Political Science 4603.0W60: Con Law I
University of Central Florida
Spring 2021
Instructor: John Hanley
v. 1.0

Logistics

Class Meetings: online
Office Hours: MWF 1:30-3:30pm; or by appointment. Email via webcourses

Overview

America's system of government arises mainly from a set of institutional negotiations concluded at Philadelphia in the summer and early fall of 1787. Just as it did not slowly take shape over hundreds of years, neither was it the product of ethnic or linguistic nationalism, nor an invention of legal scholars, international organizations, or a foreign conqueror. As a result, Americans seek political guidance and national meaning from an 18th century document whose text has been lightly revised in the succeeding 226 years. To a greater extent than in probably any other country, the American constitution *matters* and its interpretation is the subject of vigorous debate. But the Constitution of 1787 failed, and it is not the Constitution we live under today. How do we balance the meanings and purposes of the Constitution of yore against those of the amendments and current-day society? How can we determine what the Constitution's answer is to a specific question, or even whether the Constitution provides an answer in the first place? Who gets to make these determinations? Who must follow them?

Equipment

David M. O'Brien and Gordon Silverstein, *Constitutional Law and Politics, vol. I: Struggles for Power and Governmental Accountability,* 11th ed. (W.W. Norton, 2020). ISBN: 978-0393696721. *CLaP* has a big sticker price ($74 retail on Amazon), but it is the only text you need to buy. When it arrives, take the text in your hands and welcome it into your life. This is the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Learning Outcomes

Students shall:

(1) Analyze and assess judicial opinions and case outcomes, judicial philosophies and political and socio-economic theories more generally. Critical thinking will be engaged both *deductively*--identifying shortcomings in stated theories as well as *inductively*--organizing perspectives into coherent systems of belief.

To be more analytically rigorous, and become citizens who understand and recognize institutional and philosophical constraints on the Court.

(2) Increase their substantive understanding of American politics and political history, consistent with the centrality of the Constitution to American political culture and institutions.

To facilitate careers in government as well as further study in political science and law.

(3) Practice written communication skills.

To advocate for ourselves and others, and to effectively present information.

Validation

Grades will be based on weekly quizzes, review exercises, discussion posts, and a final exam. These will be weighted as follows:

• Module quizzes	50
• Review Exercises	15
• Group Discussions	15
• Final Exam	20
	100 %

Grades will be awarded as follows:

A $\geq 93\frac{1}{3}$ %	C+ $\geq 76\frac{2}{3}$
A- $\geq$ 90	C $\geq 73\frac{1}{3}$
B+ $\geq 86\frac{2}{3}$	C- $\geq$ 70
B $\geq 83\frac{1}{3}$	D $\geq$ 60
B- $\geq$ 80	F $<$ 60

Quizzes (50%)

Each module will include a quiz. The quiz will require you to understand and be familiar with the cases in the module as well as how they fit together and illustrate political debates and solutions.

Review Exercises (15%) Each numbered module contains two graded review exercises, such as crossword puzzles, matching games, etc. Your lowest two module review exercise scores will be dropped.

Group Discussions (15%) - Each numbered module includes a small group discussion of a constitutional problem or issue. Each student will be assigned to a small group of 6-7 students. Your lowest small group discussion score will be dropped.

Final Exam (20%)

The final examination will be composed of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. It will be cumulative.

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.

Course Policies

If you wish to have an assignment re-assessed due to a possible ***grading error***, it is your obligation to compose a short memo identifying the alleged mistake(s).

Incomplete grades, changes in exam dates, and extensions of written assignments will be approved only by the instructor, and only upon evidence of extenuating circumstances.

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.

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

Week/ Module	Completion Date	Topic
1	1/18	Introduction & Judicial Review
2	1/22	How the federal judiciary works
3	2/5	Methods of constitutional interpretation
4	2/12	Congress & Commerce I
5	2/19	Commerce II
6	2/26	Regulating States and Taxation
7	3/5	The President in Foreign Policy
8	3/12	Emergency Powers
9	3/19	Appointment, Privilege, and Immunity
10	3/26	Appointment and Removal
11	4/2	Representation & Voting Rights
12	4/9	Campaigns & Elections
Spring Break – No Class		
13	4/23	States – commerce and contracts
Final Due 4/30 at 6pm		