



## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

# **POS 2041**

## **American National Government**

**Spring Semester, A Session, 2024**  
**CRN: 10089 • Semester Hours: 3 • Prerequisites:**  
**None Semester Dates: January 5 -May 3**

### **Instructor Information:**

David Fistein, PhD  
BA, Sociology, SUNY Buffalo State College  
MS, International Relations, Troy University, European Division  
MA, Political Science, University of Missouri – St. Louis  
PhD, Political Science, University of Missouri – St. Louis

**Instructor's office phone:** (850) 769 -1551 extension 2826

**Instructor's email:** [dfistein@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:dfistein@gulfcoast.edu)

### **Office Hours:**

Mondays: 11:00am - 12:00pm	&	2:00pm - 3:30pm
Tuesdays : 9:00am - 9:30am	&	12:30pm - 2:00 pm
Wednesday: 10:00am - 12:00pm	&	2:00pm - 4:00 pm
Thursdays: 9:00am - 9:30am	&	3:15pm- 4:15pm

No office hours on Fridays

### **Division Chair Information:**

Dr. Robert Saunders, Jr., Chair  
Social Sciences Division  
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### **Social Sciences Senior Administrative Assistant:**

Ms. Jody Walton  
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### Required Textbook:

We The People (13th essentials edition) Ginsburg/Lowi/Weir, W.W. Norton

13 digit ISBN: 978-1-324-02268-8

### POS 2041 Catalog/Course Description and Broad Goals:

- A comprehensive examination of the theory, practice, ideals, and realities of government and politics in the United States. Major areas of study include behavior and participation, the legislative, the presidency, the judicial process, and the administrative state. Other relevant topics: The United States Constitution.
- This course is primarily lecture and reading based, with opportunities for discussions every day in face-to-face classes and once weekly via discussion board for online classes.
- The broad goals of the course include students learning and retaining a significant amount of factual information about the U.S. Constitution, how the U.S. government works and its historical development; developing critical thinking and deductive reasoning skills; and, improving communication skills.

### Student Learning Outcomes for POS 2041

The successful POS 2041 experience will result in the student's ability to correctly describe, analyze, and evaluate the following concepts as demonstrated by student performance in written assignments, research, collaborative learning projects, objective and subjective test questions designed to gauge and reinforce critical thinking and communication skills. To facilitate your learning & prepare for exams, please get in the habit of reviewing this list every week to ensure you understand and remember the main ideas.

- Describe and analyze the *foundations and development of the US government* by examining historical events leading up to the Revolutionary War, the failure of the Articles of Confederation, and evaluating the content of the United States Constitution and its primary principles.
- Discuss the political significance of *civil rights protections and individual liberties in the US* by describing the content and relevance of the Bill of Rights and other Constitutional Amendments, and by applying Constitutional principles to historical and contemporary issues.
- Describe and evaluate the *structure, roles, and powers of the institutions of American government*, including contemporary *public policymaking* in economic, domestic, and

foreign policy domains.

- Describe and analyze *relationships between the people and the government*, specifically the role of *civil society* and *political processes* like elections and identify one's own *ideological perspective(s)*.

### **Instructor-Specific Learning Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of POS 2041, students will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate college-level knowledge of the primary events, ideas, values, and perceptions that have shaped the American National Government.
- 2) Identify foundational developments that helped shape the American National Government such as the Constitutional Convention, the concept of Federalism, and early political divisions such as the Federalists versus Anti-Federalists, as well as historical events such as Shays' rebellion.
- 3) Demonstrate that they have learned the factual details about political parties, the two-party system, the electoral process, check and balances and details about the three branches of governments.
- 4) participate in the democratic process as an informed citizen by voting or starting an interest group, and discuss the role of the media in politics and their personal choices of sources of information about politics
- 5) Use basic knowledge about the United States economy and foreign policy to construct their own policy proposals about the direction our government should take.

### **6A-10.02413-1 Civics Literacy Competency**

Prior to the award of an associate in arts, associate in science, or a baccalaureate degree, first-time-in-college students entering a Florida College System institution in the 2021-2022 school year, and thereafter, must demonstrate competency in civics literacy by completing (a) and (b) prior to graduation:

**(a)** Successfully passing either POS 2041 American Government or AMH 2020 United States History Since 1877. Each of the courses must include the following competencies:

- (1) Understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government;
- (2) An understanding of the United States Constitution and its application;

(3) Knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-government; and

(4) An understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

**(b)** Achieving the standard score on one of the following assessments:

Assessment:	Standard Score:
AP Government and Politics, US	3
AP United States History	4
CLEP: American Government	50
Florida Civics Literacy Exam	60

### **Service Learning**

Service Learning is...

a specific program wherein students can participate in off-campus experiences that mirror their on-campus studies. Through a combination of classroom interaction, research/reflection and hand-on activity, students gain an applied critical thinking-focused introduction to their major field of study or simply learn the political reality and policy implications of theories learned in a specific course. By understanding how policies develop and the impact of those policies on real people, you will better prepare yourself to accept the responsibilities of citizenship and be a leader in your community. Ask professor for details first week of school if interested.

**Includes min 15 hours of some type of community service, a journal, and a reflective essay**

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS OF THE INSTRUCTOR/**

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENTS**

#### **Expectations Statements:**

- Students enrolled in this section of POS 2041 can expect a comprehensive, highly detailed, and balanced study of American Government past and present.
- Let me know of problems or issues as soon as possible. I am always open to questions and to handling any problems you are experiencing with the course.
- Students can expect to receive replies to emails to the professor within 24 hours—48 hours on weekends.
- Students enrolled in this section of POS 2041 are expected to use Canvas

Students will be automatically enrolled in Canvas for use with this course. *Canvas* is available through the college's main website at [www.gulfcoast.edu](http://www.gulfcoast.edu) . Please speak with me if you do not know how to use *Canvas*; technical issues will need to be addressed with our IT staff on

campus. Class updates, reading assignments, and resources will be posted on *Canvas* throughout the semester. Check it often.

**Academic Integrity Policy** - Honest participation in academic endeavors fosters an environment in which optimal learning can take place and is consistent with the college's mission. Academic misconduct, including cheating or plagiarism, is destructive to the spirit of an educational environment. Social Science professors report every instance of student academic misconduct to the college for inclusion on the student's records. "Cheating" includes but is not limited to use of any unauthorized assistance in completing course work. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment as well as the purchase of papers or projects. "Self-plagiarism" occurs when a student submits the same or considerably similar document to fulfill requirements in different classes. For example, if a student submits a term paper in Religion they originally wrote for an English class, this is self-plagiarism. Once a paper receives a grade in one class, it cannot be submitted again for another class. Sanctions for incidences of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incidence and/or its repetition, may range from receiving an F grade (or 0) for the test, assignment, or activity, to failure of the course, to suspension or dismissal from the college.

**Student Accessibility Statement** - Gulf Coast State College supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must register with Student Accessibility Resources. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the student. For information regarding the registration process, email [sar@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:sar@gulfcoast.edu) or call 850-747-3243.

**Recording Lectures** - In accordance with federal and state privacy laws, students may record class lectures for their own personal educational use, in connection with a complaint to the college, or as evidence in internal or external legal proceedings. Students may not publish or upload the recordings or any components thereof without the knowledge and written permission of the faculty member. Failure to obtain permission to publish could lead to the students' having to pay damages, attorney fees, and court costs. For more information about what can be recorded, please see the guidelines in the GCSC Student Handbook.

**Attendance** - Regular class attendance and participation are significant factors that help to promote success in college. In face-to-face courses, students are required to be in class at the beginning of each class session, as attendance will be taken at this time. If a student arrives late, it is his/her responsibility to inform the instructor after class of his/her presence. Failure to do so may result in the student being marked as "Absent." Attendance in an online/hybrid

CANVAS class is defined as submission of complete written assignments prior to their posted deadline.

**Withdrawals** - Students may withdraw themselves from any course until the published withdrawal deadline for that term in the Gulf Coast State College catalog. Students wishing to withdraw from a course and receive a “W” must complete a withdrawal form and submit this to the Office of Enrollment Services prior to the scheduled withdrawal date as published on the college calendar. Social Sciences instructors do not withdraw students from their individual courses under any circumstances. If you feel you have a unique situation that warrants removal from all of your courses for a term after the withdrawal deadline has passed, you may contact the Vice President of Student Affairs to discuss your situation.

**Consequences of Withdrawals** - Two withdrawals are permitted per credit course. After that, a grade will be assigned. Please be concerned about withdrawals. When admitting students into certain programs, universities may calculate withdrawals as grades. It is your responsibility to verify the effects of enrollment and/or withdrawal upon your financial assistance (financial aid, scholarships, grants, etc.).

**Incomplete Grades** - Grades of Incomplete in any Social Sciences course can only be assigned to students who have an emergency arise during the last two weeks of the course.

To receive an Incomplete, students must:

- Submit a written request to the instructor prior to the last face-to-face class meeting. For online courses, a written Incomplete request must be received no later than the week before the Final Exam period begins.
- Have completed no less than 60 percent of the course requirements and be passing the course at the time the request for an Incomplete is submitted.

Important Note: The Incomplete option provides

**Instruments of assessment for POS 2041 include:**

Quiz 1

Quiz 2

Quiz 3

Quiz 4

Midterm Exam

Activity 1

Activity 2

Activity 3

Activity 4

Class Participation

2 ½ page essay written in the English language

Final Exam

**Assignment of Grades:** All examination and assignments grades will appear in the student's gradebook in Canvas. Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

<b>A</b>	<b>90%-100%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>80%-89%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>70%-79%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>60%-69%</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>59% and below</b>