POS 2041 - AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Section: 0601

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2025
Class Meeting Days: MW
Class Meeting Time: 12:00 - 13:20
Class Meeting Location: BA1 O206
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Dr. Annabelle Conroy
Title: SPSIA Undergraduate Coordinator
Office Location: HPH 0302
Office Hours:
Mondays: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Wednesdays: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Or by appointment
Phone: 407-823-5902
Email: Please use the Canvas inbox for messaging

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.

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.

This term our class will be working on a variety of policy areas. The objective of this project is to apply what you learned in the course, to develop professional skills, and to make connections with students who are already further along in their UCF careers. The project is designed to introduce you to the career readiness competencies (competencies that employers are requiring all graduates to demonstrate), skills needed to demonstrate these competencies, and prepare you to 'translate' your past and current experiences into your employment search tools.

These competencies/skills are*:

- **Career & Self Development:** Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual
  personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.
- **Communication:** Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.
- **Critical Thinking:** Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding
  of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.
- **Equity & Inclusion:** Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills
  required to equitably engage and include people from different
  local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that
  actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.
- **Leadership:** Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

- **Professionalism:** Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.
- **Teamwork:** Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.
- **Technology:** Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

* Source: NACE Career Readiness Initiative: https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/ All of these competencies have been identified by employers as significant assets in hiring/promotion decisions.

General Education Program (GEP)

POS2041 American National Government forms part of the "Interpretation & Evaluation" Foundation. As such it focuses on developing the skills to assess and decipher information in a world full of conflicting sources.

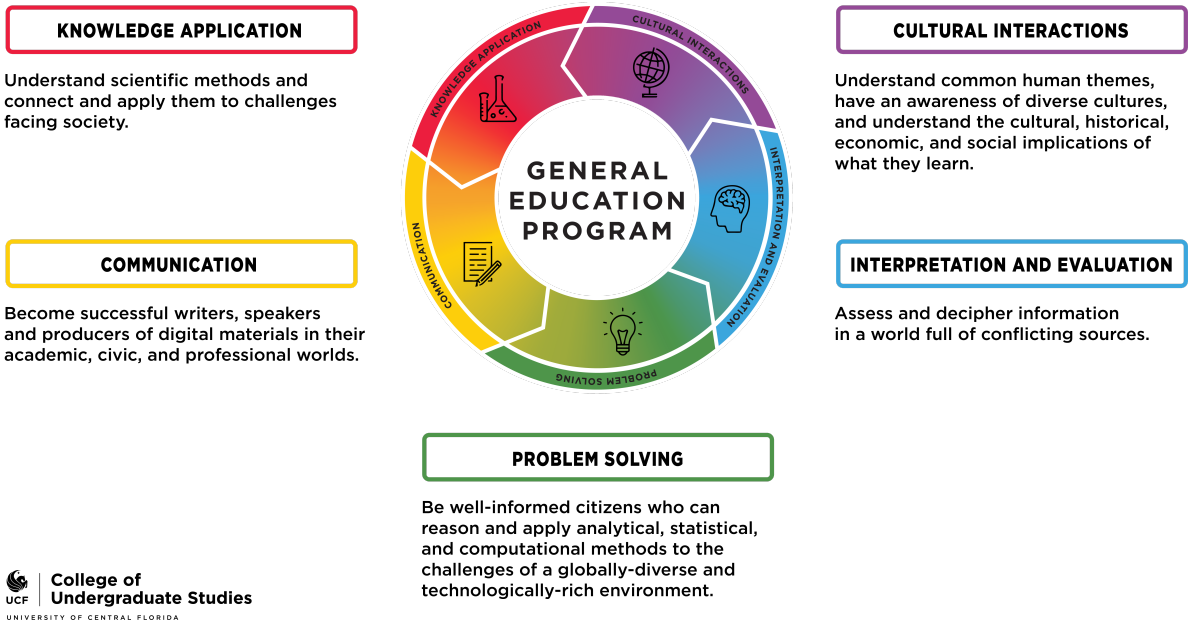
This learning foundation is designed to assist students in formulating models to determine what information is valid and useful, encouraging them to be knowledgeable and productive members of academic and real world communities. Courses will stress how to evaluate, interpret, and support conclusions drawn from multiple theoretical and practical perspectives in order to equip students to explain content, determine its usefulness, and offer productive explanations.

Students who complete requirements for the Interpretation and Evaluation foundation will be able to:

1. Demonstrate mastery of discipline specific vocabulary and concepts.
2. Recognize social, political, or economic problems and evaluate solutions to those problems.
3. Understand how to collect, evaluate, or interpret data to draw conclusions.
4. Recognize and interpret the impact of social, economic, and political institutions on the wellbeing of individuals in a country.

5. Employ social science principles, techniques, or concepts to identify, explain, or address challenges facing society.

The secondary foundation incorporated in this course is "Knowledge Application" but, of course, all of the Foundations are incorporated in some way or another. See if you can identify the Foundation for your own major!



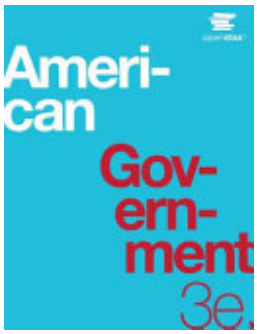
Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will learn to:

- 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.
- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution and its application.
- Develop and demonstrate knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.

- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

Course Materials and Resources



American Government 3e
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Edition: Third

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Academic Engagement for Financial Aid Activity

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 academic activity indicated in the Week 1 Module by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than Friday of the first week of class (11:59 pm). Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. Please open Module 1 to see what you need to do to complete this requirement.

Professional Points (3%)

Professional 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 professional 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. 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.
4. Fail to turn off or turn to silent your cellphone or other electronic devices during the class and/or use 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 professional points, other disciplinary actions will ensue.

Classwork (22%)

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 exams. 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. You are allowed to miss two assignments without any penalty.

Please keep in mind that if you miss 5 or more classes *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.

Collaborative Project (15%)

To help bridge the gap from education to employment, the students will engage in a collaborative group project. The collaborative group project is designed to help you build skills outlined by the National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE) . To read more about the project, go to Module 1 and click on the Final Collaborative Project link. The project will account for 12.5 % of the grade (25 points) but these will be divided into several components (Roadmap, Final Project, and Reflection paper).

Examinations (60%)

There will be four examinations in this course - four midterms and a final exam. The final examination will be cumulative. Although there will be 5 exams, only the highest 4 will count. Thus, if you are satisfied with your grade in the first 4 exams, you do not need to take the final exam. Please refer to the final module for instructions regarding the exams.

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Roll Call Attendance	Assignment	100
1/10	Week 1 Introduction Post	Discussion	1
1/10	Week 1 Quiz Academic Engagement Activity	Quiz	1
1/15	Week 2 Classwork	Assignment	4
1/22	Week 3 Classwork	Assignment	4

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
1/27	First Exam	Assignment	15
1/29	Week 4 Classwork	Assignment	4
2/9	Week 5 State Choice	Assignment	4
2/12	Week 6 Classwork	Assignment	4
2/16	Roadmap	Assignment	5
2/19	Week 7 Classwork	Assignment	4
2/24	Second Exam	Assignment	15
2/26	Week 8 Classwork	Assignment	2
3/3	Week 9 Classwork	Assignment	4
3/9	Progress Report	Assignment	2
3/17	Week 11 Classwork	Assignment	6
3/24	Week 12 Classwork	Assignment	6
3/31	Week 13 Classwork	Assignment	5
4/20	Final Collaborative Project	Assignment	15
4/21	Week 15 Classwork	Assignment	4
4/23	Third Exam	Assignment	15
4/27	Final Project Reflection Paper	Assignment	5
4/27	Final Project Team Evaluation Form	Quiz	0
4/27	Textbook Affordability Survey	Assignment	0
4/30	Final Examination	Assignment	15

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
5/5	Professional Points	Assignment	2.5

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	64-66%
D-	61-63%
F	0-60%

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

Policies for Course Grade

Makeup Work Policy

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.

Other than the situations listed above, makeup assignments will not be available since the lowest grades will be dropped, thus allowing to miss some assignments without penalty.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You are allowed to miss two classes without penalty. If you miss 5 or more classes 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.

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 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.

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	Introduction / Orientation
2	The US Constitution and its Origins
3	American Federalism
4	Review and First Exam
5	Civil Liberties
6	Civil Rights
7	Review and Second Exam
8	Voting, Campaigns & Elections
9	Political Parties and Interest Groups
10	Review and Third Exam
11	SPRING BREAK
12	The Congress
13	The Presidency & the Bureaucracy
14	The Courts

15	Review and Fourth Exam
16	Final Exam Week