Syllabus
POS 3424: Congress and the Legislative Process
Spring 2024

Instructor Contact

Instructor	Nathan Ilderton
Office	305A Howard Philips Hall
Office Hours	9:30am- 11:00am Tuesday, 2:00pm-5:00pm Thursday 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 2024
Location	Online

Catalog Information

Examination of the Congress as an institution undergoing dynamic change; emphasis upon recruitment of legislators, institutional and informal rules, the committee system, legislative procedures.

Prerequisite: POS 2041 or consent of the instructor.

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.

Learning Outcomes

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, 18th or 19th edition (Sage/CQ Press)
- Links to additional readings are included in the modules.

JSTOR

Several articles will be accessible through JSTOR, an archive of academic journal articles. JSTOR can be accessed through the library website by logging into the library website at **http://library.ucf.edu/**, and clicking on the log in link at the top right. You will be able to access the library database using your PID.

Once you have logged in click on "Databases", the "J" tab and select JSTOR from the menu.

Once at the JSTOR website "political science" under browse by discipline and use the reference given to you in the module to find the article.

Any questions regarding logging into the library's site should be directed to the library.

Course Requirements

The course is divided into three, five-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 4th week of each period. During the 5th week of each section an exam will open for you to complete. Modules will open on the Monday of the first week of each segment. Assignments and quizzes will open on the first Monday and are due by 11:59pm on the fourth Sunday of each segment. Exams will open on Monday of the fifth week of each segment and will be due the following Sunday. **Please note that no modules will be open during Spring Break (March 18th-24th).**

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.

If you miss an assignment without a documented university accepted excuse, I will accept assignments with penalty. These penalties begin at 10% per business day that the assignment is late. I encourage you to contact me as quickly as possible if you miss an assignment to make arrangements for late submission.

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 five 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 five 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 fifth week of 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 they are to be completed 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.**

LockDown Browser

LockDown Browser Requirement
This course requires the use of LockDown Browser for the three exams. Note: This course requires only the lockdown browser feature, not the Respondus Webcam Monitor. Watch this video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser:

https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtmlLinks to an external site.

Download Instructions
Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=472413933Links to an external site.

Once Installed

- Start LockDown Browser
- Log into to Canvas
- Navigate to the exam

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

Guidelines
When taking an online exam follow these guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it (60 minutes), and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted

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

- 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
- Contact the UCF IT Service Desk or UCF Online Learning
- Respondus has a Knowledge Base available from support.respondus.com. Select "LockDown Browser & Respondus Monitor" as the product to view helpful articles.
- 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

Student Engagement and Financial Aid

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/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

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 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.

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.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/AEDlocations-UCF (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 (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.

Title IX Policy

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

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*	Module 1: Introduction, Origins and Development of Congress	Congress and Its Members Ch. 1-2 U.S. Constitution: Article 1 and 1st Ten Amendments *Federalist 51*	Module 1 Quiz	January 8th	February 4th
	Module 2: The Electoral Connection	David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection,* Selections	Module 2 Quiz Electoral Connection Discussion	January 8th	February 4th
	Module 3: Congressional Elections: Context and Candidates	C&M Ch. 3 Gary Jacobson, "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections."	Module 3 Quiz	January 8th	February 4th
	Module 4: Congressional Elections: Campaigns	C&M Ch. 4, pgs. 69-85	Campaign Ads Writing Assignment	January 8th	February 4th

	Module 5: Congressional Elections: Voters and National Politics	C&M Ch. 4, pgs. 85-104 Jamie Carson and Aaron Hitefield, "A Red Wave or a Ripple? Nationalized Politics and the 2022 Elections."	Module 5 Quiz	January 8th	February 4th
	Exam 1			February 5th	February 11th
Part II	Module 6: Representation and an Introduction to Lawmaking	C&M Ch. 5 Richard Fenno, "House Members in Their Constituencies."	Module 6 Quiz	February 12th	March 10th
	Module 7: Parties	C&M Ch. 6 Steven Smith, "Party Influence in Congress."	Module 7 Quiz	February 12th	March 10th
	Module 8: Committees	C&M Ch.7 Charles Stewart III, "Congressional Committees in a Partisan Era."	Committees Writing Assignment	February 12th	March 10th
	Module 9: Rules, Norms, and Procedures	C&M Ch.8	Module 9 Quiz House and Senate Procedures Discussion	February 12th	March 10th
	Module 10: Roll Call Voting	C&M Ch.9 John W. Kingdon, "Models of Legislative Voting"	Module 10 Quiz	February 12th	March 10th
	Exam 2			March 11th	March 17th

Part III	Module 11: Congress and the President	C&M Ch. 10 Edwards, George C., III, Andrew Barrett, and Jeffrey Peake. “The Legislative Impact of Divided Government.”	Presidential Rhetoric Writing Assignment	March 25th	April 21st
	Module 12: Congress and the Bureaucracy	C&M Ch. 11	Module 12 Quiz	March 25th	April 21st
	Module 13: Congress and the Judiciary	C&M Ch. 12 Glen Krutz, Richard Fleisher, and Jon Bond, “From Abe Fortas to Zoe Baird: Why Some Presidential Nominations Fail in the Senate.”	Module 13 Quiz	March 25th	April 21st
	Module 14: Congress and Organized Interests	C&M Ch. 13	Module 14 Quiz Congress and Organized Interests Discussion	March 25th	April 21st
	Module 15: Congress and the Policy Process	C&M Ch. 14, 15	Module 15 Quiz	March 25th	April 21st
	Exam 3			April 22nd	April 28th

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.