POS 2041
American National Government
CRN 15587

Course Syllabus

Spring Semester 2026, A Session
3 Credit Hours • Pre-requisites: None
9 January 2026 – 8 May 2026

For any syllabus posted before the beginning of the term, the instructor reserves the right to make minor changes before or during the term. The instructor will notify students via e-mail or Canvas announcement when changes are made in the requirements and/or grading of the course.

Online Courses at Gulf Coast State College: All online courses at GCSC utilize the Canvas Learning System. Students should read all information presented on the Canvas course site and should periodically check for updates--at least every 48 hours.

Remember: This course is not one in which students may work at their own pace. Each week there are learning modules, assignments, online lectures, online discussions, and/or online exams with due dates. Refer to the schedule within this syllabus for more information.

Instructor Contact Information:
Colleen Heeney, MBA, MS
cheeney@gulfcoast.edu

Instructor Education:
BS, Political Science, Florida State University
MS, Applied American Politics and Policy, Florida State University
MBA, Public Management, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth
MS, Peace and Conflict Studies, Ulster University

Dr. Robert Saunders, Chair	Ms. Jody Walton
Social Sciences Division	Senior Administrative Assistant
Office 211 Social Sciences Building	Social Sciences 210
(850) 872- 3826	850-872-3825
rsaunder2@gulfcoast.edu	jwalton1@gulfcoast.edu

Required Textbook:

Book Title: American National Government 3e
Edition: 3rd
Author: Glen Krutz
Copyright: 2021
Publisher: OpenStax
Digit ISBN: 978-1-951693-38-1
Website: https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e

Technology Requirements for this Course: This course requires students to have access to a computer and the Internet. For those students who do not own a computer, computer labs are available on the GCSC campus and in public libraries. Students without internet access can come to the GCSC campus, go to local public libraries or coffee shops, etc.

Minimal technical skills required for this course include the ability to use Microsoft Office products and navigate the Internet.

Technical Assistance:

- Technical support is available by phone 24 hours a day 7 days per week by calling (850) 913-3303.
- Technicians are available on the Panama City Campus from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday.

Catalog Description: 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 US Constitution and its amendments, and The Federalist Papers. The course examines the branches of government and the government's laws, policies, and programs. It also examines the ways in which citizens participate in their government and ways their government responds to citizens.

Teaching Techniques: The means of content delivery for this course include instructor-generated lectures, textbook readings, PowerPoint presentations, discussion board contributions, one-on-one correspondence, online videos, and supplementary websites. Each of these techniques supports the broad goals of students learning the American political system in its most broad aspects and understanding the functions, processes, policies, and philosophical foundations of that system.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of America's constitutional republic.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the nation's founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution and its amendments, and *The Federalist Papers*.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of landmark US 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 an ability to engage in discussion and civil debate on American politics that are associated with multiple points of view.

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 <u>one</u> 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

The Division of Social Sciences has created a Preparation Module for students wishing to prepare for the Florida Civics Literacy Exam. The module is housed within a designated Canvas page. You can self-register for the Canvas Prep Module via the following link: https://gcsc.instructure.com/enroll/FNC8GL.

There also is a link within the module for you to register for the FCLE.
One last note: the FCLE is <u>not</u> part of your grade in POS 2041 – it is entirely separate from your overall grade in our course.

Student Expectation Statement: This course is delivered in its entirety via Canvas. In addition to being an active participant in the course and respecting all assignment deadlines, please be courteous when communicating with other students. Discussion Boards should be used for discussing the course content and answering the assigned discussion prompt. Hostility will not be tolerated.

Electronic Office Hours: Because this is an online course, I do not have on-campus office hours. Please feel free to send me an email or a Canvas message (preferred) when you need assistance, and I will get back to you within one business day.

Course Requirements: Students enrolled in this course will be required to:

- Listen to and take thorough notes on the digital lectures assigned with each weekly Learning Module—I cannot overstress the importance of the digital lectures.
- Read all of the textbook pages assigned with each Learning Module.
- Contribute to the Discussion Board prompts, when assigned.
- Complete all three Unit Exams AS SCHEDULED (see the course schedule below).
- Contact the instructor via email or Canvas at once with any problems or issues. I cannot handle problems unless you make me aware of them.

Instructor Policies and General Information: You should be mindful of how you communicate with the instructor for this course. Proofread your messages before sending them, and always be respectful. Before sending your instructor a message, check to make sure your concern has not already been addressed in a Canvas course announcement, a Canvas message to the class, or this syllabus.

Attendance Policy: A student's acquisition of learning outcomes is tied to attendance. Excessive absences guarantee that a student has not had minimal exposure to enough of the student learning outcomes to receive credit for the course. As such, missing multiple class periods will likely lead to failure.

For an online course, attendance is measured by assignment submissions. To be counted as present for the week's classes, students must submit at least one of the week's assignments. The only way to be successful in this course is to keep up with all the assigned readings, coursework, and to complete the weekly assignments.

Make-Up Work Policy: Students should be forewarned that my policies on missed and late work in this class are strict and rigid. With very few exceptions, I will not accept any late work in this course. Please acquaint yourself with the assignment deadlines now and prepare ahead to ensure that you do not miss any assignments or assignment deadlines.

Listed below are the exceptions to this course's no-tolerance late policy:
Students should promptly contact me when any unforeseen, legitimate circumstance beyond his/her control (i.e., things that do not involve a choice, like documented illness or medical emergency; family funeral; or athletic travel) occurs that may result in a missed assignment deadline. Students who foresee missing assignment deadlines due to voluntary travel or other circumstances within the student's control should submit work early.

Likewise, note that a lack of access to internet services is not a valid excuse for missing or late work. As an online student, it is your responsibility to figure out a way to submit your work. The library on campus is open after hours and there are many public spaces with free Wi-Fi (your public library, Panera, McDonald's, etc.). Take advantage of the Canvas app and other services on your phone as well, if possible.

Further, if Canvas is down or not letting you submit, you should email the assignment to me as an attached PDF or .docx file from your GCSC email account before the deadline for that assignment has passed.

Students should be forewarned that my policies on missed and late work in this class are strict and rigid. With very few exceptions, I will not accept any late work in this course. Please acquaint yourself with the assignment deadlines now and prepare ahead to ensure that you do not miss any assignments or assignment deadlines.

Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy (AI): See the student handbook for further information. Students with questions about acceptable use should consult their instructor.

Limited Assistive Use Only: Students may use basic assistive technologies for spelling, grammar, and formatting (e.g., PaperRater or SpellCheckPlus); however, the use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI function, etc.) for generating, rewriting, or enhancing content is not permitted. All work must reflect the student's original ideas and writing. Representing work created by AI as one's own is a violation of academic integrity and may result in penalties, including a zero on the assignment and additional disciplinary actions as outlined in the college's academic integrity policy.

Assignment of Grades:

A   90%-100%
B   80%-89.9%
C   70%-79.9%
D   60%-69.9%
F   59.9% and below

Social Sciences Policies
AY 2025-2026

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 in the student's records.

- "**Cheating**" includes but is not limited to the use of any unauthorized assistance in completing coursework.

- "**Plagiarism**" includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of another person's published or unpublished work 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.

- **The use of AI software** in any form to create class assignments may violate GCSC's Academic Integrity Policy. **Before employing AI technology in any manner and to any degree, students should consult with their professors for all courses offered through the Social Sciences Division.**

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 aspects of this course's instruction or design hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Before 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 or call 850-747-3243.

Recording Lectures - Under federal and state privacy laws, students may record class lectures for their 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 student(s) paying damages, attorney fees, and court costs.

For more information about what can be recorded, please see the guidelines in the current GCSC Student Handbook.

Email & Voicemail Response Time - Instructors will check and respond to messages sent to their gulfcoast.edu email within 48 hours during scheduled workdays, barring illness or emergencies. The instructor may or may not check email during holidays or weekends. This policy also applies to messages sent via Canvas, as well as voicemails left on a provided phone number.

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 the submission of complete written assignments before 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 before the scheduled withdrawal date as published on the college calendar. 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 before 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 30 days from the date grades are due to make up any missing work; if work is not submitted during this period, the grade will automatically change to an "F."