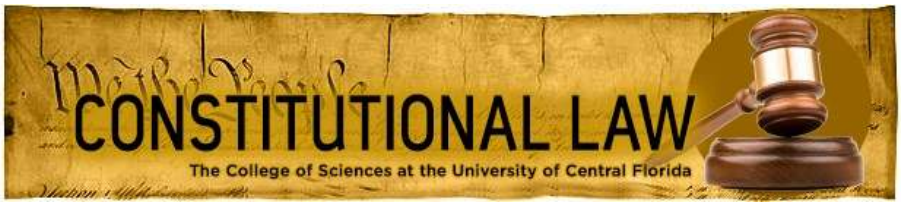
Course Syllabus

Jump to Today



Instructor Contact

- Instructor: Barry Edwards, J.D., Ph.D.
- Office: Howard Phillips Hall 311A
- Office Hours: Tues. 9 - 11 am and by appointment
- Phone: 407-823-2608
- E-mail: barry.edwards@ucf.edu

Course Information

- Course Name: Constitutional Law I
- Course ID & Section: POS 4603-DW59
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: Summer 2015
- Web Only Course

Course Description

Constitutional law addresses the contents of the U.S. Constitution and the interpretation of those contents. We will look at the organization of the United States Government (i.e., the distribution and execution of those powers); and the relations between the Government and persons under its jurisdiction (i.e., under the Bill of Rights). Under the United States' system, the chief problems of constitutional law center on the basic matter of judicial review, on relations between and among the three (3) branches of government, on the federal system's distribution of powers between the federal and state governments, and on the restrictions or limitation on government in either procedural or substantive (e.g., due process) contexts. University Course Catalog Description: Development of American federalism and national power, commerce clause, and nationalization of the economy.

Course Prerequisites

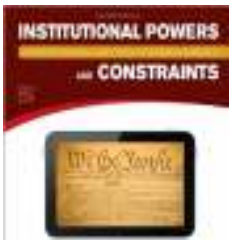
ENC 1102 (Freshman Composition II), POS 2041 (American National Government) or consent of the instructor. I encourage you to take POS 4284 (Judicial Process and Politics) prior to taking this class.

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to introduce you to the important role that the United States Constitution has in orienting American politics and governance. With this end in mind, we will explore the Constitution, its various interpretations, and the role of the judiciary in constitutional application, examples of the influence it has had on the function of government, and the case law that has emanated from its interpretation. The focus of this course is more than the memorization of cases and constitutional principles. Hopefully, this class will contribute to the development of your analytical and reasoning skills; the strengthening of your reading comprehension; the expansion of your vocabulary and verbal expression; the improvement of your writing skills; and the heightening of your personal expectations and discipline.

Required Texts and Materials

Epstein, Lee, and Thomas Walker. 2014. *Constitutional Law for a Changing America: Institutional Powers and Constraints, Eighth Edition.* Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, an Imprint of Sage Publications, Inc. (hereafter "Epstein & Walker"). *Make sure you buy Volume I with the brown cover (see image below) not Volume II with the blue cover.**



Additional readings will be announced and/or distributed in class. In particular, these readings will focus on rulings from the most recent Supreme Court term(s) and emerging issues in constitutional law.

Course Requirements

Your final grade is based on the following components:

1. **Module Quizzes** (40%) – Each numbered module contains a quiz which include multiple choice, true false questions, and a short answer question.
2. **Module Review Exercises** (10%) – Each numbered module contains one or more graded review exercises, such as crossword puzzles, matching games, etc.
3. **Supreme Court Simulation One** (15%) – Students will participate in a week long simulation of Supreme Court decision making. The simulation will required to work individually as well as in collaboration with other students in the class and will be graded on both their individual work as well as the group product. Simulation One will focus on institutional powers.
4. **Supreme Court Simulation Two** (15%) – Students will participate in a week long simulation of Supreme Court decision making. The simulation will required to work individually as well as in collaboration with other students in the class and will be graded on both their individual work as well as the group product. Simulation Two will focus on nation-state relations.
5. **Final Exam** (20%) – The Final Examination is cumulative and will require students to apply their understanding of the subject matter in a comprehensive manner. Students can expect a mix of multiple choice and true-false questions on the Final Exam.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

Make-up work will only be allowed for official University activities or personal emergencies. Written documentation is required. Make-up assessments may be different. There is no extra credit available.

Late Work

Completing all your work by the specified dues dates is important to your success in this class. Late work will be penalized. Your score on late work will be reduced 10% per day late. For example, if receive a score of 9 our of 10 on a quiz two days after it was due (i.e. you took a quiz due Sunday on Tuesday instead), your score will be reduced 20%, so you will receive a 7.2 out of 10 on that quiz. You will receive no credit for work complete ten or more days after its due date. However, because modules unlock only after your have completed prior modules, so you will still need to finish your work (for no credit) to complete this class.

Grading Scale

>=93	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<=59
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F

Grades of "Incomplete"

Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the “I” will automatically be recorded as an “F” on your transcript.

Group Work Policy

This course requires both individual and group work. You are welcome to discuss course material with other students, but you are responsible for your own work where indicated. Module review exercises and module quizzes are individual assignments. There will be two Supreme Court Simulations in this class and parts of these simulations involve group work.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the **Office of Student Conduct (http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/faq#students)** for further action. See the **UCF Golden Rule (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/)** for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

University Writing Center

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, **visit the UWC website (http://www.uwc.ucf.edu)**, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

You do not need to come to the UCF campus to receive help from a trained writing tutor. As a UCF student, you have access to writing tutors at the UCF Online Writing Center. You can **schedule an online consultation (http://uwc.ucf.edu/schedule.php)** with a writing tutor. You can get the help you need to complete the Final Report of your Civic Engagement Project online at a time convenient to you! This service is free to you.

Disability Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with **Student Disability Services (http://www.sds.ucf.edu/)**, Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Financial Aid Requirement

As of Fall, 2014, all faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please ***complete the the Syllabus Quiz by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course***. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Date	Details	
Mon May 18, 2015	**Evidence of Academic Engagement (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866244)**	due by 11:59pm
	Syllabus Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866243)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	
Thu May 21, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 1-10, 699-710 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099202&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Materia Widget: Introduction to U.S. Constitution (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871004)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Introduction to the U.S. Constitution (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3870970)	due by 11:59pm
Sun May 24, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 11-48 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099203&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Crossword Puzzle: U.S. Supreme Court Agenda Setting (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866283)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Understanding the U.S. Supreme Court (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871391)	due by 11:59pm
Thu May 28, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 57-119 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099204&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Judiciary Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866282)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Judicial Powers and Constraints (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871392)	due by 11:59pm
Sun May 31, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 120-182 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099205&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Legislative Powers Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866291)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Legislative Powers and Constraints (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871393)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jun 4, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 183-256 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099206&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Executive Powers Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866293)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Executive Powers and Constraints (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871394)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 7, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 257-322 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099207&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured SOP in Action Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866294)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Separation of Powers in Action (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871395)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Jun 8, 2015	Discuss Operating Procedures with Your Group (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100015&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Groups Assigned for Supreme Court Simulation One (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100014&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am

Date	Details	
Tue Jun 9, 2015	Supreme Court Simulation One Hypothetical Case Released (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100017&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
Thu Jun 11, 2015	Post Your Individual Memorandum on Supreme Court Simulation One to Group Discussion (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100016&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
Sun Jun 14, 2015	Upload Your Group's Opinion(s) for Supreme Court Simulation One (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866310)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jun 18, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 323-391 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099208&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Federalism Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866295)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Federalism (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871396)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 21, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 392-482 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099209&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Federal Commerce Power Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866296)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Federal Power to Regulate Commerce (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871397)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jun 25, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 503-515, 522 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099211&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Federal Tax and Spending Power Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866298)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Federal Powers to Tax and Spend (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871398)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 28, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 482-502, 515-522, 550-564 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099210&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured State Commerce Power Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866297)	due by 11:59pm
	Matching Quiz: Featured State, Intergovernmental Tax Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866299)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: State Powers to Regulate Commerce, Tax, and Spend (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871399)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Jun 29, 2015	Discuss Operating Procedures with Your Group (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100019&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Groups Assigned for Supreme Court Simulation Two (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100018&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am

Date	Details	
Tue Jun 30, 2015	Supreme Court Simulation Two Hypothetical Case Released (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100020&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
Thu Jul 2, 2015	Post Your Individual Memorandum on Supreme Court Simulation Two to Group Discussion (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1100021&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
Sun Jul 5, 2015	Upload Your Group's Opinion(s) for Supreme Court Simulation Two (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3868953)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jul 9, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 567-605 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099212&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Contract Clause Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866300)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: The Contract Clause (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871400)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jul 12, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 606-662 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099213&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Economic Substantive Due Process Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866301)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: Economic Substantive Due Process (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871401)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jul 16, 2015	Read Epstein & Walker, pp. 663-696 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099214&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
	Matching Quiz: Featured Takings Clause Cases (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3866303)	due by 11:59pm
	Module Quiz: The Takings Clause (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871403)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Jul 17, 2015	Last Day of Summer Term D (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099831&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am
Sun Jul 19, 2015	POS 4603 Final Exam, Summer 2015 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1105574/assignments/3871515)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jul 22, 2015	Grades Due to UCF (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/calendar?event_id=1099832&include_contexts=course_1105574#7b2273686f77223a2267726f75705f636f757273655f31313035353734227d)	12am