POS2041 American National Government

Section 0W661

School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs

College of Sciences

3 Credit Hours

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Instructor Information

- Instructor: Dr. Annabelle Conroy
- Office Location: HPH 302
- Office Hours (all times are EDT - Orlando time). Regular office hours will be held through Zoom and the link is provided below. For these office hours, you do not need an appointment. Just "join" the Zoom session at any point during that period by clicking on the link. If you wish to meet at a different time, send me a message through Webcourses to arrange a meeting.

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            - **Dr. Conroy's Office Hours:**
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                - **Tuesdays: 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (Zoom Meeting ID: 931 4117 7980)**
                - **Wednesdays: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM (Zoom Meeting ID: 961 1883 6313)**

    - **By appointment (contact me by Webcourses email to arrange a meeting time)**

- Phone: (407) 823-2608 (does not take messages)
- Digital Contact: **Please use the Webcourses@UCF messaging to contact me.** I aim to respond within 24 hours. If you need information on how to do this, please go to the Webcourses site: https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/guides/conversations/

Course Information

- Term: Spring 2021
- Course Number & Section: POS2041-W602 & W603
- Course Name: American National Government
- Credit Hours: 3
- Class Meeting Days: TBA
- Class Meeting Time: TBA
- Class Location: Online
- Course Modality: Online

Enrollment Requirements

Course Prerequisites (if applicable): None
Course Co-requisites (if applicable): None
Other Enrollment Requirements (if applicable): N/A

Course Description

POS2041-American National Government has been designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to the concepts and issues of the United States government. It examines the structure, philosophy, accomplishments, and challenges of the American government. Students will examine and analyze why the American political system operates as it does, who wins and who loses in the process and why this system endures. In addition, this course will provide you with the tools to understand, effectively participate in, and influence the political process in order to address issues of importance to our communities.

The problems that we face as a society are multifaceted and, thus, require that individuals with different backgrounds, training, and perspectives collaborate to elaborate and implement effective solutions. Thus, it is imperative that we learn how to do this effectively. This course includes several assignments geared towards developing teamwork skills and strategies

This course will be taught from a transdisciplinary and comparative perspective. This means that we will examine topics from a variety of angles and determine the linkages that exist between politics, society, culture, science, and the arts. In addition, we will continuously compare and contrast the United States to countries around the world to try to understand why certain patterns and phenomena are present in some contexts and not in others. This is based on the assumption that we can understand our own country better if we compare it against others.

This term our class will be working on one of UCF's priority policy areas: the issue of human trafficking. To that effect, for the final project we will be partnering with another class at UCF in the Criminal Justice program: CCJ4694: Human Trafficking. The objective of this is to apply what you learned in the course, to develop professional skills, and to make connections with students who are already further along in their UCF careers. The project is designed to introduce you to the career readiness competencies (competencies that employers are requiring all graduates to demonstrate), skills needed to demonstrate these competencies, and prepare you to 'translate' your past and current experiences into your employment search tools.

These competencies/skills are*:

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    - **Career & Self Development:** Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.
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    - **Communication:** Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.
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    - **Critical Thinking:** Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.
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    - **Equity & Inclusion:** Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.
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- **Leadership:** Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.
- **Professionalism:** Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.
- **Teamwork:** Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.
- **Technology:** Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

* Source: NACE Career Readiness Initiative: https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/
All of these competencies have been identified by employers as significant assets in hiring/promotion decisions.

Modality

This course will be conducted by remote instruction. No in-person classroom attendance is available. Additional instructional materials will be video streamed and/or require substantive interaction online. No distance learning fee is charged. Thus, you will need access to a reliable internet connection, a webcam, a microphone, and, of course, a laptop or desktop.

The weekly schedule for this course will be the following:

Module Schedule	
Modules Open on:	**Tuesdays, 9:00 am**
Modules Close on:	**Mondays, 11:59 pm**

Course Materials and Resources

Required Textbook

The textbook for this class is:

OpenStax and Lumen Learning: *American Government (2e)*, https://pressbooks.online.ucf.edu/pos2041ac/ Print: American Government from OpenStax, Print ISBN 1947172654, Digital ISBN 1947172662, https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-2e

Good news: your textbook for this class is available for free online! Your book is available in web view and PDF for free. You can use whichever formats you want. The web view is recommended -- the responsive design works seamlessly on any device. In addition, the web version may include end-of-chapter review questions not included in the print version. However, if you prefer, you can also get a print version at a very low cost. If you wish to buy a hard copy of the book, you can purchase it on Amazon, but make sure you use the link on your book page on openstax.org so you get the official OpenStax print version (https://www.amazon.com/dp/1947172654). (Simple printouts sold by third parties on Amazon are not verifiable and not as high-quality.)

The link for each chapter is included in each week's module. To access each chapter you just have to click on the link provided in each module. To navigate through the chapter, you may use the "Next" or "Back" buttons located at the top and bottom of each chapter's screen.

Hardware/Software Requirements

The following hardware and software technologies needed to complete assignments:

- Desktop or laptop computer
- Webcam
- Microphone
- Either speakers or headphones
- Reliable access to the internet
- Access to Webcourses@UCF

- Access to ucf.zoom.us with NID and NID password
- Download Respondus LockDown Browser (see instructions below)

LockDown Browser Requirement

This course requires the use of LockDown Browser for online exams.

Watch this video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser:

https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml

Consult the student quick start guide for step by step instructions:

Respondus Quick Start Guide download

Download Instructions

Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=472413933

Once Installed

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  - Start LockDown Browser
  - Log in to Canvas
  - Navigate to the quiz

Note: You won't be able to access a quiz that requires LockDown Browser with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser:

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  - The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues. If an exam requires you to use a webcam, also run the "Webcam Check" from this area
  - To save time and get the help you need, if you need further support, please contact the Webcourses help desk directly:
    - You can contact Webcourses@UCF Support by phone (407-823-0407), email (webcourses@ucf.edu), live chat, or through our Online Support Form.

- Respondus has a Knowledge Base available from support.respondus.com. Select the "Knowledge Base" link and then select "Respondus LockDown Browser" as the product. If your problem is with a webcam, select "Respondus Monitor" as your product
- If you're still unable to resolve a technical issue with LockDown Browser, go to support.respondus.com and select "Submit a Ticket". Provide detailed information about your problem and what steps you took to resolve it (Just keep in mind that due to the coronavirus they are overwhelmed right now so it might take a while to get a response).

Practice Test

It is a good idea to take the Practice Test just so you can get used to this tool and troubleshoot any problems there might be. Ideally, you should use the same computer that you will use with the graded quizzes/exams, including the same network/Wi-Fi environment. You can take this practice test unlimited times so you can get used to it.

Before you take the Practice Test, do the following:

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- Locate the LockDown Browser application or shortcut and manually launch it
- Select "Help Center" from the toolbar
- Run the "Webcam Check" and the "System & Network Check" to make sure everything is working properly. If a problem is indicated, you can search for a solution in the Knowledge Base, or seek technical assistance.

Once you take the Practice Test you will be able to make any needed corrections and I can also verify that everything is fine.

Student Learning Outcomes

The main objectives of this course are:

1. To provide students with a comprehensive introduction to the American system of government.
2. To provide students with an understanding of the ways in which the various branches of the government, as well as other political actors, operate in the context of the American political institutions and processes.
3. To show how the main political actors and institutions have changed over time.

4. To develop key skills required for the successful study of political science and for the graduate job market.
5. To provide students with the tools to become active and engaged citizens and to have the ability to make informed political decisions.

By the end of the course students should:

1. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government.
2. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution and its application.
3. Develop and demonstrate knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.
4. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

In addition, this course is designed as an introduction to and preparation for higher-level courses by developing skills such as oral presentation, writing, test-taking and teamwork skills.

Course Activities

This course will consist of a combination of activities: class discussions, individual research, and short writing assignments. Each week I will post one or more questions which you should consider and prepare for that week's discussion. The questions, readings, and assignments for each week can be found on the modules for each week. To see which module corresponds to each week, please consult the class schedule.

The course activities required in this course are:

Protocol Points:

Protocol points are points that are given to you at the beginning of the course and will remain with you as long as you observe and abide by the class protocols and the UCF student code of conduct. In other words, you start off with 2.5 points and you will only lose some or all of them if you somehow violate any of the protocols set forth in the syllabus.

You can lose protocol points if you do any of the following:

1. Use rude, disrespectful, intimidating, or unprofessional language in any communication or discussion assignment in this course. Please make sure to review the email protocols in the Course Policies section of the syllabus.
2. Violate the ethical standards set forth by UCF (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).
3. Repeatedly arrive late to class.
4. Fail to turn off or turn to silent your cellphone or other electronic devices during the class and/or use of these devices during class time unless allowed by the professor. If any of this occurs, there will be one warning and after that, the penalty for each additional offense will increase.
5. Ask a question that is obviously already stated either in the syllabus, class modules, or in an email that I have sent to the class.
6. You do not answer an email sent by your instructor within 48 hours.
7. Fail to observe the protocols set forth in this syllabus.

Please keep in mind that if you lose all 5 protocol points, other disciplinary actions will ensue.

Modules

There are 11 graded modules and each module is worth 5 points. Each module will have a set of activities you need to complete so a good strategy is to log into the course as soon as it opens to see what is required for that week. The weekly schedule for this course will be the following:

Module Schedule	
Modules Open on:	**Tuesdays, 9:00 am**
Modules Close on:	**Mondays, 11:59 pm**

If you have to miss a module due to illness you need to inform the instructor as soon as possible to arrange for an alternative assessment.

Collaborative Project

To help bridge the gap from education to employment, the students will engage in a collaborative group project. The students in this class will be grouped with students from the CCJ4694: Human Trafficking course to work on a final project. The collaborative group project is designed to help you build skills outlined by the National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE). To read more about the project, go to Module 1 and

click on the Final Collaborative Project link. The project will account for 12.5 % of the grade (25 points) but these will be divided into several components (Roadmap, Final Project, and Reflection paper).

Mandatory Zoom Meetings

There will be **TWO general mandatory meetings** where students and instructors from both classes will meet. These will be announced in the first week of class.

Examinations

There will be three examinations in this course - two midterms and a final exam. The final examination will be cumulative. You must take this exam. Failure to take the final exam will result in a grade of "F" for the entire course. Please refer to the final module for instructions regarding the exams.

As with any other course, I urge you not to fall behind on the readings. Each week we will be covering a lot of new information and if you do not keep up, it can become overwhelming the day before the exam. In addition, keep in mind that the final examination will be cumulative.

In case of a serious extenuating circumstance that prevents the student from taking the final exam, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor **before** the examination. In addition, please note that the format of any makeup examination may be different from that administered to the rest of the class.

- Extra Credit: There will be no extra credit assignments offered in this course.
- Students should have regular access to the internet and plan on logging into the course at least twice each week in order to get the class assignments.
- In addition, students should plan on at least five hours' worth of homework outside of class each week. This will consist of doing assigned readings and preparing for the in-class assignments.
- Late assignments will not be accepted unless valid medical documentation is presented and only when arrangements have been made before the due date. Make-up assignments will have a different format than those assigned to the rest of the class.
- Make sure to check the "Grades" section in Webcourses often. Please be aware that *no grade will be changed 2 weeks after the grade* for a particular assignment has been posted.
- If you have a particular concern about a grade received, you need to make an appointment by email specifying the specific points which you wish to address. Keep in mind that if you ask me to read the disputed assignment/test again, your grade may go up or down.
- Please do come and see me if you are having trouble understanding a topic or concept. Also, I encourage you to ask questions during class if something is not clear.

To protect members of our community, everyone is required to wear a facial covering inside all common spaces including classrooms (https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/PolicyEmergencyCOVIDReturnPolicy.pdf). Students who choose not to wear facial coverings will be asked to leave the classroom by the instructor. If they refuse to leave the classroom or put on a facial covering, they may be considered disruptive (please see the Golden Rule for student behavior expectations). Faculty have the right to cancel class if the safety and well-being of class members are in jeopardy. Students will be responsible for the material that would have been covered in class as provided by the instructor.

Depending on the course of the pandemic during the semester, the university may make changes to the way classes are offered. If that happens, please look for announcements or messages in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email about changes specific to this course.

COVID-19 and Illness Notification – Students who believe they may have a COVID-19 diagnosis should contact UCF Student Health Services (407-823-2509) so proper contact tracing procedures can take place.

Students should not come to campus if they are ill, are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID, or if anyone living in their residence has tested positive or is sick with COVID-19 symptoms. CDC guidance for COVID-19 symptoms is located here: (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)

Students should contact their instructor(s) as soon as possible if they miss class for any illness reason to discuss reasonable adjustments that might need to be made. When possible, students should contact their instructor(s) before missing class.

In Case of Faculty Illness – If the instructor falls ill during the semester, there may be changes to this course, including having a backup instructor take over the course. Please look for announcements or mail in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email for any alterations to this course.

Course Accessibility and Disability COVID-19 Supplemental Statement – Accommodations may need to be added or adjusted should this course shift from an on-campus to a remote format. Students with disabilities should speak with their instructor and should contact sas@ucf.edu to discuss specific accommodations for this or other courses.

Make-up Assignments

Per university policy, you are allowed to submit make-up work (or an equivalent, alternate assignment) for authorized university-sponsored activities, religious observances, or legal obligations (such as jury duty). If this participation conflicts with

any of the exams, I will offer a reasonable opportunity for you to complete missed exams. The make-up exams and grading scale will be equivalent to the missed assignment and its grading scale but its format may be different.

Assessment and Grading Procedures*

Grading Item	**Percentage**
Protocol Points	2.5
Modules (11 graded modules/5 points each)	55
Final Project	12.5
Examinations	30

Letter Grade	**Points**
A	94 – 100
A-	90 – 93.9
B+	87 – 89.9
B	84 – 86.9
B-	80 – 83.9
C+	77 – 79.9

C	74 – 76.9
C-	70 – 73.9
D+	67 – 69.9
D	64 – 66.9
D-	61 – 63.9
F	0 - 60.9

Grade Dissemination

In general, grades for each assignment will appear two weeks after the submission deadline. You can access your scores at any time by logging into your course through Webcourses. Mistakes can be made while entering the grades, so you are responsible for monitoring your grades and making sure that they are accurate. You have one week after the grades are posted to challenge or request a correction to your grades. After this time, grades become final.

If you wish to challenge your grade you must make an appointment with the professor and present the evidence to show that your grade is incorrect. Keep in mind that if a review has to be made of your graded assignment, the grade can go up or down depending on the review.

Consult the latest Undergraduate or Graduate catalog for regulations and procedures regarding grading such as Incomplete grades, grade changes, and grade forgiveness.

Course Schedule

Although I make every effort to adhere to the dates set forth in the schedule, unforeseen events may make it necessary to change the dates. If this is the case, I will let you know as soon as possible. Please keep in mind that in case of a natural disaster or another type of emergency you should consult the UCF website for immediate information.

Date	Topic	Assignments/Notes
Part I: The Foundations of the American System		
Week 1: August 23	Introduction: American Government and Civic Engagement	Week 1 Module **Friday, Aug. 27: Last Day to Drop**
Week 2: August 30	The Constitution and its Origins	Week 2 Module
Week 3: Sept. 6	The Constitution and its Origins	Week 3 Module
Week 4: Sept. 13	American Federalism	Week 4 Module
Week 5: Sept. 20	American Federalism II	Week 5 Module
Part II: Individual Agency and Action		
Week 6: Sept. 27	Civil Liberties	Week 6 Module
Week 7: Oct. 4	Civil Rights I	Week 7 Module

Week 8: Oct. 11	Civil Rights II	Week 8 Module
Week 9: Oct. 18	Voting and Elections	Week 9 Module
Part III: Toward Collective Action: Mediating Institutions		
Week 10: Oct. 25	Political Parties, Interest Groups and Lobbying	Week 10 Module Friday, Oct. 29: Withdrawal Deadline
Week 11: Nov. 1	The Media and Public Opinion	Week 11 Module
Final Project Weeks		
Week 12: Nov. 8	Final Project	Week 12 Module
Week 13: Nov. 15	Final Project	**Final Collaborative Project Due:**
Week 14: Nov. 22	Thanksgiving	No Class: Thanksgiving Wednesday - Sunday
Part III: Delivering Collective Action: Formal Institutions		
Week 15: Nov. 29	The Congress, the Presidency, and the Courts	Week 15 Module Wednesday, Dec. 3: Last Day of Class

Week 16: Dec. 6	Review Week and Final Exam Week	**Final Exam:** **Monday, December 6, 2021**