



## Syllabus for Political Science 1113: American National Government

### Course Information

College: Liberal Arts  
Department: Political Science  
Course title: American National Government  
Semester: Fall 2019 – Block 2  
Course number: POL 1113  
CRN: 15571  
Building and Classroom: n/a (WWW)  
Meeting Days/Time: n/a (WWW)

### Instructor Information

Instructor name: Dr. Alyssa L. Provencio  
Office location: Liberal Arts (LAR) 206  
Office hours: By appointment and anytime during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM-5 PM) via Skype or Google Hangout by request.  
Email (*BEST way to get ahold of me!*): [aprovencio@uco.edu](mailto:aprovencio@uco.edu)  
I will respond as soon as possible, within 24 hours, as long as it during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM-5 PM); I cannot guarantee any responses outside of those hours.  
Campus telephone: (405) 974-5537  
Personal Google Voice phone number: (405) 896-0906

### Course Description and Objectives

#### Course Description

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

#### No Prerequisites

#### 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.

#### Transformational Learning Objectives

This course supports the following tenets of transformative learning:

- Discipline Knowledge—students explore, discuss, and practice the techniques, conventions, and processes that produce researched written arguments.
- Leadership—students learn how to present claims and evidence fairly and civilly, to consider thoroughly and respond ethically to counterevidence and counterarguments, and to develop a clear, well-informed stance about ongoing issues or problems.
- Global and Cultural Competency—students read and write arguments about global and cultural issues and direct writing to diverse audiences.
- Problem Solving (Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities)—students learn to analyze complex arguments, to produce arguments informed by careful research, and to document sources following academic conventions.
- Service Learning and Civic Engagement—in service learning sections, students research and write about a significant service learning experience; in other sections, students learn how the public use of argument has the

potential to affect an audience and to effect a change in their communities.

- Health and Wellness—students read arguments about, write arguments about, and discuss those intellectual, emotional, and spiritual issues that give human existence vitality and meaning.

### Textbook Information

- Geer, Schiller, Segal, and Glencross, *Gateways to Democracy: The Essentials*, [4e **Enhanced**], Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. (Indicated as “GTD” on course readings schedule).
- MindTap is a web-based learning tool that includes a digital copy of the Geer text, study tools, weekly activities, weekly wrap it up quizzes, and the final. Cost is included with your textbook if purchased through Barnes & Noble Bookstore located in NUC bldg. Instructions for registering your MindTap account are included online. Additionally, the registration card included with your textbook includes the course key and instructions on how to register. Technical support questions should be directed to MindTap Tech Support. Each MindTap activity designated by the following: **COUNTS TOWARDS GRADE** and should be completed by the due date and time indicated in MindTap and below.
- **WARNING:** Purchasing the textbooks and MindTap access separately may result in a higher cost.
- Follow American political news at: *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Economist*, etc.

### Course Outline, Assignment Overview, and Grading

#### Course Outline

Week	Start Dates	Chapter Covered	Assignments Due (MindTap & Discussion) at 11:59 PM
Week 1	10-Oct	Ch. 2 & 3 – Gateways to Democracy (GTD)	16-Oct
Week 2	17-Oct	Ch. 4 & 5 - GTD	23-Oct
Week 3	24-Oct	Ch. 6 & 7 - GTD	30-Oct
Week 4	31-Oct	Ch. 8 & 9 - GTD	6-Nov
Week 5	7-Nov	Ch. 10 & 11- GTD	13-Nov
Week 6	14-Nov	Ch. 12 & 13 - GTD	20-Nov
Week 7	21-Nov	Ch. 15 & 16 - GTD	4-Dec
Week 8	5-Dec	Final	11-Dec

#### Assignments Overview

*MindTap Activities (Watch and Consider & Focus Activities) (35%):* Each week on MindTap, you will complete a series of activities as weekly homework. These activities are designed to assist your development of understanding regarding American national government more generally and, specifically, concepts, terms, and theories introduced in course readings and explained during course lectures. Due dates are listed on course schedule in this syllabus.

*MindTap Wrap It Up Quizzes (25%):* Using MindTap, you will complete Wrap It Up chapter quizzes for each assigned chapter from our course textbook. Each quiz is timed with one opportunity to complete the quiz. Due dates are listed on course schedule. Your lowest score will be dropped.

*Current Events Discussion Forum (25%):* (On D2L). You will critically assess a current policy through submitting one discussion post and two replies to discussion posts made by other students in the class. You will submit one weekly forum post, on D2L, in which you critically assess a specific policy. You must also comment on two separate posts/threads to this election forum discussion, made by two different classmates each week. Rely upon your growing knowledge of American Government to inform your critical assessment. You must submit a total of 7 posts/threads and 14 replies throughout the course. The forum will be moderated and netiquette is expected. Due dates are listed on course schedule in this syllabus.

Each original submission must include the following:

- a description of the policy, as interpreted through a news article
  - the news article must be from a **reputable** news source; personal opinion sites (blogs), extremist sites, etc. will not work

- a personal opinion about that policy
- a citation for the news article
  - the recommended format is APA:
  - Last, F. M. (Year, Month Date Published). Article title. Newspaper Title, pp. Page(s).

Below is an example of a critical assessment:

*Trump said, "I will build a great wall – and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me – and I'll build them very inexpensively. I will build a great, great wall on our southern border, and I will make Mexico pay for that wall. Mark my words." In this quote, President Trump demonstrates his policy position on immigration by saying he will build a wall to keep out illegal immigrants. He believes a physical barrier that is large and vast is an effective way to control illegal immigration.*

*I have multiple issues with this claim: 1. a 700-mile wall already exists on our southern border. The republicans built it during the GW Bush administration. 2. Drones fly over walls. 3. Tunnels go under walls. 4. Mexico has said it won't pay. 5. What about property rights? Much of our southern border traverses private land. 6. The 700-mile wall, has sections that are open so that wildlife may pass through, protecting the fragile ecosystem on our southern border. Wait, a sec, humans can pass through those openings as well! What's the point of a wall with holes and missing sections? In short, how secure will we be with the sort of border wall we can build?*

*Citation: Kessler, Glenn (2019, January 8). President Trump's nonsensical claim that Mexico is paying for the wall. The Washington Post, online. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/01/08/president-trumps-desperate-nonsensical-claim-that-mexico-is-paying-wall/>*

Replies to your classmates' posts should be substantial and may require doing your own research. Simple agreement or disagreement will not be sufficient.

**Final Exam (15%):** You will answer five essay questions related to the content of the course. You will first complete a thought assignment and then explain your reasoning for your choices. This will take place in the MindTap platform.

### Extra Credit Opportunity

*Political Music Sampling (2 points per submission up to 2 submissions (4 points max added to your final)*

To receive credit, submit to D2L the name of a piece of music (name, artist, and YouTube or Spotify link) and a two-sentence description of why you think it is political.

### Grade Scale

A 90-100

B 80-89.99

C 70-79.99

D 60-69.99

F 0-59.99

### Class Policies

#### Make-Up Assignments

You are all adults and should make decisions accordingly. It is your responsibility to obtain the information and to keep up with the course material. Because of the shortened nature of the course and flexibility allowed, no past due assignments will be accepted. Deadline extensions will only be granted under special, confirmable (documented) circumstances. Requests made prior to the deadline are most appreciated. For example, if you are observing a religious holiday that is in conflict with an assignment or exam deadline, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor prior to the assignment or exam deadline of any difficulty completing the assignment or exam on time due to your religious observance.

#### 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.

## Participation

The success of a student's performance is directly related to the quantity and quality of preparation for and participation in course activities.

## Technology

### *D2L*

We will use the computer-based online program "D2L" as the basis for the course. I will use D2L a number of ways, including e-mailing the whole class on updates and information, posting course documents (including any updates to the course outline), using it as an assignment submission tool, to post grades, and other activities. It is vital that you understand how to use D2L as it is essential to your success in class.

### *E-mail*

All course e-mails will be sent to your UCO e-mail address; check your e-mails regularly! In addition, when e-mailing me, I ask that you please include "POL 1113: Online" in the subject line.

## Fine Print

### Illness

Please refer to "Missing Class & Make-Up Assignments" for further details on how illness will be handled. Doctor's notes will be requested.

### Incompletes

All students are expected to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. In those rare circumstances in which completion by semester's end is not possible, I may decide either to 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 submitted, 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. If you are caught violating this policy, I will prosecute to the fullest extent possible.

### 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](mailto:TitleIX@uco.edu). The Title IX Office is located in the Lillard Administration Building, Room 114D.

## UCO Policies

Any topic not covered here is covered by university policies.

**Here is the link to the UCO Information Sheet. This information sheet applies to all courses at UCO. The link:**  
<http://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>