UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
U.S. GOVERNMENT
POS 2041(004)
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2021
Dr. Bruce Farcau

I. Textbook (Required)

O'Connor, Karen, Sabato, Larry, and Yanus Alixandra, *American Government: Roots and Reform.* 2018 or latest edition. Note that, while a textbook is highly recommended (either print or ebook versions), the instructor is flexible as to edition or even which textbook you use.

II. Office hours: MWF 0800-0900, via zoom, or by appointment. The instructor can also be reached at bruce.farcau@ucf.edu..

III. Course Description

POS 2041
U.S. GOVERNMENT
Theory, organization, principles and function of national government, stressing relationships of individual to all levels of government in the political system. This course includes a learning activity designed to ensure competence in the basic use of computers. Class will meet MWF via zoom from 1130-1220 from 11 January through 26 April 2021.

1. Students will 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. Students will develop and demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution and its application.

3. Students will develop and demonstrate knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.

4. Students will develop and demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

IV. Test and Grading Policy

A. There will be three (3) exams, none of which will be comprehensive. Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade. All tests will be handled via webcourses and will consist of two 500-word essay questions chosen from a list of questions provided. Responses must be submitted within 72 hours. Students are expected to construct a coherent, complete answer for each question. Answers will be in the student's own words and do not require citation. Tests will be based on the text and explanations of that material provided in lecture.

B. A term paper of a MINIMUM of 8 pages of text (typed, double-spaced, with standard margins and Times New Roman 12-point font, with page numbers) besides any illustrations, bibliography, and footnotes. The paper will be on any subject related to American government and politics, but the topic should be cleared with the instructor no later than September 30th. There should be an analysis of the pros and cons of the issue making use of sources on both sides and a discussion of the results of the legislation or decision. The paper should draw on *at least* five sources, including at least one from the internet (but some books as well), but not including the course text or general encyclopedias. As a rule of thumb, sources that do not include an author's name are not acceptable. The idea is to demonstrate that the student has learned something about the topic beyond what is contained in the class text. Direct quotes should be kept to a minimum. The paper will be worth 25% of your grade. The term paper will be due on or before April 9th (submitted via webcourses.) Papers will still be accepted on or before April 16th for a 10-point penalty. Late papers will still be accepted by April 23rd, but will suffer a 25-point penalty, but **no papers will be accepted after that date**.

C. Extra credit: Students will have the opportunity to earn up to 10 point to be added to any test grade by writing a 4-page, typed report on any of the books on the list provided (3 pages summarizing the book, and one page of the student's opinion of it.) Students are welcome to offer additional titles of politically related books for approval as well. This will be due by April 23rd submitted via webcourses. No papers will be accepted after that date.

D. Each test (modified for extra credit) and the term paper are all worth the same weight toward the final grade. The percentage grade on each test will be averaged to result in the final grade. The grade scale will be:

59 below = F
60-69 = D
70-79 = C
80-89 = B
90 above = A

V. Competencies

Students will learn to analyze information about the American political system and relate it to current events under discussion. They will be able to argue and explain their conclusions about political events. Students will learn to recognize tactics of

persuasion used by politicians and to evaluate their points of view. Students will learn to express their views both in writing and orally and defend their positions when questioned. Students will be able to apply what they have learned in daily life, both when reading about political events and when exercising their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

SCHEDULE
(Subject to Change – Note that specific dates for tests are not given)

WEEK	TOPIC	TEXT CHAPTER
1	Logical Thinking	N/A
2	Theory of Government	1
3	The Constitution	2
4	Federalism	3
5	Civil Liberties	4
6	Civil Rights	5
	FIRST TEST	
7	Congress	6
8	Presidency	7
9	Bureaucracy	8
10	The Judiciary	9
	SECOND TEST	
11	Public Opinion Media	10 13
12	Interest Groups	14
13	SPRING BREAK	
14	Political Parties Election Campaigns	11 12
15	Political Economy	15

THIRD TEST (Finals week, check online for date and time)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Students are expected to attend every class, barring illness or true emergency. It is unlikely that a good grade can be earned without regular attendance in class. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain lecture notes from another student in case of need.

B. Punctuality: Classes will start promptly as scheduled. If arriving late, please enter as discreetly as possible. Do not leave until class is dismissed.

C. Courtesy: Beepers and cell phones should be turned off during class. There should be no eating or drinking during class. Any questions should be directed to the instructor, and the only other talking should be in response to questions from the instructor or at his direction.

D. Cheating: All written work should be your own. Plagiarizing on term papers or otherwise cheating on tests will result in an automatic F grade for the entire course.

FURTHER READING FOR EXTRA CREDIT PROJECT

Anonymous, *Primary Colors* (novel)
Bork, Robert H., *The Tempting of America: The Political Seduction of the Law*
Caro, Robert A., *The Path to Power: The Years of Lyndon Johnson*
Ceaser, James W., *The Perfect Tie: The True Story of the 2000 Presidential Election*
Cogan, John F., *The High Cost of Good Intentions*
Coulter, Ann, *Treason, High Crimes and Misdemeanors*
Crichton, Michael, *State of Fear* (novel)
Evans, M. Stanton, *Blacklisted by History*
Goldberg, Bernard, *Bias*
Granger, Bill, *Lords of the Last Machine: The Story of Politics in Chicago*
Greenstein, Fred I., *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Clinton*
Halberstam, David, *The Best and the Brightest*
Hayek, Frederick, *The Road to Serfdom*
Kissinger, Henry, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?*
Kurtz, Howard, *Spin Cycle: Inside the Clinton Propaganda Machine*
Levin, Mark, *Men in Black*
Moore, Michael, *Stupid White Men*
McCullough, David, *Truman*
Olson, Barbara, *The Final Days*
O'Rourke, P. J. , *Parliament of Whores, Eat the Rich*
Ravitch, Diane, *Left Back*
Riker, William H., *The Art of Political Manipulation*

Saffire, William, *Scandalmonger* (novel)
Sammon, Bill, *At Any Cost: How Al Gore Tried to Steal the Election*
Schlessinger, Arthur, *The Thousand Days*
Shlaes, Amity, *The Forgotten Man*
Smith, Hedrick, *The Power Game*
Sowell, Thomas, *Intellectuals and Society*
Tocqueville, Alexis de, *Democracy in America* (either volume)
Woodward, Robert, *All the President's Men, Plan of Attack, The Choice, The Brethren*

1. **Academic Integrity (faculty members may elect to include only those items that are relevant to the types of assignments in their courses)**

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in

a. Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.

b. Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.

c. Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.

d. Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.

e. Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.

f. Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.

g. Helping another violate academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity <https://academicintegrity.org/>.

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices" <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>.

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule* <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/goldenrule.pdf>. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. 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>.

2. **Course Accessibility Statement (this language was provided by Student Accessibility Services)**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> (Ferrell Commons 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. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

3. **Campus Safety Statement**

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their 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. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at <http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html>.
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/workplacesafety.html> (click on link from menu on left).
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can 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 toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk>).

Campus Safety Statement for Students in Online-Only Courses

Though most emergency situations are primarily relevant to courses that meet in person, such incidents can also impact online students, either when they are on or near campus to participate in other courses or activities or when their course work is affected by off-campus emergencies. The following policies apply to courses in online modalities.

- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can 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 toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail

address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."

- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.

4. **Make-Up Assignments for Authorized University Events or Co-curricular Activities**
   Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied. For more information, see the UCF policy at: <http://policies.ucf.edu/documents/4-401.1MakeupAssignmentsForAuthorizedUniversityEventsOrCocurricularActivities.pdf)

5. **Religious Observances**
   Students must notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance. For more information, see the UCF policy at: <http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter5/documents/5.020ReligiousObservancesFINALOct17.pdf>.

6. **Deployed Active Duty Military Students**
   Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Required Statement Regarding COVID-19

University-Wide Face Covering Policy for Common Spaces and Face-to-Face Classes

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.

Notifications in Case of Changes to Course Modality

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.