

## General Studies Gold Request Form

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Consult the [General Studies Request FAQ](#) for more information and quick answers.

New permanent numbered courses must be submitted to the workflow in [Kuali CM](#) before a General Studies request is submitted here. The General Studies Council will not review requests ahead of a new course proposal being sent to the Senate.

### Submission Information

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College/School

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The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLA)

Department/School

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School of Politics and Global Studies  
(CGVTPOLGLB)

Submission Type

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New Request

**New Request:** A request for a new designation, a change in designation, or to reinstate a designation that has been lost.

**Mandatory Review:** Only select if this course (or topic on a *permanent* course) is undergoing mandatory review in the current academic year. Not for omnibus topic use.

**Modification:** A request to modify the expected learning outcomes of the course, but not change any other aspect of the originally approved proposal. Only for courses that have a previously approved General Studies Gold request.

Requested Effective Date

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Fall 2026

ASU Request

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Is this request for a permanent course or a topic?

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Permanent Course

Subject Code

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POS

Course Number

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270

Units/Credit Hours

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Course Information

Enter the course catalog information, found in the [web course catalog](#) or [Kuali CM](#).

Course Title

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American Legal System

## Course Catalog Description

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Concepts, institutions, classifications and functions of law. Role of the courts and impact of judicial decision making on social change.

Enrollment Requirements (Prerequisites, Corequisites, and/or Antirequisites)

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None

Is this a crosslisted course?

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No

Is this course offered by (shared with) another academic unit?

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No

If you are requesting to change the existing GS Gold (not Maroon) designation, please check this box.

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General Studies Gold Designation Request

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General Studies Designation

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American Institutions (AMIT)

Attach a representative syllabus for the course, including course learning outcomes and descriptions of assignments and assessments.

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[POS 270 Revised 2 9 2026.pdf](#)

American Institutions (AMIT)

In each American Institutions course, students will discuss people, ideas, institutions, movements and structural forces that have created and transformed the United States. Students will analyze struggles over the meaning of America's constitutional democracy. Throughout the course, students will analyze a wide range of sources drawn from both past and present and contemplate American history, ideals, and institutions in global as well as national contexts. In doing so, students will refine their ability to make and evaluate reasoned arguments, engage in civil debate, and participate constructively in civic life.

**In an American Institutions course, students must be exposed to the following knowledge or sources:**

AMIT Element 1: Principles of American constitutional democracy and how they are applied under a republican form of government.

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1. Identified Topic and Source

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Marbury v. Madison addresses the separation of powers and the role of the judiciary in American constitutional democracy.

1. Location in Syllabus

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Week 1

2. Identified Topic and Source

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Federalist 78 speaks to the debate on the independence of the federal judiciary and its power in relation to the executive and legislative branches of government.

2. Location in Syllabus

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Week 1

AMIT Element 2: The US Constitution and major American constitutional debates.

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1. Identified Topic and Source

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The Effect of Campaign Contributions on Judicial Decisionmaking, article by Chris Bonneau addresses judicial independence. Many states elect their judges, and restraining judicial independence this way carries negative consequences.

1. Location in Syllabus

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Week 2

2. Identified Topic and Source

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Democracy in America, Chapter VI, Judicial Power in the United States. Alexis de Tocqueville examines the power of the American judiciary and unlike Alexander Hamilton in Federalist 78 sees the federal judiciary as strong, given judicial review.

2. Location in Syllabus

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Week 5

AMIT Element 3: Founding documents that have shaped American institutions.

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1. Identified Topic, Document, and Source

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Article III of the U.S. Constitution, creates the U.S. Supreme Court and describes its powers, gives the U.S. Congress the power to create the lower federal courts.

1. Location in Syllabus

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Week 1

2. Identified Topic, Document, and Source

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Federal Judiciary Act of 1789, creates and structures the lower federal courts.

2. Location in Syllabus

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Week 1

AMIT Element 4: Landmark policy achievements and Supreme Court cases.

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1. Identified Case, Topic, and Source

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Gideon v. Wainwright, The Warren Court asserted a constitutional right to an attorney in criminal cases in under the 14th Amendment. Prior to this ruling most criminal defendants in state cases were not afforded this right

1. Location in Syllabus

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Week 5

2. Identified Case, Topic, and Source

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Griswold v. Connecticut, Justice William O. Douglas in the Court's majority opinion shows how the U.S. Constitution protects personal privacy.

2. Location in Syllabus

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Week 5

AMIT Element 5: Economic knowledge necessary to assess policy options affecting both the public and private sectors.

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1. Identified Topic and Source

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Building a Law-and-Political-Economy Framework: Beyond the Twentieth-Century Synthesis, article by J Britton-Purdy, DS Grewal, A Kapczynski, and KS Rahman examines how American legal development structures the contemporary neo liberal economic framework exacerbating social ills such as economic inequality. The authors also explore how law might help Americans pursue a different economic direction.

1. Location in Syllabus

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Week 5

2. Identified Topic and Source

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Amazon's Antitrust Paradox, article by Lina M Khan describes how contemporary anti-trust law fails to regulate online behemoths like Amazon because these companies work to capture markets in very different ways than the business and industrial giants that came before them.

2. Location in Syllabus

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Week 5

AMIT Element 6: Global context of American institutions.

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### 1. Identified Topic and Source

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The Globalization of American Law, article by R. Daniel Kelemen and Eric C. Sibbitt argues that countries throughout the world are embracing an American legal style. The authors attribute this shift to economic liberalism and political fragmentation. This article contrasts nicely with the following article which discusses the breakup of the existing world international order.

### 1. Location in Syllabus

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Week 6

### 2. Identified Topic and Source

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The End of the U.S.-Backed International Order and the Future of International Law, article by Monica Hakimi and Jacob Katz Cogan describes the decline in the American led international world order and offers their thoughts on the one that will replace it. The authors assert that future international law must be linked to national power

### 2. Location in Syllabus

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Week 6

## AMIT Learning Outcomes

Most of the course content should align with the Gold category learning outcomes.

**Instructions:** In the fields below, state the assignment, project, or assessment that will measure each learning outcome, and provide a description. The description should provide enough detail to show how it measures the learning outcome. If needed, more than one can be identified.

The proposal does not need to include all course assessments that measure a given learning outcome. The provided assessment should include sufficient detail to allow the subcommittee to make their evaluation. When appropriate, the same assessment can be listed for more than one learning outcome (e.g., a culminating project).

You may provide links to a document (Google Drive or Dropbox) that includes the relevant details for the assessment. **Do not provide links to Canvas shells.**

AMIT Learning Outcome 1: Demonstrate how ideas and groups have historically shaped the creation of and change in U.S. institutions.

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The first and second quizzes, midterm and final exams include questions about the significance and historical development of Common law. Students learn that William the Conqueror required English judges to decide cases based on past precedent following his conquest in 1099 and this is the basis of the American legal system today. Quiz five and the final exam assess students' knowledge of the different eras of the Supreme Court. Students should learn about organizations' push for greater Constitutional protections and rights during the Court's liberal era beginning with the Warren Court.

AMIT Learning Outcome 2: Identify key institutions in U.S. politics and their impacts on social, economic, or political outcomes. This will include differential impacts on disparate communities.

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The first quiz, midterm and final assess students' knowledge of the powers of the American courts and their fit in the constitutional framework. Quiz five and the final ask questions regarding the rivalry between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, and ways that each branch can maximize their structural advantages and take advantage of the weaknesses in the other branches, e.g., the executive branch often ignores the rulings of the courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court (as we just recently saw with president Trump). Quiz three examines students' knowledge of judicial economics, which, unfortunately, affect the poor and marginalized disproportionately more than wealthier Americans.

AMIT Learning Outcome 3: Describe the impact of key ideas, people, events, institutions, or movements on U.S. citizenship.

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Students will pick a U.S. Supreme Court Justice and describe the impact that they believe he/she had on the nature, history, and boundaries of American citizenship in a short paper. Students will describe how their choice influenced and changed the prevailing legal consensus. Students might, for example, describe how Earl Warren's judicial perspective helped to overturn the separate-but-equal principle in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

AMIT Learning Outcome 4: Communicate coherent arguments using evidence drawn from qualitative or quantitative sources.

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Students will disagree with or support the position taken in a scholarly article read in class in a short paper. They will communicate a coherent argument that makes use of qualitative or quantitative evidence. Their papers should reference the original source, but students may also include other scholarly articles. The papers in this class address important contemporary debates, e.g., the Ramseyer and Rasmusen paper addresses the contention that there is too much litigation in the American courts.

List all course-specific learning outcomes. Where appropriate, identify the associated AMIT learning outcome(s) in brackets (see below for example). Note: It is expected that a majority of course-specific learning outcomes will be associated with an AMIT learning outcome.

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1. Students will be able to describe the impact that Common Law and other legal families have on the American legal system today [AMIT LO 1].
2. Students will be able to identify the courts' impact on disparate communities relative to the other three branches of government [AMIT LO 2].
3. Students will be able to describe how the courts check the executive and legislative branches of government and vice versa [AMIT LO 2].
4. Students will be able to describe the impact that the American courts have had on citizenship citing important cases [LO 3]
5. Students will be able to describe judicial selection systems and the advantages and disadvantages of electing judges [AMIT LO 3].

6. Students will be able to give an informed personal position on a law-related topic of interest or debate [AMIT LO 4].

## Form Submission - Proposer

Submitted for Approval | Proposer

Lisa Lamb - February 9, 2026 at 1:39 PM (America/Phoenix)

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## Department Approval

Approved

Tara Lennon - February 9, 2026 at 2:17 PM (America/Phoenix)

Gunes Tezcur

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## GSC Coordinator Review

Approved

Kimberly Singleton - February 10, 2026 at 7:51 AM (America/Phoenix)

If this request is approved, the AMIT LO3 syllabus statement will need to be revised.

April Randall

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## Assistant Vice Provost Review

Approved

Tamiko Azuma - February 11, 2026 at 12:11 PM (America/Phoenix)

All required components confirmed.

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## Pre-GSC Meeting

Approved

Kimberly Singleton

April Randall - February 11, 2026 at 4:36 PM (America/Phoenix)

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## American Institutions (AMIT) Subcommittee

Acknowledgement Requested

James Dupey

Susan Miller

Ruby Arjona

Revisions needed.

Element 2: Please add the US Constitution as part of the readings that meet this element with a brief description of the debate or principles in article 3 and how they relate to the constitutional debate. Listing Marbury v. Madison here would also be helpful here.

Learning outcome 3: The assessment needs to require students to identify the disparate impact on different communities. The quiz seems to assume students will make this connection, but the assignment needs to explicitly require students to make these identifications. Example questions that match the learning outcome may also help clarify the assessment's fit to the learning outcome.

Brent Scholar

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## General Studies Council Meeting

Waiting for Approval

Kimberly Singleton

April Randall

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## Registrar Notification

Notification

Courses Implementation

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## Implementation

Approval

Kelli Eberhart

Lauren Bates

Alisha Von Kampen

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## Proposer Notification

Notification

Lisa Lamb

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## College Notification

Notification

Amanda Smith

Jenny Smith

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## ATCS Notification - ASU Course

Notification

Bryan Tinlin

Michele Devine

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## EdPlus Notification

Notification

Sarah Shipp

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