Syllabus
POS 3424: Congress and the Legislative Process
Spring 2021

Instructor Contact

Instructor	Nathan Ilderton
Office	305A Howard Philips Hall
Office Hours	1:00pm-4:00pm Monday; 10:00am-1:00pm Wednesday All office hours this semester will be virtual. During office hours I will be available in the course chat room. Zoom meetings are available upon request.
Phone	407-823-2608
E-mail	Please contact me via the email function within webcourses for all class related emails. Click my profile under people and select send message. If webcourses is down you can reach me via my University email: Nathan.Ilderton@ucf.edu.

Course Information

Course Name	Congress and the Legislative Process
Course ID & Section	POS 3424 Section W60
Credit Hours	3
Semester/Year	Spring 2021
Location	Online

Course Description

This course is an examination of the politics of the United States Congress. During the semester we will examine the election of members of Congress, the legislative process, and the place of Congress in the broader context of the American government and democracy. This will mean exploring the rules, norms, individuals, and historical events that have shaped the Congress. We will also discuss the development of the modern Congress and where it is heading in future.

Prerequisite: POS 2041 or consent of the instructor.

Course Objectives

This course will equip you not only to describe how Congress operates, but analyze why it operates in the manner it does. Students will become familiar with the theories posited by political scientists to explain congressional process and evaluate the rigor of these theories. At the end of the course, students will be better able to understand and analyze political outcomes within Congress and in the American political system in general.

Required Text

- Roger H. Davidson, Walter J. Oleszek, Francis E. Lee, and Eric Schickler. *Congress and Its Members*, 17th edition (Sage/CQ Press)

Course Requirements

The course is divided into three, four-week segments. During these periods, five modules will be available. You will be required in each period to complete four quizzes, participate in one discussion, and complete one writing assignment. These assignments will be due the fourth week of each period. During the week following each section an exam will open for you to complete. Modules will open on the Monday of the first week. Assignments must be completed by 11:59pm the Sunday after the week they are due. The third segment will include Spring Break and will be open for five weeks.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

I will not allow missed assignments to be made up without a documented university excused absence. If you know ahead of time that you will be unable to complete a module on time please inform me prior to the closing time. If you cannot inform me ahead of time, please inform me within one business day of the closing of the module either via phone or email. Date and time of makeup modules will be determined by the instructor on a case by case basis. I reserve the right to change the format and questions of makeup modules at my discretion.

Evaluation and Grading

Each module will consist of reading and lecture materials you will be required to read or watch. Four of five modules in each segment of the class has a quiz associated with it. Quizzes consist of true/false and multiple choice questions. True/false and multiple choice questions will be worth one point each. Your quiz grade will be computed by dividing the total points earned during the semester by the total points available. Quizzes are listed under the quizzes tab on the course menu. Quizzes are due the Sunday of the fourth week of each segment.

Each four week segment of the class will include one discussion question in which you will be asked to interact with your classmates. Each discussion contribution will be graded on a 10 point scale based on the accuracy of the answer to the question posed and the quality of the interaction with fellow students. These are listed under the discussions tab of the course menu. Discussions are due the Sunday of the fourth week of each segment.

Each four week segment of the class will include a 500 word writing assignment. These will be assignments that require you to find or examine materials related to Congress on the web and respond to them. These assignments will be graded on a 100 point scale. These will be listed under the

assignments tab on the course menu. These assignments substitute for quizzes in Modules 4, 8, and 11, and will be due after the fourth week of each segment.

During the week following each segment of the class, an exam will be available which you are required to complete. Exams consist of five short answer questions from the material covered in the segment. The second and third exams are **not** cumulative. Exam questions should be answered in one or two paragraphs each. Answers should be original (i.e. **not** cut and pasted from course modules or the text). Exams will open at midnight on the Monday of the week after each segment and close on the following Sunday at 11:59 pm (see course schedule). Exams will be listed under the quizzes tab.

Once you begin a quiz, discussion, or writing assignment there is no time limit for it to be completed. **There is a 60 minute time limit for the completion of exams. Also, be aware that you only get one attempt to complete a quiz or exam, i.e. once you start a quiz or exam you must complete it.**

Assignments will be weighted in the following manner for calculating the final grade.

Assignment	**Percentage of Grade**
Quizzes	20
Writing Assignments	10
Discussions	10
Exam 1	20
Exam 2	20
Exam 3	20
Total	100

Final grades will be awarded according to the following scale.

Letter Grade	**Points**
A	93.5 - 100
A-	89.5 - 93.4
B+	86.5 - 89.4
B	83.5 - 86.4
B-	79.5 - 83.4
C+	76.5 - 79.4

C	73.5 - 76.4
C-	69.5 - 73.4
D+	66.5 - 69.4
D	63.5 - 66.4
D-	59.5 - 63.4
F	59.4 or below

Final grades are just that, final. I will not reconsider them except in a case where I made a computational error in calculating them (I have taught for many years and have yet to miscalculate a final grade). **Please do not email or call me asking for a grade change for another reason (including requesting extra credit), it will not happen.**

Student Engagement and Financial Aid

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 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.

The syllabus quiz is a five question multiple choice quiz and can be found under the "Quizzes" tab. The only purpose of the syllabus quiz is to satisfy the financial aid requirement for this class. It will not be included in the calculation of your final grade.

Academic Honesty

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/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

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 (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.> 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/zgradeLinks to an external site..

For more information about UCF's Rules of Conduct, see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/Links to an external site..

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

Faculty have reported errors in class notes being sold by third parties, and the errors may be contributing to higher failure rates in some classes. The following is a statement appropriate for distribution to your classes or for inclusion on your syllabus:

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 ServicesLinks to an external site. (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.

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.

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.htmlLinks to an external site..
- 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-UCFLinks to an external site. (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.eduLinks to an external site. 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 about how to manage an active shooter situation on campus or elsewhere. You CAN Survive an Active Shooter (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

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.

COVID-19 Statement

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.pdfLinks to an external site.. 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 RuleLinks to an external site. 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 (Links to an external site.))

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.

Schedule

Modules assignments and exams open at midnight on the open date and close at 11:59pm on the close date.

Weeks	Topic	Readings	Assignments	Open Date	Due Date
Part I* Weeks 1-4	Module 1: Introduction, Origins and Development of Congress	Congress and Its Members Ch. 1-2	Module 1 Quiz	January 11th	February 7th
	Module 2: The Electoral Connection		Module 2 Quiz Electoral Connection Discussion	January 11th	February 7th
	Module 3: Congressional Elections: Context and Candidates	C&M Ch. 3	Module 3 Quiz	January 11th	February 7th
	Module 4: Congressional Elections: Campaigns	C&M Ch. 4, pgs. 69-85	Campaign Ads Writing Assignment	January 11th	February 7th
	Module 5: Congressional Elections: Voters and National Politics	C&M Ch. 4, pgs. 85-104	Module 5 Quiz	January 11th	February 7th
Week 5	**Exam 1**			February 8th	February 14th
Part II Weeks 6-9	Module 6: Representation and an Introduction to Lawmaking	C&M Ch. 5	Module 6 Quiz	February 15th	March 14th
	Module 7: Parties	C&M Ch. 6	Module 7 Quiz	February 15th	March 14th
	Module 8: Committees	C&M Ch.7	Committees Writing Assignment	February 15th	March 14th
	Module 9: Rules, Norms, and Procedures	C&M Ch.8	Module 9 Quiz House and Senate Procedures Discussion	February 15th	March 14th

	Module 10: Roll Call Voting	C&M Ch.9	Module 10 Quiz	February 15th	March 14th
Week 10	**Exam 2**			March 15th	March 21st
Part III Weeks 11-15	Module 11: Congress and the President	C&M Ch. 10	Presidential Rhetoric Writing Assignment	March 22nd	April 25th
	Module 12: Congress and the Bureaucracy	C&M Ch. 11	Module 12 Quiz	March 22nd	April 25th
	Module 13: Congress and the Judiciary	C&M Ch. 12	Module 13 Quiz	March 22nd	April 25th
	Module 14: Congress and Organized Interests	C&M Ch. 13	Module 14 Quiz Congress and Organized Interests Discussion	March 22nd	April 25th
	Module 15: Congress and the Policy Process	C&M Ch. 14, 15	Module 15 Quiz	March 22nd	April 25th
Week 16	**Exam 3**			April 26th	May 2nd

Note: All dates and times are subject to change by Dr. Ilderton. Be informed and routinely check the Schedule and Class Email or Announcements for any changes or updates.

*Syllabus quiz for financial aid purposes due by end of 1st week of class or as soon as possible after adding the class.