Course Syllabus

Jump to Today

Instructor Contact

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Course Information

- Course Name: Topics in Public Policy
- Course ID & Section: PUP 4931-DW59
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: Summer 2016
- Web Only Course

Course Description

Topics in Public Policy offers instructors and students the opportunity to study different contemporary public policy issues. In this course, we will focus on a particularly controversial area of public policy: gun control. Too often, the debate over gun control degenerates into a clash of cliches and clever slogans. In this class, we will consider the debate over gun control from an academic perspective. We will examine America's gun problem in historical context and study the most recent data on gun violence. We will analyze federal and state gun control laws and consider the political forces that shape gun control laws. Students will complete an original research paper examining media coverage of a mass shooting to better understand the public perception of gun violence. We will conclude the class by considering emerging issues in gun control policy.

University Course Catalog Description: Intensive analysis of a current policy problem. Sample topics include education, growth management, housing, affirmative action, welfare, and transportation. May be used in the degree program a maximum of 2 times.

Course Prerequisites

ENC 1102 (Freshman Composition II), POS 2041 (American National Government) or consent of the instructor.

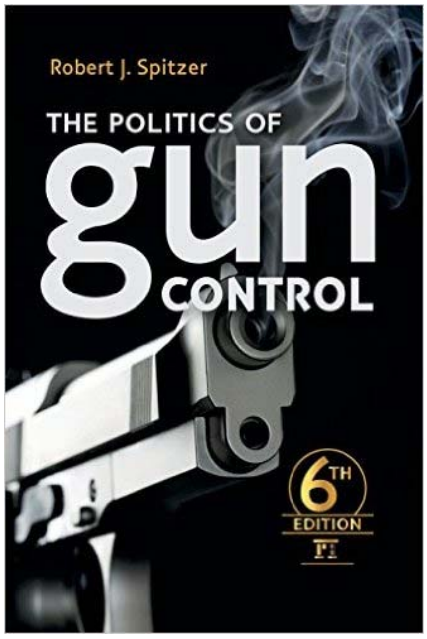
Course Objectives

The objectives of this course include:

- Understanding key terms and concepts related to gun control,
- Evaluating the constitutional right to bear arms,
- Assessing evidence on effects of gun control,
- Analyzing the media coverage of a mass shooting,
- Improving writing, research, and critical thinking skills, and
- Developing collaborative skills in small group discussions of course material.

Required Texts and Materials

Spitzer, Robert J. 2015. *The Politics of Gun Control, Sixth Edition.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers (hereafter "Spitzer"). **See on Amazon** **(http://www.amazon.com/Politics-Gun-Control-Robert-Spitzer/dp/1612057217/ref=la_B001ITYB1Q_1_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1457535433&sr=1-5)**



In addition to reading the textbook, you will be required to read articles, watch videos, and view web pages. These supplementary materials are incorporated as links in course material and are available at no additional cost to students.

Course Requirements

Your final grade is based on the following components:

1. **Module Quizzes** (50%) – Each numbered module contains a quiz which include multiple choice, true false questions, and a short answer question.
2. **Small Group Discussions** (10%) – Each numbered module contains one small group discussion of potential module quiz short answer questions.
3. **Research Paper** (20%) - You will prepare a moderate-length research paper examining the pattern of news reporting

following a mass shooting in the United States.

4. **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.

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. Lateness deductions may be excused for official University activities or personal emergencies.

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

Course grades are rounded to the nearest integer; thus, an overall numeric grade of 89.5% rounds to 90 and an A- letter grade. Any missing assignments are treated as 0 scores for the purposes of calculating final course grades.

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 midterm exams in this class and parts of these simulations involve group discussions.

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. See **Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Citations (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/pages/academic-integrity-plagiarism-and-citations)** for additional information and answers to frequently asked questions.

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://uwc.cah.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.cah.ucf.edu/schedule-a-consultation/)** 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	
Wed May 18, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 1 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550464)	due by 11:59pm
	Syllabus Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550448)	due by 11:59pm
Fri May 20, 2016	Evidence of Academic Engagement Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550453)	due by 5pm
Sun May 22, 2016	Module 1 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550455)	due by 11:59pm
Wed May 25, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 2 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550463)	due by 11:59pm
Sun May 29, 2016	Module 2 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550452)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jun 1, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 3 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550462)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 5, 2016	Module 3 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550444)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jun 8, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 4 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550461)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 12, 2016	Module 4 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550446)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jun 15, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 5 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550460)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 19, 2016	Module 5 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550451)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jun 22, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 6 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550459)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jun 26, 2016	Module 6 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550454)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jun 29, 2016	Small Group Discussion for Module 7 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550458)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	
Sun Jul 3, 2016	**Module 7 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550445)**	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jul 6, 2016	**Small Group Discussion for Module 8 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550457)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jul 10, 2016	**Upload Your Research Paper (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550465)**	due by 11:59pm
	Module 8 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550449)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jul 13, 2016	**Small Group Discussion for Module 9 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550456)**	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jul 17, 2016	**Module 9 Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550450)**	due by 11:59pm
Tue Jul 19, 2016	**Final Exam - Summer 2016 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1199689/assignments/4550447)**	due by 11:59pm