POS 3424 - Congress and the Legislative Process

Section: 0W60

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2025
Class Meeting Days: ASC
Class Meeting Location: Online
Modality: WW
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Nathan Ilderton
Title: Associate Lecturer
Office Location: Remote
Office Hours:
Office hours will be virtual via Zoom on Monday and Wednesday, 10:00am to 1:00pm. I will be available in this Zoom room:

https://ucf.zoom.us/j/9454354959?pwd=cUs0N3lObWJleVl4NXdyMnpua0R4dz09

You do not need an appointment to join this meeting, but you will be placed in a waiting room and admitted in the order that you joined.

Meetings at other times are by appointment.
Email: Nathan.Ilderton@ucf.edu

Course Description

POS 3424 COS-POLS 3(3,0)Congress and the Legislative Process: PR: POS 2041 or C.I. Examination of the Congress as an institution undergoing dynamic change; emphasis upon recruitment of legislators, institutional and informal rules, the committee system, legislative procedures. Fall.

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- Describe how Congress operates.
- Analyze why Congress operates in the manner it does.
- Understand and evaluate the major theories regarding the institution of Congress.
- Better able to analyze outcomes in Congress and American politics generally.

Course Materials and Resources

Congress and Its Members
ISBN: 9781071901816
Authors: Roger H. Davidson, Walter J. Oleszek, Frances E. Lee, Eric Schickler, James M. Curry
Publisher: CQ Press
Publication Date: 2023-10-17
Edition: 19th

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

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 Tuesday of the first week of each segment. Assignments and quizzes will open on the first Tuesday and are due by 11:59pm on the Monday after the fourth week of each segment. Exams will open on Tuesday of the fifth week of each segment and will be due the following Monday. **The third exam will be given during the designated final exam week and will be open from Tuesday, April 22nd through 11:59pm on Monday, April 28th.**

*Note: The Monday on which Exam 2 would normally be due falls during spring break. Therefore, Exam 2 will be available between **Monday, March 10th and Sunday, March 16th.** This will not affect the due date for the other Part II assignments. (see schedule below)*

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.

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.

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.

Quizzes, discussions, and writing assignments for each segment are due on the Monday after the 4th week of the segment (see schedule below for specific dates).

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 Tuesday of the week they are to be completed and close on the following Monday 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.

LockDown Browser

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.shtml Links to an external site.

Download Instructions Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=472413933 Links 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.

Grading Scale

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

Policies for Course Grade

Makeup Work Policy

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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 6th	February 3rd
	Module 2: The Electoral Connection	David Mayhew, Congress: The Electoral Connection, Selections	Module 2 Quiz Electoral Connection Discussion	January 6th	February 3rd
	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 6th	February 3rd

	Module 4: Congressional Elections: Campaigns	C&M Ch. 4, pgs. 69-85	Campaign Ads Writing Assignment	January 6th	February 3rd
	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 6th	February 3rd
	Exam 1			February 4th	February 10th
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 11th	March 10th
	Module 7: Parties	C&M Ch. 6 Steven Smith, “Party Influence in Congress.”	Module 7 Quiz	February 11th	March 10th
	Module 8: Committees	C&M Ch.7 Charles Stewart III, “Congressional Committees in a Partisan Era.”	Committees Writing Assignment	February 11th	March 10th
	Module 9: Rules, Norms, and Procedures	C&M Ch.8	Module 9 Quiz House and Senate Procedures Discussion	February 11th	March 10th
	Module 10: Roll Call Voting	C&M Ch.9	Module 10 Quiz	February 11th	March10th

		John W. Kingdon, “Models of Legislative Voting”			
	Exam 2**			March 10th	March 16th
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 24th	April 21st
	Module 12: Congress and the Bureaucracy	C&M Ch. 11	Module 12 Quiz	March 24th	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 24th	April 21st
	Module 14: Congress and Organized Interests	C&M Ch. 13	Module 14 Quiz Congress and Organized Interests Discussion	March 24th	April 21st
	Module 15: Congress and the Policy Process	C&M Ch. 14, 15	Module 15 Quiz	March 24th	April 21st
	Exam 3			April	April 28th

				22nd	

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.

**To accommodate Spring Break, Exam 2 will be available on a Monday through Sunday period rather than the regular Tuesday through Monday.