POS 2041 - AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Section: 0005

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2025
Class Meeting Days: TR
Class Meeting Time: 01:30PM - 02:50PM
Class Meeting Location: MSB 0360
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Alvin Quackenbush
Title: Professor of Political Science
Office Location: HPH 302
Office Hours:
On Campus: Tuesday: 4:30 - 6:00 pm.

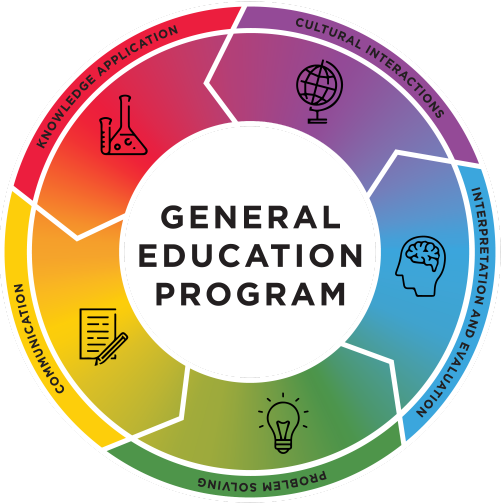
Online, not in office: Wednesday from 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Students should contact me via the WebCourses message system and I can make myself available via the Chat function.
Phone: 407 823-2608
Email: Alvin.Quackenbush@ucf.edu

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.

General Education Program (GEP)



UCF's General Education Program (GEP) provides a cohesive learning experience across five key areas. Each course is designed to help students build essential skills and knowledge that connect across disciplines, preparing them for success in their academic, civic, and professional lives. This foundation equips students to make informed decisions and navigate a rapidly changing world.

Specifically, the GEP is intentionally designed to:

- Introduce students to a broad range of foundational knowledge.
- Provide students the opportunity to explore potential academic majors, minors, and careers.
- Equip students with the analytic and expressive skills required to engage in chosen pursuits.
- Develop critical thinking skills.
- Encourage lifelong learning.

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

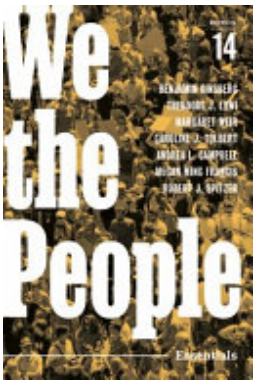
Student Learning Outcomes

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



We the People
ISBN: 9781324034797
Authors: Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J. Tolbert, Andrea Louise Campbell, Megan Ming Francis, Robert J. Spitzer
Publication Date: 2023-01-01
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Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Evaluation: Your grade will be determined by grades on a Syllabus Quiz, 15 Quizzes, 6 Discussion Posts, and 4 Exams (your lowest exam score is dropped).

Syllabus Quiz: 10 points.

Quizzes: 20 points each (300 Total)

Discussion Posts: 20 points each (120 Total)

Exams: 200 points each (600 Total)

(1030 Total Points)

Quizzes: There will be 15 Chapter quizzes throughout the semester that you will take online using the WebCourses online course program. Although these quizzes are taken outside of class you are expected to do your own work. The quizzes are available for 1 week, so you are encouraged to take the quiz before the due date. See the assignment schedule for all quiz due dates.

Discussion Posts: During the semester there will be 6 discussion posts related to current events in US Government. In your post you should answer the questions and reply to at least two other students. Please see the discussion rubric for additional information. Due dates will be indicated in the posts and in the assignment schedule.

Examinations: There will be 4 exams in this course during the semester and your lowest score will be dropped. Any student missing an exam is expected to drop that exam as their low score.

The tests will consist of fill in the blank, multiple choice and true/false questions. The exam dates are listed in the course schedule. Any student not completing the examination will receive 0 of those possible points, and this will impact the final average in the course.

Any student who misses TWO of the four in class exams will only be granted a make up, with documentation of illness or emergency. Please note that all make up exams will be short answer and essay format only.

Extra Credit: There will **NOT** be any specific assignments for extra credit; however, attendance will be taken from time to time and points will be added for extra credit. Thus, missing regular class will not hurt your grade but you may miss out on valuable extra credit opportunities.

Late Work Policy: You can access the quizzes and discussions on the dates indicated in the assignment schedule. The quizzes and discussions are available for 1 week, so you are encouraged to take the quiz before the due date. However, you can cam submit quizzes late with a 15% penalty per day. See the course schedule for all quiz due dates.

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Attendance Extra Credit	Assignment	0
1/10	Syllabus Quiz	Quiz	10

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
1/12	InQuizitive: Chapter 01. Americans and Their Political Values	Assignment	20
1/12	InQuizitive: How to Use InQuizitive	Assignment	0
1/19	Discussion 1	Discussion	20
1/19	InQuizitive: Chapter 02. The Founding and the Constitution	Assignment	20
1/26	InQuizitive: Chapter 03. Federalism	Assignment	20
1/28	Exam 1	Assignment	200
2/2	Discussion 2	Discussion	20
2/9	Discussion 3	Discussion	20
2/9	InQuizitive: Chapter 04. Civil Liberties	Assignment	20
2/9	InQuizitive: Chapter 05. Civil Rights	Assignment	20
2/23	Discussion 4	Discussion	20
2/23	InQuizitive: Chapter 06. Public Opinion	Assignment	20
2/23	InQuizitive: Chapter 07. The Media and Political Information	Assignment	20
3/4	Exam 2	Assignment	200

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
3/9	InQuizitive: Chapter 08. Parties and Interest Groups	Assignment	20
3/16	InQuizitive: Chapter 09. Participation, Campaigns, and Elections	Assignment	20
3/16	InQuizitive: Chapter 10. Congress	Assignment	20
3/23	InQuizitive: Chapter 11. The Presidency	Assignment	20
3/25	Exam 3	Assignment	200
3/30	Discussion 5	Discussion	20
3/30	InQuizitive: Chapter 12. The Bureaucracy	Assignment	20
4/6	InQuizitive: Chapter 13. The Federal Courts	Assignment	20
4/13	Discussion 6	Discussion	20
4/13	InQuizitive: Chapter 14. Domestic Policy	Assignment	20
4/20	InQuizitive: Chapter 15. Foreign Policy	Assignment	20
4/24	Exam 4	Assignment	200

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points

Letter Grade	Points
A	>927
B	>824
C	>721
D	>618
F	<617

Policies for Course Grade

Grading Scale:

90 - 100 = A

80 – 89 = B

70 – 79 = C

60 – 69 = D

59 and below = F

No Rounding of Grades.

If students miss an exam, they are expected to drop that exam as a low test score. If they happen to miss two exams, then documentation will be required to receive a written/Essay make up.

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 Code 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 and Academic Integrity, 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.

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.

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced abusive or discriminatory behavior by any faculty or 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.

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

Week	Topic
1	Chapter 1: Americans and their Political Values
2	Chapter 2: The Founding and the Constitution
3	Chapter 3: Federalism

4	Chapter 4: Civil Liberties
5	Chapter 5: Civil Rights
6	Chapter 6: Public Opinion
7	Chapter 7: The Media and Political Information
8	Chapter 8: Political Parties and Interest Groups
9	Chapter 9: Participation, Campaigns, and Elections
10	Chapter 10: Congress
11	Chapter 11: The Presidency
12	Chapter 12: The Bureaucracy
13	**C**hapter 13: The Federal Courts
14	Chapter 14: Domestic Policy
15	Chapter 15: Foreign Policy
16	Review and Final Exam

Classroom Policies

Topics and Discussion**:** Please keep in mind that in this course we will be analyzing and debating topics that are current, relevant, political, and sometimes controversial. Some students may find that certain topics hard to discuss and there may be a level of discomfort. Please keep in mind that the intent is to promote critical thinking, present alternative ideas, challenge preconceptions, and deepen important conversations.

It is natural for students to sometimes feel overwhelmed. If this happens, please advise me via email. As always, the goal is to maintain a safe space for learning.

Attendance: Regular class attendance is expected. There is a direct correlation between class attendance and overall success in the course. Attendance will be taken for Extra Credit purposes. This will be the only extra credit offered in the course.

Tardiness: Students are expected to be on time for class. Students who are tardy disrupt other students and the overall learning environment, so tardiness is not acceptable. Students who are late on Exam days will not receive extra time for their quiz.

Email: It is the policy of this professor to communicate with you via UCF email or the WebCourses message system. Failure to check for e-mail messages will not be accepted as an excuse for missed work.

Cell Phone**:** Students are expected to turn off or make silent all cell phones and electronic devices before the beginning of class because they can disrupt the learning environment. If a cell phone vibrates or is audible, the student may be asked to leave for the remainder of the class. If there is an emergency situation warranting the use of a cell phone during class time, the student must notify the professor in writing prior to the beginning of class. During a testing situation, if a cell phone vibrates or is audible, the student's test or examination will be collected and the student will be asked to leave without an option for completion.

Laptop Computers: Students may use their laptop, tablet, or "mini-computer' (smart phone) during class to take notes or to access the Internet for research. A student who uses this freedom in an inappropriate fashion may be asked to leave the class for that day or to turn off their laptop or phone.

Student Recordings: Students may record video and/or audio of class lectures for their personal use. Recordings may be a useful tool to support your learning and provide a resource for review. It is important to be respectful of your peers' rights to privacy; with

that in mind, please refrain from recording your peers during lectures. You may not record class discussions, student presentations, labs, group work, and private conversations. Further, you may not publish or share recordings without my written consent, nor may you provide recordings to classmates as a substitution for class participation and attendance. If necessary, I will handle violations of this section through the College's Student Code of Conduct.

Protected Course Learning Materials: All course learning materials are protected information and cannot be shared via social media or outside of the class canvas page. In order to maintain a comfortable and private learning environment, students should not take screen shots of the course website. This is to protect the privacy rights of you and your fellow students. Such conduct may be determined to be a violation of college policy and the student code of conduct.