Syllabus

POS 4284: Judicial Process and Politics

Fall 2017

Instructor Contact

Instructor	Nathan Ilderton
Office	302 Howard Philips Hall
Office Hours	2:00-4:00pm Tuesday and Thursday. All regularly scheduled office hours this semester will be virtual. You can access these hours by clicking on the "chat" tab. Face to face meetings are available by appointment.
Phone	407-823-2608
E-mail	Please contact me via the email function within webcourses for all class related emails. Click my profile under people and select send message. If webcourses is down you can reach me via my University email: Nathan.Ilderton@ucf.edu.

Course Information

Course Name	Judicial Process and Politics
Course ID & Section	POS 4284 Section W58
Credit Hours	3
Semester/Year	Fall 2017
Location	Online

Course Description

This class is a study of the U.S. court system, its processes, participants, structure, and policy impact. This is not a course on the law, but on the branch of government charged with interpreting the law. We will examine state and federal court systems, the key participants in the legal process (judges, lawyers, special interest, etc.), and the process by which decisions are made in the judicial branch. We will also examine the impact of these decisions on public policy.

Course Objectives

The first objective is to understand the basic procedures of the judicial process. However, we must also recognize that Article 3 of the Constitution is the shortest article describing a branch of government. It left wide open the structure of the judicial branch below the Supreme Court, issues of jurisdiction, and even the process by which judges render decisions. This means that the judicial process and structure of the judiciary as we see it today was created by a political process. Further, the effects of judicial decisions are deeply political. Therefore, we will go beyond just a simple understanding of the mechanics of the judicial process and seek to understand the political nature of its creation and its political impact

Required Text

- David W. Neubauer and Stephen S. Meinhold. *Judicial Process: Law, Courts, and Politics in the United States*, 7th edition (Cengage Learning).

Course Requirements

This course is divided into two parts. Each parts include six lectures videos between 30 minutes and one hour in length. Assignments within each part include one quiz for each lecture, two discussion assignments, one film assignment consisting of a film to be viewed and a 1000 word essay, and one exam. Each part will be open for eight weeks. Part 1 will open at 12:01 am Monday, August 21st and close at 11:59pm on Sunday, October 15th. Part 2 will open at 12:01 am on Monday October 16th and close at 11:59pm on Friday, December 8th. All assignments except the exams will be available for the entirety of the time its part is open. Exams will be available for the final week of each part of the class.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

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 be unable to complete a module on time please inform me prior to the closing time. If you cannot inform me ahead of time, please inform me within one business day of the closing of the module either via phone or email. Date and time of makeup modules will be determined by the instructor on a case by case basis. I reserve the right to change the format and questions of makeup modules at my discretion.

Evaluation and Grading

Each lecture will consist of assigned background reading from the text and a video. Each lecture has a quiz associated with it. Quizzes consist of true/false and multiple choice questions. True/false and multiple choice questions will be worth one point each. Your quiz grade will be

computed by dividing the total points earned during the semester by the total points available. Quizzes are listed under the quizzes tab on the course menu.

Each half of the class will include two discussion questions in which you will be asked to interact with your classmates. Each discussion contribution will be graded on a 10 point scale based on the accuracy of the answer to the question posed and the quality of the interaction with fellow students. These are listed under the discussions tab of the course menu.

Each half of the class will include a film assignment. These assignments require you to watch a film and respond to it in a 1000 word essay using questions I assign as a guide to writing the paper. These assignments will be graded on a 100 point scale. These will be listed under the assignments tab on the course menu and will have there own pages linked in the course homepage.

During the final week of each half of the class, an exam will be available which you are required to complete. Exams consist of five short answer questions from the material covered in the half of the class it ends. The second exam is **not** cumulative. Exam questions should be answered in one or two paragraphs each. Answers should be original (i.e. **not** cut and pasted from course modules or copied from the textbook). Exams will run seven full days.

Once you begin a quiz, discussion, or film assignment there is no time limit for it to be completed. **There is a 60 minute time limit for the completion of exams. Also, be aware that you only get one attempt to complete a quiz or exam, i.e. once you start a quiz or exam you must complete it.**

Assignments will be weighted in the following manner for calculating the final grade.

Assignment	**Percentage of Grade**
Quizzes	20
Film Assignments	20
Discussions	10
Exam 1	25
Exam 2	25
Total	100

Final grades will be awarded according to the following scale.

Letter Grade	**Points**
A	89.5 – 100
B	79.5 – 89.4
C	69.5 – 79.4

D	59.5 – 69.4
F	59.4 or below

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. 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 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.

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 for further action. See the *UCF Golden Rule* 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.

Disability Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, 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.

Schedule

Modules assignments and exams open at midnight on the open date and close at 11:59pm on the close date.

Topic	Readings	Assignments	Date Open	Date Close
Part 1: Weeks 1-8*				
Lecture 1: Politics of Law and Courts	Judicial Process, Ch. 1,2	Lecture 1 Quiz Discussion 1	August 21	October 15
Lecture 2: The Federal Court System	Judicial Process, Ch. 3	Lecture 2 Quiz	August 21	October 15
Lecture 3: State Judicial Systems	Judicial Process, Ch. 4	Lecture 3 Quiz	August 21	October 15
Lecture 4: Judges	Judicial Process, Ch. 6	Lecture 4 Quiz	August 21	October 15
Lecture 5: Lawyers	Judicial Process, Ch. 5	Lecture 5 Quiz	August 21	October 15
Lecture 6: Litigants, Interest Groups, and the Media	Judicial Process, Ch. 7	Lecture 6 Quiz Discussion 2	August 21	October 15
Film Assignment 1: Judicial Elections		Essay	August 21	October 15
Exam 1			October 9	October 15
Part 2: Weeks 9-16				
Lecture 7: Civil Trials	Judicial Process, Ch. 10, 11	Lecture 7 Quiz	October 16	December 8
Lecture 8: Criminal Trials	Judicial Process, Ch. 8,9	Lecture 8 Quiz Discussion 3	October 16	December 8
Lecture 9: Juries	Judicial Process, Ch. 12	Lecture 9 Quiz	October 16	December 8
Lecture 10: The Appeals Process	Judicial Process, Ch. 13	Lecture 10 Quiz	October 16	December 8
Lecture 11: Supreme Court 1	Judicial Process, Ch. 14	Lecture 11 Quiz Discussion 4	October 16	December 8
Lecture 12: Supreme Court	Judicial Process, Ch. 15	Lecture 12 Quiz	October	December

2			16	8
Film Assignment 2: Q&A with Antonin Scalia		Essay	October 16	December 8
Exam 2			December 2	December 8

Note: All dates and times are subject to change by Dr. Ilderton. Be informed and routinely check the Schedule and Class Email or Announcements for any changes or updates.

*Syllabus quiz for financial aid purposes due by end of 1st week of class or as soon as possible after adding the class.