



Syllabus for Political Science 1113: American National Government

NOTE: If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or have had direct exposure to someone with COVID-19, file a report with the COVID-19 Response Team at https://uco.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_39Omw83BStDpw1L.

Course Information

College: Liberal Arts
Department: Political Science
Course title: American National Government
Semester: Fall 2021
Course number: POL 1113
CRN: 17654
Building and Classroom: Liberal Arts Building – L 16
Meeting Days/Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 – 2:15 PM

Instructor Information

Instructor name: Dr. Alyssa L. Provencio
Office location: Liberal Arts Building – North 100B, Political Science suite, Box 165
Student hours: By appointment anytime during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM-5 PM) via Zoom or face-to-face by request.
Email (*the BEST way to get ahold of me!*): aprovencio@uco.edu
I will respond as soon as possible, within 24 hours, as long as it's during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM-5 PM); I cannot guarantee any responses outside of those hours.
Communication: Please remember to check your UCO (@uco.edu) email and the D2L course site frequently, as these are the official modes of communication for this course. I will post announcements, course updates, and resources in the News area of the D2L course site homepage. Be sure to check this frequently to stay up-to-date on the latest course information.
Campus telephone: (405) 974-5537
Personal Google Voice phone number: (405) 896-0906 – This number forwards to my cell phone; I cannot receive text messages at this number.
Teaching Philosophy: I aim to be inclusive and participatory in the pursuit of equity and justice in the public sphere.

Land Acknowledgment

The MPA faculty acknowledge and honor the indigenous peoples whose unceded traditional lands overlap in Oklahoma – the Apache, Arapaho, Caddo, Comanche, Kiowa, Osage, and the Wichita. We also remember the 60 tribes who were relocated during the genocidal disruptions of the removal era, including, but not limited to, the Muscogee, Sac and Fox, Seminole, Cherokee, Delaware, Osage, Ponca, and Pawnee nations. In the United States, Oklahoma has the third-largest number of tribes, behind Alaska and California.

Course Description and Objectives

Course Description

An introductory analysis of the origin, structure, and functions of the United States national government.

Prerequisites

None

Course Objectives

- View government and politics more objectively and analytically; to study government as social scientists.
- Develop a broad understanding of the theoretical and institutional development of American democracy.
- Understand the Constitutional framework, linkage institutions, and political structures that guide our democratic system.
- Urge students to become stakeholders in their government by getting involved in civic activities.
- Enhance political efficacy – the belief that government officials respond to public demands and that citizens can and do invoke change in the political system.
- Interest students in the work of government as reflected in current events.

Textbook Information

- McClain, P. D., & Tauber, S. C. American government in black and white: Diversity and democracy. Oxford University Press.
 - ISBN: 9780190928513
 - 4th edition
- Follow American political news at: *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Economist*, etc.



Course Outline, Structure, Requirements, Grading

Course Outline

See Appendix A.

Course Structure

Before Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter reading• Individual quiz (D2L)	Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issue prep	Thursday
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief lecture• Activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large group issue forum

Group Work

Small groups - You will be assigned to a group for the duration of the semester. This is to encourage teamwork and collaboration, which are important elements of our American democracy. These groups will work together each Monday on small group quizzes and focus activities, and possibly for the final project.

Voting someone out of the group – Due to potential conflicts, I have created a policy that allows a group to vote someone off of their team at any point during the semester. The following conditions must be met for this to occur:

1. The conflict is not personal or due to differing opinions; it must be due to lack of participation or contribution.
2. A team meeting with the instructor to discuss the conflict.
3. All team members must agree that they want to vote the person off.
4. The team members must fill out a form documenting and justifying why they want to take the action.

Once the person has been voted off, they have three options:

1. Appeal the group, asking them to allow them to stay and provide justification.
2. Find another group and ask them to allow them to join their group. All group members of that group must agree.
3. Work independently for the remainder of the semester (aside from Issue Forums).

Course Requirements & Assignment Weights

More information about the following assignments will be provided in class and via D2L.

Individual Quizzes (12 quizzes @ 10 points each; drop 1 grade) – WEIGHT: 20%

You are required to read the assigned chapter and take a quiz on D2L by **NOON each Tuesday before class.**

Focusing Activities (12 problem sets @ variable points) – WEIGHT: 20%

In small groups, you will work on a set of problems related to the chapter reading. The group will work together to discuss and collectively decide on answers.

Issue Forum Participation (11 forums @ 1 point per day) – 20%

Each Thursday will be devoted to deliberating a current controversial issue in American politics. The format will be discussed in greater detail in class.

Mid-Term Policy Position Paper (1 mid-term @ 100 points) – WEIGHT: 20%

Each person will be required to select a policy that is interesting to them. In a 1,000-word paper, you will provide the history, background information, and give your informed opinion about the issue. More information will be provided in detail.

Final Political Music Presentation (1 final @ 100 points) – WEIGHT: 20%

This project will be done instead of a traditional final exam. It will require your group (to be chosen at a later date) to select a piece of music that you believe to be political in nature. For the presentation, the group will play part the song, describe the time period in which it was written, describe the band/artist and the reason why they wrote the song, describe the public reception of the song, and, finally, discuss your/your group's opinions/thoughts on why it the song is/was important for the political environment of the time. More information will be provided in detail.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Political Music Sampling (2 points per submission (10 points max) added to your mid-term or final)

To receive credit, e-mail me a piece of music (name, artist, and YouTube or Spotify link) and a two-sentence description of why you think it is political. Explicit lyrics will be played at my discretion, but do not disqualify your submission. If I receive submissions, I will begin a class period by playing the song (anything from Nina Simone to Jimi Hendrix, Green Day to Kendrick Lamar) and will read your description to the class.

Issue Forum Service (added to the forum for that day)

Moderator: 2 points – The moderator guides the discussion, asks questions of the participants, and encourages ALL to share their opinion. The moderator should attempt to stay neutral and share their opinion during moderation.

Note taker: 1 point – The note taker takes detailed notes on participants' comments. At the end the note taker will summarize the main points made throughout the deliberation.

Time keeper: 1 point – The time keeper ensures each section of the forum remains on schedule.

UCO or Community Events (5 points per event for up to 2 events – 10 points max added to your final)

You may receive credit for "attending" (can be virtual) and reflecting on any UCO or community event related to politics, social/environmental justice, public service, etc. I just need an email with the event name, where it was held, and a one-paragraph reflection about how it relates to class in order to earn credit.

Class Policies

Grading Policies

Scale

A 90-100

B 80-89.9

C 70-79.9

D 60-69.9

F 0-59.9

Grading Response Times

Grades will be posted in the D2L grade book within two weeks of the due date unless otherwise communicated via the News Board or D2L email.

Late Work Policy

Assignments are due by the times and days listed in the schedule. Assignments may be uploaded to D2L after the deadline with an automatic 5% off per day it is late (example: 2 days late = 10% off). The final paper will not be accepted after the deadline during finals week. Any other circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Missing Class & Make-Up Assignments

You are all adults and should make decisions accordingly. It is your responsibility to obtain the information you missed in class and to keep up with any changes in the course outline. That being said, in-class activities cannot be made up. If you need to miss a class due to illness, family emergency, death in your immediate family, or any other grave matters, please email, phone, or talk to me in person before with justification, if possible. If one of the above circumstances affects your ability to turn in an assignment, please email/phone/talk to me in person before with justification, if possible, before the due date. If it is not possible to contact me before the missed class or due date, please contact me as soon as you can.

Contesting Grades

If you have received a grade on an assignment that you see as unfair, you have the right to contest the grade with a written explanation sent to me by email. I will consider it, but I reserve the right to give the grade initially given with an explanation of why your request was denied. Final grades will NOT be changed. You will have had ample opportunity to contest your grades on assignments and/or exams. For example, while figuring final grades, if I find you are one point away from the next highest grade, you will receive the lower grade. If you are .1 point from the next highest grade, you will receive the lower grade. I will NOT raise your grade at the end of the semester if you are one or two points away from the next higher grade. What you earned is what you get. If I do it for one person, I will have to do it for all.

Classroom Expectations

Participation

The success of a student's performance is directly related to the quantity and quality of preparation for and participation in classes. I fully expect participation and active engagement during class sessions.

Behavior

I expect appropriate class behavior. The classroom is a learning environment and a preparation for your entry into the workforce, continuation up the workforce ladder, and/or additional higher education. I want you to come to class, exchange ideas, think, have fun, and challenge other students and me intellectually. Arriving to class late, leaving class early, interruption, sleeping in class, reading, listening to music, and displaying other inappropriate behavior are not conducive to a learning environment. If you do not want to be in my class, please don't come. As this class is participatory, I expect that we will be sharing our own ideas/opinions. These ideas/opinions may not always be that of your colleagues. Please be respectful! I take discrimination very seriously. Racist or sexist remarks will be considered a violation of classroom expectations and I reserve the right to refer the offender to the Office of Student Conduct. If you are being disruptive, I will ask you to leave. If this occurs twice during the semester, you will not be allowed to return to class and you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Technology

Please bring a laptop, tablet, or internet-capable phone to class – we will use it for in-class activities. Use it well! Please don't text during class. If you need to have a cell phone ringer on (e.g., if you are an emergency responder, expecting an important call, and/or going through a family emergency), please set your phone on vibrate and inform me in advance; otherwise, please set your phone to silent.

D2L

You all will have access to the online-based instruction program Desire2Learn (D2L). I will use D2L in several ways, including emailing the whole class on updates and information, posting course documents (including any updates to the course outline), using it as an assignment submission tool, and for other activities. We will discuss the use of D2L more in class. You must understand how to use D2L, as it is essential to your success in class. If you have any questions, please see me for help.

Zoom

We might be using Zoom as a contingency plan. The link to the class session would be located in D2L.

Email

All course emails will be sent to your UCO email address; check your emails regularly! When emailing me, I ask that you please include POL 1113 and a short descriptor of what your email is about; for example, POL 1113: Missing Class.

Recording Policy

Due to limitations on the disclosure of personally identifiable information under certain federal privacy laws, students are not permitted to record class sessions or allow non-students to view online class sessions. Students registered with the UCO office of Disability Support Services may request accommodation of the prohibition and must present a copy of the DSS letter to the instructor.

Fine Print

Illness

If you are ill/contagious, out of respect for your classmates and me, I request that you do not come to class. If this is the case, please let me know via email. Please refer to "Missing Class & Make-Up Assignments" for further details on how sick days will be handled.

Incompletes

All students are expected to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. In those rare circumstances in which completion by the semester's conclusion is not possible, I may decide to either submit a final grade based on the work completed or submit a grade of "I" along with a default grade based on work completed. In no case will an "I" grade be submitted unless at least 50% of the required work has been completed by the end of the semester. If an "I" grade is provided, the student will be allowed no more than one year from the end of the semester to complete course requirements; else, the "I" grade will convert to the default grade.

Academic Integrity

I seek to uphold equity and fairness in my classroom. Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated in consideration of your fellow students. I abide by UCO's Academic Dishonesty Policy, which is available in the syllabus attachment.

Usability, Inclusivity and Design

I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design. I am always happy to consider creative solutions as long as they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

ADA Statement Regarding Special Accommodations

The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their requests by contacting Disability Support Services, at (405) 974-2516. The DSS Office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 305. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible. Per Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), pregnant and parenting students may request adjustments by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, at (405) 974-3377 or TitleIX@uco.edu. The Title IX Office is located in the Lillard Administration Building, Room 114D.

Office of Academic Affairs COVID-19 Syllabus Statement - Fall 2021

Consistent with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission as of August 1, 2021, the University of Central Oklahoma recommends that all individuals wear a mask covering the mouth and nose when in public indoor spaces such as classrooms, laboratories, studio spaces, the library, the Nigh University Center, enclosed athletic facilities, and other shared indoor spaces on campus. While mask wearing is not required, the university encourages all members of the university community to follow the guidelines issued by the CDC based on conditions in Oklahoma County. This guidance may be revised at any point during the semester.

As detailed in the Student Code of Conduct, students are expected to be familiar with the UCO Coronavirus webpage, www.uco.edu/coronavirus and are expected to follow the recommendations and guidance published on that page. Because the recommendations and guidance are subject to change, students should check back often for updated information and requirements.

Students who follow these guidelines will not be penalized for class absences provided they follow their instructor's directions for making up missed assignments in a timely fashion, in conformity with the requirements and expectations outline in the class's syllabus. Instructors shall provide reasonable opportunities, consistent with the structure and objectives of the class, for students who are following these guidelines to participate in and to keep up with the work of the class.

As the conditions on campus and in the community evolve, events may occur that necessitate a change in the procedures, course schedule or modes of delivery. The information provided on www.uco.edu/coronavirus will be updated throughout the academic year. Procedure changes on this webpage and communicated via official correspondence from the university will supersede any prior guidance.

UCO Policies

Transformational Learning Objectives

This course supports the following tenets of transformative learning:

- Discipline Knowledge
- Leadership
- Global and Cultural Competency
- Problem Solving (Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities)
- Service Learning and Civic Engagement
- Health and Wellness

Other University Policies

University policies cover any topic not included here. Additionally, the [UCO Information Sheet](#) covers many important topics and applies to all courses at UCO.

Appendix A – Course Outline

Module	Date	Day	Module Information	Out-of-Class Activities Due
Module 1	8/24/2021	Tuesday	Introductions, Course Overview, Political Typology/Learning Inventory	
	8/26/2021	Thursday	D2L Demonstration, Syllabus Quiz, Political Story	
Module 2	8/31/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 1: American Government and Politics in a Racially Divided World	
	9/2/2021	Thursday	Sharing Your Political Story	
Module 3	9/7/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 2: The Constitution: Rights and Race Intertwined	PPP Proposal Due @ 11:59 PM
	9/9/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 4	9/14/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 3: Federalism: Balancing Power, Balancing Rights	
	9/16/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 5	9/21/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 4: Civil Liberties: Freedom and Government Authority in Tension	
	9/23/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 6	9/28/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 5: Civil Rights: Inequality and Equality & Chapter 12: Social Movements: Civil Rights as a Movement Model	Rough Draft for PPP Due @ 11:59 PM
	9/30/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 7	10/5/2021	Tuesday	Latinx Leadership Panel	
	10/7/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 8	10/12/2021	Tuesday	TBD	
	10/14/2021	Thursday	Fall Break	
Module 9	10/19/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 6: Congress: Representation and Lawmaking & Chapter 7: The Presidency: Conventional Wisdom Redefined	
	10/21/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	Final PPP Due @ 11:59 PM
Module 10	10/26/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 8: The Bureaucracy: Career Government Employees, Accountability, and Race & Chapter 9: The Judiciary: Blending Law and Polit	
	10/28/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 11	11/2/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 10: Public Opinion: Divided By Race? & Chapter 11: The Media: Reinforcing Racial Stereotypes?	Song Choice & Justification Due @ 11:59 PM
	11/4/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 12	11/9/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 13: Interest Groups: Good Outcomes with Few Resources	
	11/11/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 13	11/16/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 14: Political Parties: Linking Voters and Governing Institutions	
	11/18/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 14	11/23/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 15: Voting and Elections: From Obama to Clinton	Rough Draft for Feedback Due @11:59 PM
	11/25/2021	Thursday	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break	
Module 15	11/30/2021	Tuesday	Chapter 16: The Making of Domestic and Foreign Policy: Summing Up American Government in Black and White	
	12/2/2021	Thursday	Issue Forum	
Module 16	12/7/2021	Tuesday	Presentations	
	12/9/2021	Thursday	Presentations	
FINAL	12/14/2021	Tuesday	Presentations (TIME CHANGE 1-2:50 PM)	