POS 2041H
Honors American National Government
Fall 2016
Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-1:15
Business Administration I, Room 126

Instructor: Nathan Ilderton
Office: 328 Valencia West Building 11, 302 Howard Phillips Hall (Orlando Campus)
Office Hours: 10:00-11:30 Tuesday and Thursday (Orlando Campus), 2:30-5:30, Thursday (Valencia West Campus), or by appointment.
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Course Description:
This class is an overview of American politics. We will study the constitutional foundations of American government, the institutions on which it is built, the means of participating in its politics, and the public's political behavior. The topics we will cover include the constitution, federalism, civil rights and liberties, the three branches of government, public opinion, political groups, elections and the media.

Course Objectives:
The objectives of the course are for students to understand the philosophical basis of the American political system, its constitutional structure, the functioning of its institutions, and the means ordinary citizen have to participate in government. Further students will gain knowledge as to the approach political science takes in analyzing the American political system and begin to develop these analytical skills for themselves. This will be accomplished through lectures, student centered class discussions, reading of applicable materials and viewing of films, and written responses to course content.

Required Reading:
There are two books required for this class. Each is available at the University Bookstore and through the usual off campus and internet outlets.

- Samuel Kernell, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, and Lynn Vavreck. *The Logic of American Politics*, 7th edition. (Sage, CQ Press)
- Samuel Kernell and Steven Smith. *Principles and Practice of American Politics*, 6th edition. (Sage, CQ Press)

If you purchase the text books online please insure that you are purchasing the correct editions of the required texts. This course will adhere to the listed editions; students who purchased the wrong editions are responsible for acquiring any new or changed material. It is especially important to purchase the listed edition of the *Principles and Practice* book.

Assignments, Exams and Grading:
Grades will be based on the completion of the following assignments:

1. Exams. There will be three exams given during the semester. They will take place in class on September 22nd and October 20th and during the final examination period on December 8th. The second and third exams will not be cumulative. Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

2. Essays. The class is broken up into three sections (see course calendar). At the beginning of each of those sections the instructor will provide an essay question. Students are to turn in an essay answering the question using both in class readings and outside sources if needed. All essays are to follow APA citation style, formatted as double spaced using 12 point font and will be approximately 1500-2000 words. These essays will be due September 27th, October 25th, and December 1st.

In this course we may utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit essays in electronic format (via email). After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit http://www.turnitin.com.

3. Readings Summaries. Students will be assigned to turn in summaries of the readings in *Principles and Practices* book three rimes during the semester. These summaries will be used to help foster in class discussion of the articles being summarized. The article summaries will discuss the main points the authors of each article make, suggest questions about each article that the class could spend time discussing, and summarize conflicts between articles or areas that create problems for the author's arguments, such as omissions, inconsistencies, or vagueness.

These summaries should be follow APA citation style and be formatted according to the same specifications as the essays. The reading summaries should be 750-1000 words long. These will be due to me via email by noon on Wednesday of the week you are assigned. These summaries will be made available to your classmates Wednesday afternoon of discussion weeks via webcourses. There will be penalties for late submissions. If you miss a week or wish to improve your grade for a previous summary Week 15 (November 29) will be unassigned and used as a makeup week. Makeup summaries must be submitted by noon, Monday, November 28th.

4. Class Discussions. As noted above, many weeks our Thursday class will be devoted to in class discussion of readings from the *Principles and Practice* book. All students are expected to have read the assignment and come prepared to discuss the assignment regardless of whether or not they have been assigned a summary for a particular week. Several weeks have been designated for viewing and brief discussion of films. There will be no summaries due those weeks.

Final grades will be calculated using the following formula:

Exams:	50%
Essays:	20%
Readings Summaries:	20%
Discussion:	10%

The grading scale for final grades is as follows:

A: 89.5% or above
B: 79.5% to 89.4%
C: 69.5% to 79.4%
D: 59.5% to 69.4%
F: 59.4% or below

Final grades are just that, final. I will not reconsider them except in a case where I made a computational error in calculating them (I have taught for several years and have yet to miscalculate a final grade). Please do not email or call me asking for a grade change for another reason, it will not happen.

Student Engagement and Financial Aid:
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 syllabus quiz by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 26th. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

The syllabus quiz is a five question multiple choice quiz and can be found on the class' webcourses site under the "Quizzes" tab. The only purpose of the syllabus quiz is to satisfy the financial aid requirement for this class. It will not be included in the calculation of your final grade. Please contact the professor if you have any questions.

Attendance Policy:
I will take attendance during every class by passing around a sign in sheet. You will be considered absent if you fail to sign the roll even if you came to class and left before the roll was circulated. I reserve the right to count as absent students who come to class, sign the sheet, and leave. I understand if it is necessary for you to leave class early on rare occasions, but I will begin to count you as absent if you make a habit of leaving class early.

<u>Do not sign the roll for another student.</u> This is an act of academic dishonesty, if I catch a student signing in for another I will refer both the student signing in and the student who was signed in for to the Office of Student Conduct.

Any student who has no more than <u>one</u> unexcused absence during the semester will receive a two point bonus on their final grade.

Makeup Work:
I will not allow missed assignments to be made up without a documented university excused absence. If you know ahead of time that you will miss a scheduled exam or other assignment please inform me prior to the class period the assignment is due. If you cannot inform me ahead of time, please inform me within one business day of the scheduled due date of the assignment of the reason you missed the assignment and request a makeup. This should be done either via phone or email. Date and time of makeup exams will be determined by the instructor on a case by case basis. I reserve the right to change the format and questions of makeup exams at my discretion.

Other Policies:
Please silence cell phones and refrain from talking or texting during class. I reserve the right to answer any calls received by a student on a cell phone.

I allow laptop computers for the purpose of taking notes; however, I reserve the right to revoke this privilege if students begin to use the computers for other purposes. I occasionally like to drift around the room when lecturing so beware.

I expect students to be respectful of each other during discussion sessions. This means (among other things) that we do not personally others even if we adamantly disagree with their opinion. Abusive behavior towards others will not be tolerated.

Webcourses:
A webcourses section has been created for this class and is accessible through the myUCF web portal at my.ucf.edu. This space will be used to post the syllabus, lecture notes, grades, and important class notices.

Class Topics and Reading Assignments:

Students are expected to complete the assigned reading by the beginning of each week.
Please note that I reserve the right to change the lecture and readings schedule as necessary to adequately cover all topics. I also reserve the right to add or subtract readings from the course. Any changes to the schedule or assigned readings will be announced in class.

Part I: The Foundations of American National Government

Week 1: Class Introduction
August 23: Course Introduction and Policies
August 25: Political Science and American National Government
Readings: Logic Ch. 1

Week 2: The Constitution
Readings:
August 30: Logic Ch. 2
September 1: Principles and Practice pgs. 18-46
Summaries: Rotation 1

Week 3: Federalism
Readings:
September 6: Logic Ch3
September 8: Film

Week 4: Civil Rights
Readings:
September 13: Logic Ch4
September 15: Principles and Practice pgs. 86-110
Summaries: Rotation 2

Week 5: Civil Liberties
Readings:
September 20: Logic Ch. 5

Exam 1: Thursday, September 22nd.

Part II: The Institutions of American National Government

Week 6: Congress
Readings:
September 27: Logic Ch. 6, **Essay 1 Due**
September 29: Principles and Practice pgs. 138-160
Summaries: Rotation 1

Week 7: The Presidency
Readings:
October 4: Logic Ch. 7
October 6: Film

Week 8: The Federal Judiciary
Readings:
October 11: Logic Ch. 9
October 13: Principles and Practice pgs. 233-253
Summaries: Rotation 2

Week 9: The Bureaucracy
Readings:
October 18: Logic Ch. 8

Exam 2: Thursday, October 20th.

Part III: Public Participation in American National Government

Week 10: Public Opinion
Readings:
October 25: Logic Ch. 10, **Essay 2 Due**
October 27: Principles and Practice pgs. 294-324
Summaries: Rotation 1

Week 11: Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
November 1: Logic Ch. 11
November 3: Film

Week 12: Political Parties
November 8: Logic Ch. 12
November 10: Film (concluded from Week 11)

Week 13: Interest Groups
November 15: Logic Ch. 13
November 17: Principles and Practice pgs. 391-413
Summaries Rotation 2

Week 14: The News Media
November 22: Logic Ch. 14

November 24th, No Class, Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15: The News Media (Continued), Class Conclusion
November 29: Principles and Practice pgs. 431-51
Makeup Summaries (Due Monday, November 28)
December 1: Logic Ch. 15, **Essay 3 Due**

Exam 3: December 8th, 10:00am-12:50pm

UCF Creed and Academic Honesty
Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

Integrity
I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

Scholarship
I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

Community
I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

Creativity
I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

Excellence
I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the University's Rules of Conduct (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Burnett Honors College Honor Code

As an honors course, students are also expected to abide by the Burnett Honors College Honor Code which is as follows:

As a member of The Burnett Honors College I pledge to uphold the following academic and ethical standards:

To strive for the highest levels of performance in all scholarly endeavors and to do so with the enthusiasm that stems from a true love of learning and a devotion to academic excellence.

To demonstrate self-discipline, commitment, and responsibility in fulfilling my obligations as a member of the academic community.

To show thoughtfulness, understanding, and empathy toward my peers, and to offer encouragement as they pursue their intellectual goals.

To be respectful of, and attentive toward those who teach and mentor, while cherishing the ideal that academic excellence is best served where scholarly debate flourishes.

To honor the traditional rules of conduct that guide the achievements of a scholar including contempt for plagiarism, cheating, falsification, or any activity that threatens academic integrity and honesty.

Students with Disabilities

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 who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes

Third parties may be selling class notes and other materials from this class without my authorization. Please be aware that such class materials may contain errors, which could affect your performance or grade. Use these materials at your own risk.