POS 2041 - American National Government

Section: B060

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

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

Instructor Information

John Hanley
Title: Associate Lecturer
Office Location: 302l Howard Phillips Hall
Office Hours:
Thursdays 11-12:30, via Zoom

https://ucf.zoom.us/j/93467380534?pwd=aDLaBozNcHmao3guOBPKbEKaLcF0Ve.1
Email: John.Hanley@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.

Teaching Assistants

TBA

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. Students will 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.
2. Students will develop and demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution and its application.
3. Students will develop and demonstrate knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.
4. Students will develop and demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

Required Course Materials and Resources

American Government
Authors: Krutz, Glen, and Sylvie Waskiewicz
Publisher: OpenStax
Publication Date: 2025
Edition: 4

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Grades will be computed on the basis of four types of assignments:

- Class participation, through Yellowdig (33% of total grade)
    - *A group discussion will take place throughout the semester using the Yellowdig platform. Topics will be added to or removed from point-earning in response to participation and the present subject matter.*
- Practice exercises, two per module (33%)

- *For each module there will be one or two short, web-based exercises such as crossword puzzles and matching activities to help you review reading material. These will be graded.*

- Quizzes, one per module (33%)
  - *Each module will include a quiz with multiple-choice and true/false questions. The quiz will open on the last day of the module and be available for 24 hours for full credit, and 24 hours late with a ten-percent penalty. The quiz is open book and open notes, but you may not consult with others or use the Internet (including AI) to take the quiz. Some or all quizzes may require use of the Respondus Browser—this will be announced at the beginning of the module in which this format will be employed. You may be required to provide written reasoning for your answers to one or more questions. The quiz will require you to understand and be familiar with the readings associated with the module, and any module supplemental material or videos.*

- Course requirements and syllabus quiz -- 1% of grade

  This is the federal/UCF financial aid validation exercise for the course. You may retake it as many times as you wish.

In computing the final grade, the two lowest review exercises and the lowest module quiz will be dropped. In addition to the dropped grades, two exercises and one module quiz may be replaced by the score on the optional final, as discussed below.

- Optional Final, July 30-31

  The optional final will consist of multiple-choice questions taken from Modules 1-6 and a short essay. If you take the optional final, the score will replace your lowest counting module quiz and lowest counting review exercise. If your grade on the optional final does not exceed your lowest counting quiz/exercise, the optional final will be disregarded—in other words, the optional final cannot hurt you.

The State of Florida requires this course to provide "opportunities to engage synchronously in political discussions and civil debates with multiple points of view." These discussions will take place every other Wednesday from 12:30-2pm, and can be accessed via the Zoom link in the webcourse. Participation is optional and will not affect your grade. The agenda for these sessions will be indicated in advance.

Grading Scale

A > 93.333%	B+ > 86.666%	C+ > 76.666%	D > 59.999%
A- > 89.999%	B > 83.333%	C > 73.333%	F < 60%
	B- > 79.999%	C- > 69.999%	

Communication Expectations

In this class our official mode of communication is through email located inside Webcourses. All communication between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional. It is the student's responsibility to check the "coursemail" tool frequently.

Generally, emails to the instructor will receive a reply within 2 business days.

Policies for Course Grade

Makeup Work Policy

Incomplete grades, changes in exam dates, and extensions of written assignments will be approved only by the instructor, and only upon evidence of extenuating circumstances.

Students participating in religious observances or university-sanctioned activities may receive extensions on assignments consistent with UCF and state policy.

Missed/Late Assignments

Review exercises can be done up to one week late with no penalty. Quizzes can be taken up to one day late, for a penalty of 10%. Yellowdig permits students to exceed by 35%, each week, the week's point goal. Thus, you can work a little ahead on this assignment, or catch up a little.

By default, the "running" grade visible to students in Webcourses includes only assignments that have been completed or manually assigned a grade. Students are responsible for monitoring their completion of assignments and, by extension, for understanding the grade impact when missed assignments are ultimately entered as "0."

Attendance

This is an online course. There are no sessions to attend. The weekly "synchronous civil debate and political discussion" opportunities must be provided under UCF policy, but participation in them does not affect your grade.

Special Note on Weather Disruptions

In the event that severe weather (i.e., tropical systems) is projected to impact the Orlando metro area, UCF administration may suspend due dates in online classes. If a deadline for our course is suspended by the University, it will generally be my practice upon reopening of classes to extend the deadline by the length of time that the original period for the assignment was interrupted by the suspension. For example, if an assignment is due Friday night, and UCF suspends online due dates from Wednesday night to Sunday night, the expected revised due date will be Tuesday night.

In the event that courses are suspended because of weather, students should assume that the suspension is continuing until UCF provides a notification that classes are resuming.

Students who have been impacted more severely, or who are impacted by severe weather that does not affect the Orlando area, should contact me (when able) to arrange a timeline for catching up in the course.

Make-up Assignments for Authorized University Event or Co-curricular Activities

Students who represent the university an an authorized event or activity (for example, student athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied if the student gives advance notice and communicates with the instructor following UCF policy. In the case of an authorized university activity, it is your responsibility to show the instructor a signed copy of the Program Verification Form for which you will be absent, prior to the class in which the absence occurs or due date you need extended. For more information, see UCF Policy 4-401.

Make-up Assignments for Religious Observances

A student who desires to observe a religious holy day of his or her religious faith must notify their instructor as soon as practicable prior to the observance. Students who are absent because of religious observances will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to complete any missed work. For more information, see UCF Regulation 5-020.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Except as expressly authorized in the assignment instructions, all assignments are expected to consist of your own work. Should a submitted assignment be suspected of having been AI-generated, or should it exhibit clear indications of AI (such as erroneous references, failure to adhere to assignment guidelines, or heavy reliance on works and viewpoints external to our course), I reserve the power to use supplemental oral examinations to verify a student's comprehension of the assignment submitted and

related module material. This examination will be conducted in person or via Zoom at a mutually convenient time, and the grade may be substituted for the overall grade for the module.

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 and 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:

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.

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.**

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.

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.

Class Schedule

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

June 24-June 30 (Tuesday)

Module #1: American Government, Civic Engagement, and the Constitution

Read Chapters 1-2

6/25, 12:30-2pm: Optional Class Discussion

June 30-July 6 (Monday)

Module #2: Federalism and Congress

Read: Chapters 3 & 11

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

Jeff Stein. “Deal to Pass Farm Bill Scraps House GOP Plan for New Food Stamp Work Requirements.” *Washington Post*, November 29, 2018.

7/2, 12:30-2pm: Optional Class Discussion

July 6-July 10 (Friday)

Module #3: The Presidency and the Bureaucracy

Read: Chapters 12 & 15

Tamara Keith. "Why Trump Is Obsessed With Building a White House Ballroom." NPR. July 29, 2025.

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

7/9, 12:30-2pm: Optional Class Discussion

July 10-July 15 (Wednesday)

Module #4: The Courts and Civil Liberties

Read: Chapters 13 & 4

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

Adam Liptak. "Justices Rule That Police Can't Extend Traffic Stops." *New York Times*. April

21, 2015.

July 15-July 20 (Monday)

Module #5: Political Parties and Civil Rights

Read: Chapters 9 & 5

Rick Beyer. “Where there’s smoke, there’s…political intrigue?” *Politico*, March 3, 2008.

Summer Sewell. "There Were Nearly a Million Black Farmers in 1920. Why Have they Disappeared?" *The Guardian*. April 29, 2019.

7/16, 12:30-2pm: Optional Class Discussion

July 20-July 24 (Friday)

Module #6: Public Opinion, Voting. Campaigns and Elections

Read: Chapters 6 & 7

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

Liam Stack. An ‘I Voted’ Sticker Can Get You Free Stuff, but It Shouldn’t." *New York Times*, November 8, 2016.

7/23, 12:30-2pm: Optional Class Discussion

July 24-July 29 (Wednesday)

Module #7: Interest Groups and the Media

Read: Chapters 8 & 10

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

Noor Al-Sibai. “Steak-umm Uses Deepfakes to Make Vegans Devour Meat.” *Futurism*, November 4, 2023.

7/30, 12:30-2pm: Optional Class Discussion

July 30-31 (Friday, at 5pm)

Optional Final Exam, due at 5pm

Read: all chapters in eTextbook