



Syllabus for Political Science 1113: American National Government

Course Information

College: Liberal Arts
Department: Political Science
Course title: American National Government
Semester: Spring 2021 – Block 1
Course number: POL 1113
CRN: 25329
Building and Classroom: n/a (WWW)
Meeting Days/Time: n/a (WWW)

Instructor Information

Instructor name: Dr. Alyssa L. Provencio
Instructor title: Assistant Professor
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 by request. I am not holding any face-to-face meetings.
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.
Campus telephone: (405) 974-5537 – This number will forward to my cell phone when I am not on campus.
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.

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
- You will also need to purchase one of the Very Short Introductions books; more information is provided below under "Book Review & Reflection".
- 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/Module	Chapters	Module Starts: Tuesday, 12 AM	Recommended Discussion Post Due Date	Module Ends: Monday, 11:59 PM	Other
Week/Module 1	1 & 2	19-Jan	22-Jan	25-Jan	
Week/Module 2	3 & 4	26-Jan	29-Jan	1-Feb	
Week/Module 3	5 & 12	2-Feb	5-Feb	8-Feb	(should be halfway done with VSI book)
Week/Module 4	6 & 7	9-Feb	12-Feb	15-Feb	
Week/Module 5	8 & 9	16-Feb	19-Feb	22-Feb	
Week/Module 6	10 & 11	23-Feb	26-Feb	1-Mar	(should finish VSI book)
Week/Module 7	14 & 15	2-Mar	5-Mar	8-Mar	
Book Review/Reflection due Monday, March 8 @ 11:59 PM					
Week 8	FINAL	9-Mar			Final due Thursday, March 11 @ 11:59 PM

Assignments Overview

Weekly Quiz (25%) – found under D2L Quizzes: Using D2L, you will complete weekly quizzes per module, which will contain questions from each chapter from our course textbook. Due dates are listed on course schedule. You can take it up to three times, but your score will be averaged. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Weekly Reflection (25%) – submission under D2L Assignments: Using D2L, you will reflect on 2 questions of your choice each week/module - one question per chapter. There will be questions per chapter from which to choose. If there are multiple parts to one question, ensure you answer all parts. Due dates are listed on the course schedule.

Current Events Discussion Forum (20%) – submission on D2L Discussion Board: You will critically assess a current issue 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 government-related issue/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 – I recommend you post your original thread by Wednesday of each week to allow others to comment on your post by the Sunday deadline.

Each original submission must include the following:

- a description of the issue/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 using critical analysis
- 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 description and critical analysis:

Description:

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.

Critical Analysis:

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:

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.

Book Review & Reflection (15%) – submission located under D2L Assignments: You will select one of the following topics and purchase/borrow the corresponding book in the [Very Short Introductions book series](#). You will read the book and produce a paper connecting the material in the book to the content of the class. More information will be provided on D2L on [how to complete the assignment](#). The due date is listed in the course schedule; a recommended reading schedule is also listed.

Topic	Author(s)
American Immigration	David A. Gerber
American Political Parties and Elections	L. Sandy Maisel
American Slavery	Heather Andrea Williams
American Women's History	Susan Ware
Capitalism	James Fulcher
Communism	Leslie Holmes
Democracy	Bernard Crick
Diplomacy	Joseph M. Siracusa
Fascism	Kevin Passmore
Federalism	Mark J. Rozell, Clyde Wilcox
Free Speech	Nigel Warburton
Liberalism	Michael Freeden

Topic	Author(s)
Nationalism	Steven Grosby
Neoliberalism	Manfred Steger, Ravi K. Roy
Populism	Cas Mudde, Cristóbal Rovira Kalwasser
Progressivism	Walter Nugent
Racism	Ali Rattansi
Socialism	Michael Newman
Taxation	Stephen Smith
The American Presidency	Charles O. Jones
The Cold War	Robert J. McMahon
The U.S. Congress	Donald Ritchie
The U.S. Constitution	David J. Bodenhamer
The U.S. Supreme Court	Linda Greenhouse

Final Exam (15%) – found under D2L Quizzes: You will answer one essay question per chapter over the course material using fact-based content and critical analysis. More information about the final will be given prior to the exam.

Extra Credit Opportunities

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.

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.

Grade Scale

- A 90-100
- B 80-89.9
- C 70-79.9
- D 60-69.9
- F 0-59.9

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, past deadline extensions are unlikely to be granted. Deadline extensions will only be granted under special, confirmable (documented) circumstances. Discussions cannot be made up, all other assignment are at the discretion of the instructor. 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.

“Classroom” Expectations

Participation

The success of a student’s performance is directly related to the quantity and quality of preparation for and participation the course. It is possibly even more important in order to be successful in the online classroom. I fully expect participation and active engagement throughout the semester. I also expect that every student will be respectful of other students’ ideas and experiences; this is not to say that constructive critique can’t be used, only that it be done with tact and regard.

D2L

You all will have access to the online-based instruction program Desire2Learn (D2L). 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. If you have questions, please see me for help.

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 and a short descriptor of what your email is about; for example, POL 1113: Missing Assignment.

Fine Print

Illness

If you are not feeling well, please refer to “Missing Class & Make-Up Assignments” for further details on how sick days will be handled. Because you have a week to complete your assignments, it is assumed you will be able to complete the assignments. This does not apply to more extreme diagnoses, such as COVID-19. Please email me if you have a condition requiring more extreme accommodations.

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.

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.

COVID-19 Considerations

Interaction

Because this is an online class, I will conduct all class-related matters via email, D2L, and Zoom.

Other Resources

If you need any further information about UCO’s COVID-19 re-opening plan, policies, or resources, please visit the [UCO Coronavirus website](#).

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.