# POS2041 American National Government

**Section 602**

**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.
    - **Dr. Conroy's Office Hours:**
        - **Mondays: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM**
            - **(Meeting ID: 948 6604 3853 / Passcode: 657386) Zoom only**
        - **Wednesdays: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM**
            - **(Meeting ID: 948 6604 3853 / Passcode: 657386) Zoom only**

- **Thursdays: 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
    - **(Meeting ID: 929 6921 9585 / Passcode: 717291).**
    - **I will also be in my office (HPH 302) during that time**

- **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: POS2041-601
- Course Name: American National Government
- Credit Hours: 3
- Class Meeting Days: Tuesdays/Thursdays
- Class Meeting Time: 10:00 AM - 11:50 AM
- Class Location: All classes will be held in ENG2 Room 105. https://goo.gl/maps/Ke1NYW4L4AKDy14A9
- Course Modality: P (Face-to-Face)

### 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.

## Modality

This class will be held in person (P Modality) in ENG2 Room 105. https://goo.gl/maps/Ke1NYW4L4AKDy14A9 . Please make sure you are on time. Give yourself extra time the first day to familiarize yourself with the classroom location.

## 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

## 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 lectures, 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 and/or exhibit rude or disrespectful behavior in

class. 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, have webcam turned off, or show disrespectful or disruptive behavior in 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 the protocol points, other disciplinary actions will ensue.

**Modules**

There are 10 graded modules. Modules list and describe the topic(s) and the assignments for each week. Modules will open on Monday of each week at 9:00 AM. The classwork assignments will generally be based on questions derived from the week's topic. This classwork will also serve as preparation for the quizzes and final exam. In order to do well in these class assignments, it is important that you complete all the work assigned in each week's module. This requires you to be very disciplined and organized.

Since each module will have a set of activities you need to complete, a good strategy is to log into the course as soon as it opens to see what is required for that week. This will enable you to plan and prepare for the class activities and assignments. 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.

Please keep in mind that if you miss two weeks of assignments *for any reason* without a valid excuse and/or discussing this with your professor, you will fail the class. Thus, please make sure that you keep up with the readings and assignments.

**Final Examination**

There will be one final examination in this course. 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 this exam.

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.

**Attendance/Participation**

You must attend all the weekly sessions. If you have to miss one for any reason, you must reschedule one as soon as possible (within 24 hours) or you will miss the points for that session. Please keep in mind that if you miss more than 3 classes *for any reason*, you will fail the class. TPlease make sure that you keep up with the readings and assignments so can participate actively in each class.

**Statement Regarding COVID-19**

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 email 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 (10 graded modules) | 70 |
| Final Collaborative Project (divided into distinct parts) | 12.5 |
| Final Exam | 15 |

| 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 |

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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: May 17 | Introduction: American Government and Civic Engagement | Module 1 |
| Week 2: May 24 | The Constitution and its Origins | Module 2 |
| Week 3: May 31 | American Federalism | Module 3<br><br>No Class: Monday, May 31 (Memorial Day) |
| **Part II: Individual Agency and Action** | | |
| Week 4: June 7 | Civil Liberties | Module 4 |

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|---|---|---|
| | | Roadmap Due: Monday, June 7 |
| Week 5: June 14 | Civil Rights | Module 5 |
| Week 6: June 21 | Voting and Elections | Module 6 |
| **Part III: Toward Collective Action: Mediating Institutions** | | |
| Week 7: June 28 | Political Parties, Interest Groups and Lobbying | Module 7<br><br>Project Progress Report: Monday, June 28 |
| Week 8: July 5 | The Media and Public Opinion | Module 8<br><br>No Class: Monday, July 5 (Independence Day-Observed)<br><br>Withdrawal Deadline: Wednesday, July 7 |
| **Part III: Delivering Collective Action: Formal Institutions** | | |
| Week 9: July 12 | The Congress | Module 9 |
| Week 10: July 19 | The Presidency | Module 10 |
| Week 11: July 26 | The Courts | Module 11<br><br>Final Collaborative Project Due: Monday, July 26 |
| Week 12: August 2 | Review | Module 12<br><br>Project Reflection Paper Due: Monday, August 2 |

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| | | Final Exam: Thursday, August 5 |

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The following are important UCF guidelines and resources that you should be aware of.

## University Services and Resources

### Academic Services and Resources

A list of available academic support and learning services is available at UCF Student Services. Click on "Academic Support and Learning Services" on the right-hand side to filter.

### Non-Academic Services and Resources

A list of non-academic support and services is also available at UCF Student Services. Click on "Support" on the right-hand side to filter.

If you are a UCF Online student, please consult the UCF Online Student Guidelines for more information about your access to non-academic services.

### Policy Statements

### Course Policies

**Webcourses:**

Webcourses is an online course management system (accessed through my.ucf.edu and then the "Online Course Tools" tab) which will be used as a medium for turning in assignments and a forum for communicating with your professor. The Webcourses site will have up-to-date information on topics, class assignments, schedule and so on. In addition, each class module will include useful tools for exam preparation and to add to the material presented in class. My recommendation is to check Webcourses regularly for updates.

**Email:**

In this class our official mode of communication is through email located inside Webcourses. All communication between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional. When sending an email be sure to observe the protocols set out in the syllabus. If you are unsure of how to write an email with the proper salutation and closing,

you might want to consult the following site: Email Etiquette (by Ali Hale in *Daily Writing Tips*). It is the student's responsibility to check Webcourses frequently. You may also wish to create a Knight's Email account at www.knightsemail.ucf.edu for separate official communication from the university. If for any reason you cannot log into Webcourses, you may use my office email address which is: Annabelle.conroy@ucf.edu. You may also call or come to my office (information provided above) but keep in mind that the office staff do not take messages over the phone.

**Electronic devices:**

Laptops, tablets and cell phones **may not** be used during class unless indicated by the instructor. Please make sure that they are all either turned off or set to "silent" during class. A violation of this request will result in a loss of protocol points.

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Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- *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.
- *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.
- *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.
- *Falsifying or misrepresenting* the student's own academic work.
- *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.
- *Multiple Submissions*: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
- *Helping another violate* academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity.

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices".

**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.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.

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.

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.html.
- 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/workplacesafety.html (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.edu 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

## 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.

## 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.