Political Science 2041-0005: American National Government
University of Central Florida
Fall 2018
Instructor: John Hanley
Syllabus

Class Meetings: Face to face Tuesday/Thursday 9-10:15, MSB 360
Office Hours: HPH 306, T/Th noon-1pm, Th 3-5pm; or by appointment.
Email via webcourses Phone: 407-823-3329

GTA: Sandor Fabian (contact via webcourses)

Overview

This is a survey course is designed to provide students with a foundation for understanding and critically assessing American political processes, institutions, and public policies. The course proceeds in four major sections: first, we will situate the institutions of American government in the context of their creation and understand the objectives of the Founders and the tradeoffs inherent in institutional design. Second, we will observe and evaluate the performance of governmental institutions. Third, we will examine the relationships between government and individuals, groups, and corporate entities. Finally, we will consider American public policy. Throughout the course, but with particular attention at the end, we will assess the outcomes generated by American government both at home and abroad. [Tl;dr (UCF Catalog): "A study of the dynamics of American national government, including its structure, organization, powers, and procedures."]

Prerequisites, Co-requisites, other enrollment requirements

None.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Understand and become conversant in the concepts, theories, institutions, programs that comprise and describe American government and politics.
2. Critically assess alternatives in institutional and policy design through thoughtful use of empirical data. *Especially*: (1) conceptualize and develop measurement strategies to describe and test hypotheses about social phenomena; (2) develop causal explanations for the operation of American politics in a manner that facilitates the understanding of other political systems.
3. Identify the appropriate venues and strategies for pressing claims in the political system. *Especially*: predict and explain the behavior of political actors with reference to their interests and environment.

Validation and Grading

The maximum points available for assignments will be as follows:

Attendance Checks (random)	30 points	Midterms (2)	200 (100 per)
Intro Quiz	10	Closing Quiz	10
Short Assignments (6)	150 (25 per)	Final	150

Total: 550 points

I reserve the right to award students up to 10 bonus points at the end of the semester for participation during class.

Attendance Checks: On six random dates during the course of the semester, I will take attendance. All students in attendance will receive five points for each time they are present, up to a maximum of 25 points.

Late short assignments will be deducted 2 points (out of 25) for each day late or portion thereof. Missing an exam without a valid excuse will incur a penalty of no less than 20 percent of the point value of the exam. This deduction may be raised to 50 percent if a student fails to reply promptly to emails about an exam delinquency, or otherwise obstructs scheduling of the makeup.

The midterms and final will consist of multiple-choice questions. The final will be cumulative.

The plus/minus system will be used in calculating final grades.

A > 513	B+ > 477	C+ > 422	D > 330
A- > 495	B > 458	C > 403	F < 330
	B- > 440	C- > 385	

Text

Theodore J. Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2017. *American Government, Power & Purpose*. Norton. 14th brief edition. This is comprehensive, clear, and moderately priced. Reading it will allow you to follow more closely what's going on in lecture, and to understand other materials.

There are other readings, all of which will be available through webcourses. Readings in *AGP&P* should be done before the applicable lecture. Whether you do the other readings before or after lecture is up to you. All readings mentioned in lecture are fair game for examinations.

Additional Policies

Incomplete grades, changes in exam dates, and extensions of written assignments will be approved only upon evidence of extenuating circumstances, religious holidays, or participation in approved university activities.

Academic Integrity

The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.
http://academicintegrity.org/

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

1. Integrity: I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.
2. Scholarship: I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.
3. Community: I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.
4. Creativity: I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.
5. Excellence: I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

The following definitions of plagiarism and misuse of sources come from the Council of Writing Program Administrators <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9> and have been adopted by UCF's Department of Writing & Rhetoric.

Plagiarism

In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers.

Misuse of Sources

A student who attempts (even if clumsily) to identify and credit his or her source, but who misuses a specific citation format or incorrectly uses quotation marks or other forms of identifying material taken from other sources, has not plagiarized. Instead, such a student should be considered to have failed to cite and document sources appropriately.

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

UCF faculty members have a responsibility for your education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to infringements of academic integrity. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or

in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade.
For more information about UCF's Rules of Conduct, see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Unauthorized Use of Class Materials
There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are actually cheat sites. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes
Third parties may be selling class notes 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.

In-Class Recording Policy
Outside of the notetaking and recording services offered by Student Accessibility Services, the creation of an audio or video recording of all or part of a class for personal use is allowed only with the advance and explicit written consent of the instructor. Such recordings are only acceptable in the context of personal, private studying and notetaking and are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the separate written approval of the instructor.

Course Accessibility Statement
The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Campus Safety Statement
Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise in our class, we will all need to work together. Everyone should be aware of the surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Please make a note of the guide's physical location and consider reviewing the online version at http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html.
- Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes from each of your classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency. (Insert class-specific details if appropriate)
- If there is a medical emergency during class, we may need to access a first aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those items are located in this building, see http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/AEDlocations-UCF (click on link from menu on left). (insert class specific information if appropriate)
- To stay informed about emergency situations, sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to my.ucf.edu and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the tool bar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on your Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including your e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
- If you have a special need related to emergency situations, please speak with me during office hours.
- Consider viewing this video (https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk) about how to manage an active shooter situation on campus or elsewhere.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students
If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

Schedule of Material

Part I. Introduction and the Constitution. In recent years, the meaning of the Constitution has taken on increased relevance in political debates. We will study the problems which the Constitution was created to address, the struggles to reach agreement and achieve ratification, obvious and lurking defects in the document, and its legacy today.

Tuesday, 8/21 Introduction – Logistics, what is politics and what we hope to gain by studying it.

Readings:
AGP&P, Chapter 1
Robert Dahl, "What is Politics"

8/23-8/28 Early America and the Constitution – How did our system of government come into being? We will look at the principal debates from the Constitutional convention and the explanations made in *The Federalist*; and we will look at what the Framers missed.

AGP&P, Chapter 2
AGP&P, Federalist 10 & 51 (James Madison) – *the language in these will take some time to digest*.
Robert Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution*? Chapter 2

8/30, 6pm Assignment 1 Due

8/30-9/4 Federalism – does "limited government" mean one with narrow powers, strictly enumerated; or with specific limits on broad powers? How has the operation of federalism changed over time?

AGP&P, Chapter 3
Martha Derthick. 2007. "Where Federalism Didn't Fail." *Public Administration Review*. pp 36-47.

Part II. The Elected Branches and the Electoral System. We examine the Framers' work in Articles I-III, the development of these institutions over time, how they appeal to the public, and how they are influenced by it.

9/6-11 Congress (Article I) –
Introduction to the legislative branch, and how it has changed over time.
The mechanics of legislating, starting with how a bill becomes a law.
Who ends up in Congress, and what motivates them.

AGP&P, Chapter 6
Jay Newton-Small, "The Last Politicians" *Time*, October 28, 2013.

9/13, 6pm Assignment 2 Due

9/13-18 President and "the Presidential Branch" (Article II) – emergence of the President as a national leader despite limited institutional power; advisors and Cabinet as policy-makers

AGP&P, Chapter 7
Jeff Shesol, "Can President Trump Learn on the Job?" *New Yorker*, April 22, 2017.

9/20 Exam #1

9/25 Bureaucracy – growth of the executive branch over time; expertise, institutional loyalty and problems for democratic accountability; Congress's attempts to re-gain influence.

AGP&P, Chapter 8
James Q Wilson. 1975. "The Rise of the Bureaucratic State."

9/27, 6pm Assignment 3 Due

9/27-10/2 Judiciary (Article III) – the "least dangerous branch" is today the most respected branch of government. Introduction to the federal court system and the Supreme Court; the genius of *Marbury v. Madison*; the Court's struggles with legitimacy in the 19th and 20th centuries.

AGP&P, Chapter 9
Antonin Scalia. 2005. "Constitutional Interpretation the Old Fashioned Way."

Part III. The Supporting Cast. Having set up the operations and interactions at the core of American democracy, we move to consider four institutions which greatly affect outcomes and which themselves frequently become the subject of debate and political struggle.

10/4-10/9 Political Parties – Parties are important for linking elected officials and the public, organizing activity in the legislature, and structuring competition among aspiring politicians. The Founders tried—and failed—to prevent them. Here, we'll look at the emergence of American political parties and their importance to Presidential nominations.
AGP&P, Chapter 12
Ryan Lizza, "Occupied Territory," *The New Yorker*, June 20, 2016.

10/11, 6pm Assignment 4 Due

10/11-10/18 Public Opinion – In a republic, public opinion plays a critical role in what governmental institutions do. We will look at how public opinion is measured, and what it is like.
AGP&P, Chapter 10
Neil Irwin. 2016. "How Is the Economy Doing? Politics Will Probably Decide Your Answer" *The Upshot.*

10/23 Exam #2

10/25-30 Campaigns and Elections – At first glance, political campaigns appear to respond very effectively to popular demands. However, specific choices of electoral institutions—in the US, plurality voting, primary elections, and private financing of campaigns—shape the political landscape.
AGP&P, Chapter 11
David Weigel, "Meet the Hip Geeks Who Beat Mitt Romney," *Slate*, December 3, 2012.

11/1, 6pm Assignment 5 Due

11/1-6 Interest Groups (Associations, lobbies, unions, and PACs) – the "seamier" side of political organizations, the "special interests." We will talk about how the U.S. political system facilitates interest group activity, theories about why groups form, and the history of campaign financing.
AGP&P, Chapter 13
Robert D. Putnam. 1996. "The Strange Disappearance of Civic America" *Policy*, pp. 3-15.

11/8-13 The Media – Political actors frequently complain about "media bias," but what basis is there to believe that journalists affect what people think? What drives changes in how we receive news?
AGP&P, Chapter 14
Pew. "Newspapers Fact Sheet." June 1, 2017. http://www.journalism.org/fact-sheet/newspapers/

Part IV. Policy. Finally, we put together the pieces together in a few examples. What is the character of American politics and government? What changes might we consider?

11/15, 6pm Assignment 6 Due

11/15-20 Civil Rights – How does a democratic republic confront its own prejudices and end its mistreatment of others? We will reflect on how the Founding generation's deep ambivalence on

human rights became embedded in the Constitution. We will examine the muddle of "the First Reconstruction," the rise of state-sanctioned segregation, and multiple factors behind the success of the Civil Rights Movement.

AGP&P, Chapter 5

Celia McGee, "Recalling 'Green Book,' Guide for Black Travelers", *NYT*, August 22, 2010

11/22 **Thanksgiving – No Class**

11/27 Public Policy and Current Challenges – Who wants what? Are they likely to get it? When? How? Where do you fit into the picture?

AGP&P, Chapter 14

11/29 Conclusion & Review

Thursday, 12/6, ***7AM***-9:50 Final Exam