

POS 2041 - 51878

Course Syllabus

Summer 2026 (Session E: 6/8/2026 – 7/31/2026)

American National Government



Catalogue 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.

Credit hours: 3

Prerequisites: None

Contact Information

Instructor:

Dr. Steven L. Neely
Social Sciences Division
(850) 319-4290
sneely@gulfcoast.edu

Please include your name and course title in the subject line of any e-mails sent to the instructor. I ask that you do not send me an email as if you are sending a text. Common courtesy dictates that you tell me who you are.

Social Sciences Division Contacts:

Dr. Robert Saunders, Chair

Social Sciences Division

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Instructor Education:

BS, Biology, Methodist College, Fayetteville, North Carolina, 1974

MS, Government, Campbell University, Buies Creek, North Carolina, 1984

ABD, International Relations, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT, 1990

EdD, Education, University of Phoenix, Phoenix, Arizona, 2014

Student Learning Objectives (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.

Technology Requirements

Canvas is where course content, grades, and communication will reside for this course. All exams will require the use of the LockDown Browser.

For Canvas, passwords, or any other computer-related technical support contact the IT Service Help Desk. Technical support is available by phone 24 hours a day 7 days per week by calling (850) 913-3303.

Textbook & Reading Materials

***American Government 3e* from Openstax by Glen Krutz and Slyvie Waskiewicz, 2019. Find the free textbook here: <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government>Links to an external site.Links to an external site. . Or, you can buy a printed hardcopy from the bookstore.**

Syllabus Policy

For any syllabus posted prior to the beginning of the term, the instructor reserves the right to make minor changes prior to 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.

All online courses at GCSC utilize the Canvas Learning System. Students should read all information presented in 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.

Course Policies

Student Expectation Statement:

Students enrolled in this course will be required to:

1. Participate and take thorough notes on videos and lectures.
2. Read all textbook assignments and assigned materials BEFORE the lecture.
3. Complete all assignments AS SCHEDULED.
4. Contact the instructor via email at once with any problems or issues.
5. Do your own work.
6. ASK QUESTIONS!

Method of Evaluation:

Attendance	5%
Introduction	5%
Quizzes	30%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Capstone Project	10%

Assignment of Grades:

All grades will be posted in the student grade book in Canvas and will be assigned according to the following scale:

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

Assessment Instruments:

Multiple choice quizzes/tests, essays, projects, discussions

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to submit assignments on time. Attendance is graded. You will be counted in attendance when assignments are submitted on time. Late submissions will be counted as an absence.

Make-Up Work Policy:

All work is expected to be turned in on time. In the case of absences, make-up work must be scheduled with the instructor within one week of the due date for missing work.

Social Sciences Division Policies

Academic Integrity

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. GCSC professors report every instance of student academic misconduct to the college for inclusion in the student's records.

Prohibited Use of AI: The use of AI-generated content is strictly prohibited in all assignments, class work, and throughout all stages of the work process, such as brainstorming, outlining, or drafting. This includes, but is not limited to, tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, and Grammarly's AI function. Use of AI tools will be treated as 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.

"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 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 a considerably similar document to fulfill requirements in different classes. For example, if a student submits a term paper in Religion that 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 incidents of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incident 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.

Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy

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.

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 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 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” in Lighthouse.

Students with Disabilities

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 or call 850-747-3243.

Classroom/ Lecture Recordings

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.