POS 2041 - American National Government

Section: 0W60

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2026
Class Meeting Days: ASC
Class Meeting Location: Online
Modality: WW
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Name: Annabelle Conroy
Office Location: HPH 302
Office Hours
Mondays: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Wednesdays: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Or by appointment (Contact me via Webcourses to arrange a meeting time)

Email: Use the Webcourses Inbox to contact me

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.

Teaching Assistants

Please see Office Hours in the Modules section for this information

Combined Course Details

This syllabus applies to POS 2041 0W60, POS 2041 0W61.

Office Hours

Mondays: 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Wednesdays: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

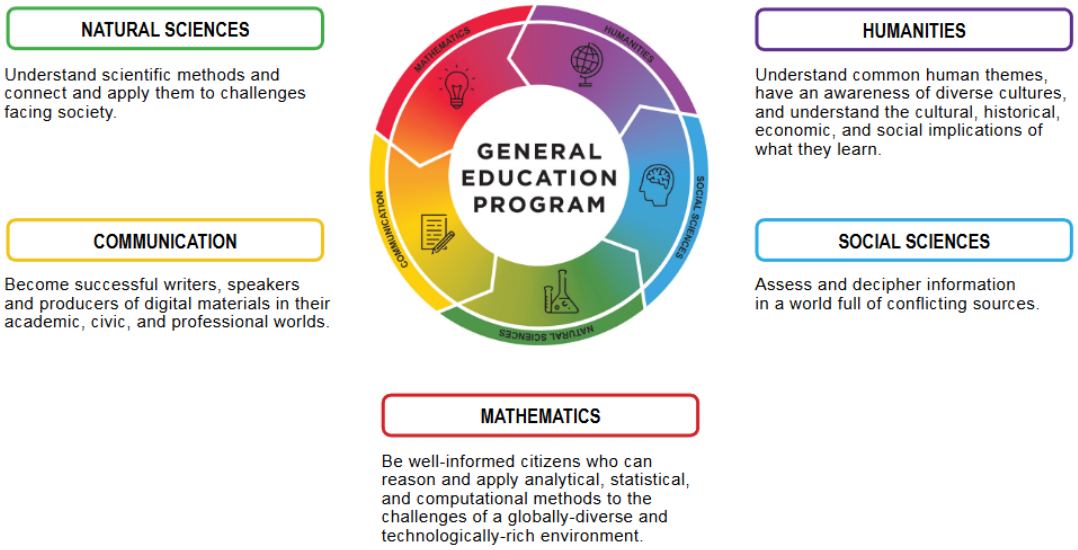
Or by appointment (Contact me via Webcourses to arrange a meeting time)

Please see the Office Hours page in the Modules section for Zoom links

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.



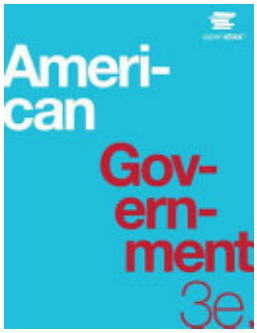
POS2041 American National Government forms part of the "**Social Sciences**" Foundation of the General Education Program (GEP). This learning foundation is designed to assist students in formulating models to determine what information is valid and useful, encouraging them to be

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 Social Sciences foundation will be able to:

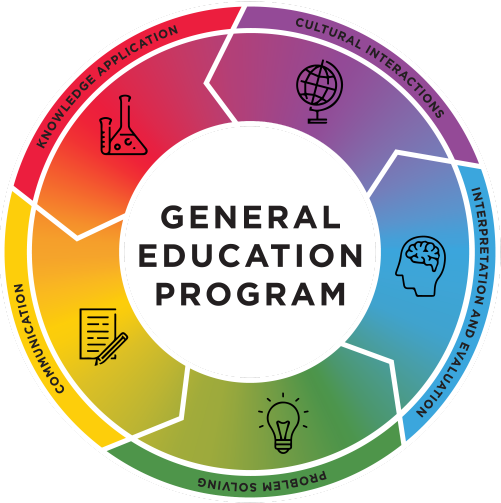
1. Demonstrate mastery of discipline specific vocabulary and concepts.
2. Recognize social, political, or economic problems and evaluate solutions to those problems.
3. Understand how to collect, evaluate, or interpret data to draw conclusions.
4. Recognize and interpret the impact of social, economic,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

Required Course Materials and Resources



American Government 3e (Available Free in Each Module)
ISBN: 9781951693435
Authors: Glen Krutz
Publication Date: 2021-07-28
Edition: Third

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.

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Course Grading Summary

Item	% of Grade
Yellowdig - Weekly Discussions	15%
Chapter Quizzes	10%
Section Exams (4)	30%
Case Studies (2)	20%
Class Review / Final Project	10%

Final Exam (1)	15%

Course Modules

Modules vary in length from 1 to 3 weeks. Typically, modules open on Tuesday at 9:00 AM and close on the last Monday of each module period at 11:59 PM. The exceptions are the first week (which will open on Monday) and the last module which will open on Wednesday and close the following Tuesday.

Readings

The textbook for this class is available free of charge and electronically. You do not need to buy the textbook unless you wish to have a hard copy (you may also download a PDF and print out the relevant pages if you wish). Each module will have links to the relevant chapters assigned for that week. You can dowload the PDF or read it online.

Academic Engagement for Financial Aid Activity

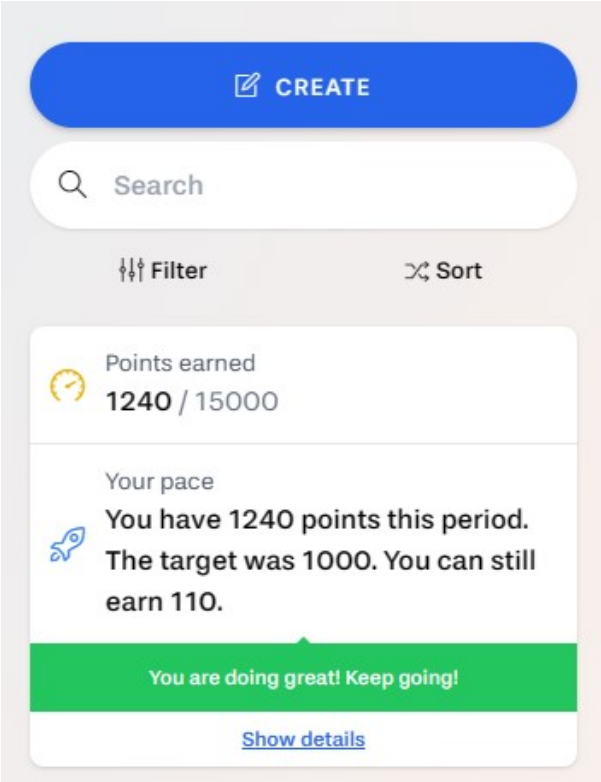
All faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the academic activity indicated in the Week 1 Module by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, 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.

Weekly Discussions - Yellowdig (15%)

In this class, we will use the Yellowdig tool to as the online discussion platform. Unlike typical ***Canvas*** discussions where everyone responds to the same prompt, Yellowdig lets you share and discuss real-world content (articles, videos, etc.) that YOU feel is relevant to lectures and readings. As you create posts and make comments, and as other students react to or comment on your posts, you will automatically receive participation

points. To be clear, using Yellowdig is a required part of the course, and the points you acquire will account for 15***%*** of your course grade.

Yellowdig is a course-long assignment. This means that, although you have to post weekly, the grade will be determined by the total number of points that you earn throughout the class. The points you earn in Yellowdig are passed to the ***Canvas*** grade book for your discussion credit. To learn more about how points work, see [this help article] along with the Show details link inside Yellowdig (shown in the image below).



To earn the ***14,000*** points required for an "A" in Yellowdig by the end of the course, you will need to reach ***1000*** points per week on average. Keep in mind that the last day to earn points is Monday, April 27 **(Week 15)**. This Community has a point buffer of ***35%***, meaning you can earn up to ***1350*** points per week. That means that, if you always participate up to the weekly maximum and go over that, you can earn a few points that will count for the next week's amount. You need to earn points each week, though. You will not be able to earn all 14,000 points in one week! You will be done with the

assignment when you have earned 14,000 points so it is possible to finish the assignment before **Week 15**. The more you post, the earlier you can finish the assignment.

At ***11:59 PM every Monday***, the weekly maximum points will reset, and you will again have until the following Monday to get up to the weekly maximum. This means that your grade on the Canvas gradebook will show as 0 (or a little more if you earned more than 1000 points in the previous week) but this does not mean that you lost your previous points. It just means that a new grading period is beginning. To see how many total points you have, please refer to the Yellowdig counter as illustrated above. If you are having a fun discussion, you can always keep posting even after you have reached the weekly maximum; you will just stop earning additional credit toward your grade until the next ***Monday at 11:59 PM***.

A few additional recommendations:

- Consult the Yellowdig Student Startup Guide.
- Watch Yellowdig's student orientation videos.
- Peruse the Features and Functionality section of Yellowdig's Knowledge Base.
- Check out Yellowdig's FAQ page.
- If you have any technical questions or are having trouble, send Yellowdig a support ticket here.

More information will be contained in each module.

Please consult the Yellowdig page in the Modules section for more information and instructions on how to log in.

Chapter Quizzes (10%)

Each chapter will include a corresponding quiz, and some modules may contain more than one. These quizzes are designed to assess your understanding of the assigned readings and to help you prepare for both the module and final exams.

Although multiple quizzes will be administered throughout the term, only your top 10 scores will count toward your final grade. The lowest two quiz scores will be automatically dropped. This policy provides flexibility—if you miss a quiz or perform poorly on one, it will not negatively impact your final grade.

Section Examinations (30%)*

This course includes four module examinations, each designed to assess your understanding of the material covered. However, only your three highest exam scores will count toward your final grade. Each counted exam will contribute 10% to your overall course grade.

This policy allows some flexibility and helps accommodate any unforeseen challenges that may affect performance on a single exam. Thus, if you miss an exam or perform poorly on one, it will not negatively impact your final grade.

Case Studies (20%)

The case study assignment requires you to research and analyze a specific issue, then present your findings in a written format. Case study options will be provided during Modules 2, 3, 4 and 5 and you may choose from the available topics in each module.

You are required to submit at least two case studies over the course of the term. However, you may submit up to three— *but only one per module*. Only your two highest-scoring case studies will count toward your final grade. Please note that you will not be able to submit two case studies in one week, so you need to space them out.

This structure allows you the opportunity to improve your performance. If you are not satisfied with your grade on an initial submission, you may complete an additional case study in a later week to replace the lower score.

Class Review / Final Project (10%)

For your final project, you'll get to dive into a topic that truly excites you—and you'll have the freedom to choose how you want to explore it! Whether you're passionate about media, policy, or design, there are several creative formats you can choose from:

- Create a short podcast

- Create a short video to review one of the topics we covered during the term. This can also be helpful to your peers as they prepare for the final exam.
- Build a website
- Produce a video documentary
- Draft a law proposal

This is your opportunity to connect what you've learned in class to your future career or academic interests. Think of it as your chance to showcase your voice, your perspective, and your professional goals—all while applying your understanding of American government in a meaningful way.

More instructions will be available in the respective modules. You will be able to work on this individually or with a team. Teams can have up to 4 members. People who work on the project in a team will receive extra credit points.

Final Examination (15%)*

The final examination will be cumulative and mandatory. It is worth 15% of your grade. The Final Exam will open on Wednesday **April 29, and close on Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 11:59 PM**.

* To take the exams, you will need to download and use Respondus LockDown Browser. Please see the instructions below.

Hardware/Software Requirements

The following hardware and software technologies are needed to complete the course:

- Desktop or laptop computer
- Webcam
- Microphone
- Either speakers or headphones

- Reliable access to the internet
- Access to Webcourses@UCF
- Access to ucf.zoom.us with NID and NID password
- Respondus LockDown Browser, which you will need to take the quizzes and exams.

Using LockDown Browser and a Webcam for Online Exams

This course requires the use of LockDown Browser and a webcam for online exams. The webcam can be built into your computer or can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable. Watch this short video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the webcam feature. A student Quick Start Guide (PDF) is also available.

Then download and install LockDown Browser from this link:

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

To ensure LockDown Browser and the webcam are set up properly, do the following:

- Start LockDown Browser, log into this course.
- Locate and select the **Help Center** button on the LockDown Browser toolbar.
- Run the **Webcam Check** and, if necessary, resolve any issues.
- Run the **System & Network Check**. If a problem is indicated, see if a solution is provided in the Knowledge Base. Troubleshooting information can also be emailed to our institution's help desk.
- Exit the Help Center and locate the Practice Quiz.
- Upon completing and submitting the practice quiz, exit LockDown Browser.

When taking an online exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:

- *Select a location where you are comfortable having a video recording taken of yourself and your workspace environment. This area should also be free of distractions and interruptions.*
- Turn off all other devices (e.g., tablets, phones, second computers) and place them outside of your reach.
- Clear your desk of all external materials not permitted — books, papers, other devices, etc.
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it.
- Remain at your device for the duration of the test.
- If the device or networking environment is different than what was used previously with the **Webcam Check** and **System & Network Check** in LockDown Browser, run the checks again prior to starting the test.
- To produce a good webcam video, do the following:
  - Avoid wearing baseball caps or hats with brims.
  - Ensure your device is on a firm surface (a desk or table). Do NOT have the device on your lap, a bed or other surface where the device (or you) are likely to move.
  - If using a built-in webcam, avoid tilting the screen after the webcam setup is complete.
  - Take the exam in a well-lit room and avoid backlighting, such as sitting with your back to a window.
- Remember that 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.

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

Errors/Grade Omissions

Generally, grades will be posted approximately one week after the due date (although this will depend on the final number of students enrolled). Students should make sure to review the grades posted to make sure they are accurate. If there has been an error, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor with the exact details of the mistake/omission. ***Three days after the grades have been posted, the grade becomes final***, even

if there was a mistake or omission. **Grades will not be changed after that time.**

If you wish to challenge a grade you must follow these steps:

1. Inform the professor by Webcourses mail of the mistake/omission in the published grade **no later than 3 days** after the grade has been posted. Explain in detail what the mistake was.
2. Make an appointment to go over the disputed assignment.
3. Keep in mind that if there is a review of the assignment, the grade may go up, but it may also go down if the instructor discovers any oversights in the grading.

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 you know you will have any of these, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor **by the end of the first week of class.** 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.

Late Assignments

Assignments must be submitted on time. Missing or late work for reasons other than those stated in the syllabus will not be accepted.

You have multiple opportunities to complete case studies and several days to finish quizzes and exams, so please plan ahead.

There is a one-day grace period after the deadline where you can still submit an assignment, but it will incur a 20% late penalty. This ensures fairness for students who submitted on time.

To give you flexibility, lowest grades will be dropped, so you can miss some assignments without penalty.

Attendance

Since this is an entirely online course, there is no attendance requirement. However, please keep up with the readings and assignments. Since this is a short term, it is imperative that you are active in the course.

Incomplete grades, changes in exam grades, 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 during class.

Religious or Other Accommodations

If a student requires any type of accommodations, these should be communicated to the professor by the end of the first week of class. Since this is an online class and most assignments are open for 2-3 weeks, there should not be a conflict with a religious observance, but if there is, it is the student's responsibility to inform the professor by the end of the first week of class. Please review the due dates carefully so you avoid any issues later.

Violations of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity violations include cheating, plagiarism, and any other violations of the Gordon Rule.

- **Penalties:**
  - **First violation:** Grade of **F** for the assignment.
  - **Second violation:** Grade of **F** for the entire course.
- All violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity and may result in having a Z designation added to your transcript.

Important:
If an issue is found with one assignment, **all previous submissions may be reviewed**. For example, we may re-examine all exam recordings. If additional violations are discovered, grades for those assignments will be changed and penalties applied.

Disability Access & Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing equal access to all students with disabilities (ADHD, learning disabilities, Autism, chronic medical conditions, physical disabilities, etc.). To receive consideration for reasonable disability-related course accommodations, disabled students must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and complete the steps required for SAS to review accommodation requests. More information can be found on the UCF Student Accessibility Services website under the Start Here tab or by contacting SAS directly (Ferrell Commons 185; sas@ucf.edu; Phone - 407-823-2371).

Approved accommodations are shared with course instructors via the SAS Course Accessibility Letter. Implementing certain accommodations may require discussion about specific considerations of the course design, course learning objectives, and the individual academic and course challenges experienced by the student. While students with disabilities or chronic health needs are also encouraged to discuss any course concerns with professors in addition to contacting SAS, professors are not required to facilitate disability-related adjustments to the course unless the professor has received a Course Accessibility Letter from SAS that outlines approved accommodations.

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:

1. 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 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 assessment, 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.

2. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.
3. 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 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.
4. 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" designated 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 access and community engagement, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – ONAC – Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance & 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 discrimination by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance via the ONAC

website or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line either anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or by 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 arrangements.

Class Schedule

Module	Topic	Dates
1	Introduction: American Government and Civic Engagement	Opens 8/18 – Closes 8/24
2	The Constitution and its Origins and American Federalism	Opens 8/26- Closes 9/8
3	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	Opens 9/9 - Closes 10/6
3	Voting, Campaigns & Elections, the Media & Public Opinion	Opens 10/7 - Closes 10/27
5	Institutions: The Congress, The Presidency & the Courts	Opens 10/28 - Closes 11/17
6	Final Project Week	Opens 11/18 – Closes 11/24
-	THANKSGIVING WEEK	11/26-11/30
7	Final Exam Week	12/1 - 12/6

Campus Safety

At UCF's 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 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 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.