGRAM COORDINATOR ENDORSEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ASSOCIATE/ACADEMIC DEAN ENDORSEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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Curriculum Requirements Professor William Skulski

From: Mark Herman <mherman@edison.edu>  
Subject: **Re: Course Proposal**  
Date: September 3, 2009 8:55:25 AM EDT  
To: "Dr. Marsa Detscher" <mdetscher@edison.edu>

Dear Marsa, Yes. Sincerely, Mark

Dr. Marsa Detscher wrote:

Mark:  
Thank you for your feedback. Does this mean you support/endorse it?  
Marsa

Dr. Marsa B. Detscher, AICP  
Adjunct Professor, Political Science  
Edison State College  
[MDetscher@Edison.edu](mailto:MDetscher@Edison.edu)

On Sep 3, 2009, at 8:41 AM, Mark Herman wrote:

Dear Marsa, Your course proposal is very well framed and fills an important need for Edison students. On the first page you will need to indicate the modality for the course. I'll put your form back in your mail box. Sincerely, Mark

CONFIDENTIALITY: This e-mail (including any attachments) may contain confidential, proprietary and privileged information, and unauthorized disclosure or use is prohibited. If you received this e-mail in error, please notify the sender and delete this e-mail from your system.

You are the Key to Information Security: <http://www.edison.edu/technology/security/>

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You are the Key to Information Security: <http://www.edison.edu/technology/security/>

## **New Course Proposal:**

### **POS 2141 Urban Government and Politics**

This is proposed as a 3-credit experimental course for Spring 2010.

#### **Background:**

Government policymaking impacts virtually all aspects of our lives. In fact, it is difficult to identify an aspect of our lives that is not somehow regulated, governed, licensed, inspected, taxed, or otherwise influenced by government action or inaction. However, it is clear that the population in general, and college students in particular, lack basic knowledge of the functions and processes of government. Since I began teaching at ESC in Fall 2002, I administered a "pre-test" to American National Government students to ascertain their knowledge of fundamental government characteristics. The test asks students several basic questions: Students are asked to identify the current Secretary of State, a US Senator from Florida, and a US Representative from Florida; the total number of US Senators, US Representatives, and Supreme Court justices and their respective terms of office; the three branches of the federal government; what it takes to register to vote in the State of Florida; and whether or not the first ten amendments of the US Constitution comprise the Bill of Rights. Many know about the Bill of Rights and many can name at least two branches of the federal government. Fewer than five percent typically know the name of the current Secretary of State, fewer still know the number of US Senators, and only one student knew how many Representatives serve in the US House (he had just taken a government class in high school!). Many know that one must be at least 18 years old to vote; however, the vast majority is unaware that only citizens can vote.

We know that 18- to 29-year old citizens are the least likely to register to vote and, once registered, they are least likely to vote than any other age group. Why is it that young adults fail to participate in the most common form of civic involvement? I believe young adults lack the basic education about their government so they fail to recognize the effects of government policymaking on their lives or the importance of civic engagement.

A second factor is the limited scope of civic education experienced by students. High school civics classes teach the basics of national government structure and processes. Unfortunately, retention is limited since they "fail" my pre-test. Generally, students are not exposed to the processes and politics of state and local governments. Some say that all politics are local, and there is a lot of truth to that observation. On a day-to-day basis, the effects of state and local politics impact us more intimately than the actions of the national government.

Ironically, it is my experience that more students than ever are declaring a political science major or minor. Many of these students are recently released military veterans who want to learn more about government; many were inspired by the 2008 political season and want to pursue political careers; and others view political science as a stepping-stone to a legal or business career. Students ask why ESC does not offer more political science courses or a bachelor's degree in political science. In my experience, interest in political science has steadily increased over the past 8 years, and most notably the past two years.

**Proposal Summary:**

The proposal is to establish an intensive hands-on local government experience that builds on the prerequisite coursework (POS 2112 American State and Local Politics or similar). This proposed course requires a partnership between Lee County Government and Edison State College to utilize a 21-year old tested program, LeeGROWS, as its core resource.

LeeGROWS – Government Resource and Orientation Workshop Series – began in 1988 by then County Administrator Jim LaRue. Since its inception, there have been 152 LeeGROWS “classes” involving a total of almost 5,400 participants. There are up to 50 participants in each class. The LeeGROWS program purpose is to “inform the citizens about the day-to-day operations of county government.” The current LeeGROWS director is Gordon “Booch” DeMarchi, a former educator. When I approached Booch with this proposal, he expressed enthusiastic interest in partnering with ESC for this course.

The focus of this experimental course is four-fold:

- to offer students of political science an opportunity to build on their experience in POS 2112 American State and Local Politics to learn about local government at ground-level, and from those who work in the various departments and agencies
- to provide a connection between theory and practice through a clearly unique experiential learning opportunity
- to create opportunities for developing relationships in the local government community that can lead to internships, employment, or other similar placements
- to incorporate and expand on an existing, successful program administered by Lee County

The main portion of this course involves the LeeGROWS weekly day-long field trips that include the following sites:

1. Corkscrew Water Treatment Plant, Lakes Regional Library, Smart Growth presentation, Fiesta Village Wastewater Treatment Plant, Medical Examiner's office

2. Lee County Justice Center – meeting with a judge, court administrator; Public Defender, State Attorney, Clerk of Court, Property Appraiser, Tax Collector, Supervisor of Elections, Equal Opportunity Office, County Attorney
3. Lee County Department of Transportation, Solid Waste Recycling Facility and Resource Recovery Facility; Public Safety/EMS and Emergency Management, E-911 and Telecommunications and Dispatch Center, Mobile Response Unit; Human Services Department
4. Parks and Recreation at the Lee County Sports Complex/Hammond Stadium; Parks and Recreation Support Services and Environmental Education, County Lands 2020 Program at Rutenberg Community Park; Cooperative Extension Office (IFAS); Animal Services; Port Authority at Southwest Florida International Airport Training Facility
5. Office of the Sheriff at the Lee County Justice Center, Tour of the Jail; Veterans Service Office, Visitor and Convention Bureau, Health Department, LeeTRAN, Economic Development, Community Development, Public Resources, Budget Services, and meeting with County Commissioner and County Manager

A sixth half-day tour involving the School Board offices would be constructed to round out the field trips.

The LeeGROWS field trips are scheduled in advance, on five consecutive Tuesdays or Thursdays. For Spring 2010, the LeeGROWS schedule is as follows (the School Board session has yet to be prepared or scheduled):

- (1) Tuesdays, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26, Feb. 2
- (2) Thursdays, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb. 4
- (3) Tuesdays, Feb. 9, 16, 23, March 2, 9
- (4) Thursdays, Feb. 11, 18, 25, March 4, 11
- (5) Tuesdays, March 16, 23, (not March 30), April 6, 13, 20
- (6) Thursdays, March 18, 25, (not April 1), April 8, 15, 22

The second, third or fourth session is preferable, to afford students sufficient time to complete the introductory session before the field trips and write the term paper after the field experience.

Students would have an introductory session to provide background for the field trips, which could be delivered in person on campus or online. Worksheets prepared for each of the tours will help provide structure for the students. At the conclusion of the experiential part of the course, students prepare a research paper on an appropriate topic.

**Impact:**

From the perspective of Edison State College, there is limited overhead involved in the delivery of this course. The significant increase in student enrollment this semester has created a shortage of classroom spaces; this course would provide an additional option for students without stressing an already difficult physical plant situation. The five full

tour days are already structured and provided by partnership with LeeGROWS, a county program that is dedicated to helping citizens in Lee County to understand where their tax dollars are spent. The half-day tour of the School Board is yet to be scheduled. Additionally, an introductory lecture, worksheets for each site visit, and the outline for the term paper must be prepared.

For the five full tour days, students meet in Downtown Fort Myers and park (fee-free) in the downtown parking garage. Transportation to each of the field locations is by bus provided by LeeGROWS. Lunches are working sessions; LeeGROWS provides box lunches for participants. The sixth tour half-day would take place at the School Board offices; students would meet there.

The LeeGROWS program is fully funded by Lee County Government. According to information provided by the LeeGROWS director, the cost for participation in 2007 was \$143 per person. This cost covered bus transportation, parking garage fees, box lunches, and miscellaneous office supplies; it did not cover the cost of staff of LeeGROWS or an Edison instructor. A student lab fee of \$50 to \$55 per credit hour could cover the major portion of the out-of-pocket LeeGROWS expenses, if that is a requirement of Lee County for this partnership.

**Summary:**

- Interest in political science courses has increased over the past several years.
- ESC currently offers three courses in political science, POS 2041, POS 2112, and INR 2002.
- This course fills an unmet need by exposing students to the structure and function of county government from within the actual government setting.
- An informal survey of a select number of former POS 2112 students suggests interest in the proposed course.
- This experimental course is held off-campus or in the field so demand on ESC overhead is limited.
- The course is structured and established, for the most part, thanks to LeeGROWS. An initial or introductory lecture, worksheets, and the half-day School Board tour would need to be created.
- This course would involve coordination with Lee County government and the Lee County School Board, thereby promoting an ESC goal to establish partnerships with community organizations and leaders
- This course can be easily ready for the Spring 2010 semester.