# POS 2041 - American National Government

**Section:** 0005

*College of Sciences*

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

## Course Information

**Term:** Fall 2024
**Class Meeting Days:** TR
**Class Meeting Time:** 10:30 - 11:50
**Class Meeting Location:** MSB 0360
**Modality:** P
**Credit Hours:** 3.00

## Instructor Information

John Hanley
**Office Location:** 302-Eye Howard Phillips Hall
**Office Hours:**
Monday, 9am-noon, online; Tuesday noon-3pm
**Email:** John.Hanley@ucf.edu

To Be Announced
**Office Location:** TBD
**Office Hours:**
TBD
**Email:** TBD

## Teaching Assistants

David Hardcastle

## Course Description

POS 2041 COS-POLS 3(3,0)American National Government: In this course, students will investigate how the national government is structured and how the American constitutional republic operates. It covers the philosophical and historical foundations of American government, including but not limited to the declaration of independence, the United States constitution and all its amendments, and the federalist papers. The course examines the branches of government and the governments laws, policies, and programs. It also examines the ways in which citizens participate in their government and ways their government responds to citizens.Student Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of Americas constitutional republic. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the nations founding documents, including the declaration of independence, the U.S. constitution and its amendments, and the federalist papers. Students will demonstrate knowledge of landmark U.S. supreme court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the history and development of the American federal government and its impact on law and society. Students will demonstrate an ability to apply course material to contemporary political issues and debates. Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in discussion and civil debate on American politics that are associated with multiple points of view. Fall, Sum, Spr.

s is a survey course is designed to provide students with a foundation for understanding and cally assessing American political processes, institutions, and public policies. The course proceeds ree major sections: first, we will situate the institutions of American government in the context of r creation and understand the objectives of the Founders and the tradeoffs inherent in institutional gn. Second, we will observe and evaluate the performance of governmental institutions. Third, we examine the relationships between government and individuals, groups, and corporate entities.

oughout the course, we will learn to assess and decipher information in a world full of conflicting rces and to employ social sciences models to produce knowledge. (**Interpretation and luation Objective**) We will then consider how to synthesize what we have learned, as it might be veyed to political practitioners (in the form of strategy or analysis) as well as to the general public he form of advocacy or civic education). Our study of the backgrounds and beliefs of citizens and

tical elites will assist us in tailoring our writing to the requirements and preferences of audiences. **mmunication Objective**)

## General Education Program (GEP)

This course is a GEP core course (black diamond) for the Social Foundation and fulfills the requirement for GEP 10.

## Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of America's constitutional republic.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the nation's founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and its amendments, and the Federalist Papers.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation and landmark executive actions.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the history and development of the American federal government and its impact on law and society.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to apply course material to contemporary political issues and debates.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in discussion and civil debate on American politics that are associated with multiple points of view.

## Course Materials and Resources

**American Government**
**Authors:** Kurtz, Glen, and Sylvie Waskiewicz
**Publisher:** OpenStax
**Publication Date:** July 19, 2021
**Online Access:** https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e

**To Be Determined**

## Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

maximum points available for assignments will be as follows:

o and Closing Quizzes 1

owdig Assignments 100

Midterm 99

Final 133

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A > 310 | B+ > 289 | C+ > 255 |
| A- > 300 | B > 277 | C > 244 |
| | B- > 266 | C- > 233 |

*Total: 333 points*

I reserve the right to award students up to 10 bonus points at the end of the semester for participation during class.

The midterms and final will consist of multiple-choice and true/false questions.

## Grading Scale

The plus/minus system will be used in calculating final grades. Zeros for unsubmitted assignments may not be entered on webcourses. The number of points earned, not the webcourses “average,” determines grades.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | B+ > 289 | C+ > 255 |
| A > 310 | | |
| A- > 300 | B > 277 | C > 244 |
| | B- > 266 | C- > 233 |
| | | D > 199 |
| | | F < 200 |

## Policies for Course Grade

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.

In accordance with state requirement, there will be regular opportunities to engage in "political discussions and civil debates." I will signal these opportunities in class.

## Course Accessibility

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need access to course content due to course design limitations should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone 407-823-2371). For students connected with SAS, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and 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. Further conversation with SAS, faculty and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.

## Academic Integrity

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

a. Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of the course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assignment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.

b. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.

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

d. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

**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 respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designation on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Let's avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: take the zero, not a shortcut.

## Title IX

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 Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE – Office of Institutional Equity & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu
- Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.

## 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.

## Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced abusive or discriminatory behavior by any faculty of staff member, contact the Office of Institutional Equity online or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line and can report anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or using the online form. UCF cares about you and takes

every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

## Campus Safety

At UCF Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In an emergency, always dial 911.
- Every UCF classroom has an **Emergency Procedure Guide** posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.
- In the event of an active threat, remember **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND**. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.
    - **AVOID**. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.
    - **DENY.** When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your cell phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.
    - **DEFEND.** When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.
- For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.

## Financial Aid Accountability

All instructors/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 this activity 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.

## Class Schedule

**Schedule of Material**

*Part I. Introduction and the Constitution. In recent years, the meaning of the Constitution has taken on increased relevance in political debates. We will study the problems which the Constitution was created to address, the struggles to reach agreement and achieve ratification, obvious and lurking issues in the document, and its legacy today.*

Tuesday, August 20. Introduction – Logistics, what is politics and what we hope to gain by studying it.

Readings:

Textbook, Chapter 1

Robert Dahl, "What is Politics"

8/22-27 Early America and the Constitution – How did our system of government come into being? We will look at the principal debates from the Constitutional convention and the explanations made in *The Federalist*; and we will look at what the Framers missed.

Textbook, Chapter 2

James Madison, Federalist 10 & 51– *the language in these will take some time to digest*.

Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. May 4, 2021. "Agriculture and the Monticello Plantation."

Watch the first 21 minutes. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrlWNBF-c5s

8/29-9/3 Federalism – does "limited government" mean one with narrow powers, strictly enumerated; or with specific limits on broad powers? How has the operation of federalism changed over time?

Textbook, Chapter 3

Adam Liptak. "At Center of Health Care Fight, a 1942 Case of a Farmer's Wheat." *New York Times*, March 19, 2012.

*Part II. The Elected Branches and the Electoral System. We examine the Framers' work in Articles I-III, the development of these institutions over time, how they appeal to the public, and how they are influenced by it.*

9/5-12 Congress (Article I) – Introduction to the legislative branch, and how it has changed over time. The mechanics of legislating, starting with how a bill becomes a law. Who ends up in Congress, and what motivates them.

Textbook, Chapter 11

Jay Newton-Small, "The Last Politicians" *Time*, October 28, 2013.

9/17-19 President and "the Presidential Branch" (Article II) – emergence of the President as a national leader despite limited institutional power; advisors and Cabinet as policymakers

Textbook, Chapter 12

9/24-9/26 Bureaucracy – growth of the executive branch over time; expertise, institutional loyalty and problems for democratic accountability; Congress's attempts to re-gain influence.

Textbook, Chapter 15

Michael Moss. "While Warning About Fat, U.S. Pushes Cheese Sales." *New York Times.* November 7, 2010.

10/1-3 Judiciary (Article III) – the "least dangerous branch," or is it? Introduction to the federal court system and the Supreme Court; the genius of *Marbury v. Madison*; the Court's struggles with legitimacy in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.

Textbook, Chapter 13

Jess Bravin. "Supreme Court Ruling Ducks Conflict Between Religious, Gay Rights." *Wall Street Journal.* June 4, 2018.

10/8-10 Civil Liberties – People love freedom for themselves; for other people, not as much. The Constitution, courts, and public attempt to balance society and the individual.

Textbook, Chapter 4

Linda Greenhouse. "Free-Speech Case Divides Bush and Religious Right." *New York Times*, March 18, 2007.

**October 15 – Midterm Exam**

*Part III. The Supporting Cast. Having set up the operations and interactions at the core of American democracy, we move to consider five institutions which greatly affect outcomes and*

*which themselves frequently become the subject of debate and political struggle.*

10/17-24 Public Opinion – In a republic, public opinion plays a critical role in what governmental institutions do. We will look at how public opinion is measured, and what it is like.

Textbook, Chapter 6

Neil MacFarquhar. "Sweet Cherries, Bitter Politics: Two Farm Stands and the Nation's Divides." *New York Times.* June 6, 2021.

10/29-11/5 Campaigns and Elections – At first glance, political campaigns appear to respond very effectively to popular demands. However, specific choices of electoral institutions—in the US, plurality voting, primary elections, and private financing of campaigns—shape the political landscape.

Textbook, Chapter 11

11/7-12 Political Parties – Parties are important for linking elected officials and the public, organizing activity in the legislature, and structuring competition among aspiring politicians. The Founders tried—and failed—to prevent them. Here, we'll look at the emergence of American political parties and their importance to Presidential nominations.

Textbook, Chapter 9

Rick Beyer. "Where there's smoke, there's…political intrigue?" *Politico*, March 3, 2008.

11/14-19 Interest Groups (Associations, lobbies, unions, and PACs) – the "seamier" side of political organizations, the "special interests." We will talk about how the U.S. political system facilitates interest group activity, theories about why groups form, and the history of campaign financing.

Textbook, Chapter 10

Clarke, John. "Key Lime Pie Fans Whipped Up Over Dessert Snub." *Wall Street Journal*. July 31, 2022.

11/21-26 The Media – Political actors frequently complain about "media bias," but what basis is there to believe that journalists affect what people think? What drives changes in how we receive news?

Textbook, Chapter 8

Pew. “Newspapers Fact Sheet.” June 1, 2017. http://www.journalism.org/fact-sheet/newspapers/

NO CLASS 11/28 - THANKSGIVING

FINAL EXAM, Tuesday, December 3 10am-12:50pm