

## **Political Science 2041-006: Government of the United States**

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Florida Atlantic University, Summer 2024 (Second Half Term)

Course Credits: 3.000 Prerequisites/Corequisites: None

Fully Online Class (Distance Learning)

**Professor:** Dr. Rebecca LeMoine

**Contact:** rlemoine@fau.edu or (561) 287-3947

**Office Location:** Zoom (email for link)

**Office Hours:** Thurs. 2:00 – 4:00PM,  
or by appt.

**GTA:** Annabelle Campbell (annabellecam2013@fau.edu)

**GTA Office hours:** Tuesdays 10:00AM – 12:00PM

**GTA Office location:** Zoom appointment

### **Course 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 United States constitution and all 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.

### **Objectives**

#### **Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of America's constitutional republic.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the nation's founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and its amendments, and The Federalist Papers.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation and landmark executive actions.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the history and development of the American federal government and its impact on law and society.
5. Students will demonstrate an ability to apply course material to contemporary political issues and debates.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in discussion and civil debate on American politics that are associated with multiple points of view.

#### **Intellectual Foundations Program Learning Outcomes**

This is an IFP course (see [Intellectual Foundations Program - General Education Curriculum](#)).

As such, it fulfills requirements for IFP Learning Outcomes for Gen. Ed. Foundation F4, including:

1. Be able to identify patterns of human behavior; (IFP:1)
2. Demonstrate an understanding of how political, social, cultural, or economic institutions influence human behavior; (IFP:2)

3. Understand key social science methods and the theoretical foundations behind these methods; (IFP:3)
4. Be able to apply social science methods to the analysis of social, cultural, psychological, ethical, political, technological, or economic issues or problems. (IFP:4)

The course also fulfills IFP General Education Outcomes, including:

1. Knowledge in several different disciplines; (IFP:5)
2. The ability to think critically; (IFP:6)
3. The ability to communicate effectively; (IFP:7)
4. An appreciation for how knowledge is discovered, challenged, and transformed as it advances; (IFP:8) and
5. An understanding of ethics and ethical behavior. (IFP:9)

### **Civic Literacy Objectives**

This course helps to fulfill the State of Florida's Civic Literacy Requirement (Florida Statute 1007.25) competencies and outcomes, including:

1. Understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government;
2. Understanding of the Constitution of the United States and its application;
3. Knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance;
4. Understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

### **Course Level Objectives**

As a result of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Discuss American government and politics; (CO:1)
2. Develop critical reading, writing, and speaking skills, especially to make a convincing argument; (CO:2)
3. Develop skills to become self-directed learners and engaged citizens; (CO:3)
4. Prepare for further work in political science; (CO:4)
5. Participate as a member of a peer-based team of learners. (CO:5)

*(IFP=Intellectual Foundations Program Learning Outcome)*

*(CO=Course Objective)*

### **Course Delivery Mode**

This class is designated as a **“Fully Online Class”** with no on-campus attendance requirements.

To complete the work for this course, you will need to purchase access to the electronic textbook/quizzes (see “Required Textbooks” below) and be able to log in to FAU's learning management system, Canvas, using your FAU ID and Password. If you do not know your FAU ID or Password, [contact OIT for help](#).

The course is organized into modules with due dates. Unless otherwise specified, each module begins on Saturday at 12:00am Eastern Time and ends on Friday at 11:59pm Eastern Time. The course begins with the Start Here module, which will familiarize you with the organization and navigation of the course. Each week, you should begin by completing the assigned readings listed

in the schedule found at the end of this syllabus. Then, open that week's learning module on Canvas to access the lecture videos, learning aids, and other relevant materials. Finally, complete any required assignments by the due date. This course is designed to be self-paced. It requires independent learning and dedicated time management.

**Please note that every Thursday from 1:00 – 2:00PM Eastern Time there will be a discussion on Zoom (accessible via Canvas Zoom tab).** You are not required to attend these sessions, but attendance is *strongly* encouraged. Think of these discussions as an opportunity to engage more deeply with the material and thereby prepare for the exams and other course assignments. I am doing these sessions so the university can document it to the Board of Governors.

### Required Texts

In this course, we will use the **Revel (electronic) version** of O'Connor and Sabato's *American Government: Roots and Reform*, 2022 Midterm Elections Update Edition (14<sup>th</sup> edition). You may choose to purchase a print copy in addition, but please note that you will need access to the *Revel* electronic edition in order to take the quizzes (worth 15% of your final grade). The access code for the e-book is available for purchase by clicking the Pearson tab on the Canvas course homepage and following the prompts. Alternatively, you may purchase an access code from the FAU Bookstore.

Karen O'Connor and Larry J. Sabato, *Revel American Government: Roots and Reform*, 2022 Midterm Elections Update Edition (14<sup>th</sup> edition). ISBN: 9780136900368

### Instructor Availability

It is important to me to be accessible to students throughout the semester. Below are the ways you can contact me:

### FAQ Discussion Board

You should ask general, course-related questions in the FAQ discussion board on Canvas, which will be active throughout the semester. If you have questions of a personal nature, you should email the instructor or TA from your FAU email address or schedule an office hour appointment.

### Email

Except for weekends and holidays, I will typically respond to email within 48 hours. **Please use your FAU email address rather than the Canvas inbox system.** Follow basic norms of professionalism (don't start an email with "hey"). If you have questions about what is appropriate, this is a helpful resource <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>

### Office Hours

On *Thursdays from 2:00 – 4:00PM*, I will be available for Zoom appointments during designated time slots in half-hour increments (e.g., 2:00, 2:30, 3:00). To schedule an appointment, please email me in advance with your preferred time slot(s). I will reply with confirmation of the appointment time and the Zoom link.

### Course Requirements

Discussion Board:	10%
Quizzes:	15%

Mock Op-Ed:	15%
Policy Memo:	15%
Exams:	45% (3 exams @ 15% each)

Discussion Board (10%)

To encourage deeper engagement with the material and your classmates, you will be required to post once each week on the Canvas discussion board. Over the course of the semester, you will write a total of six posts: three “Primary” posts and three “Response” posts. You will alternate which type of post you write based on your last name (students with last names beginning with the letters A-L will complete Primary posts on weeks 1, 3, and 5 and Response posts on weeks 2, 4, and 6. Students with last names beginning with the letters M-Z will complete Primary posts on weeks 2, 4, and 6 and Response posts on weeks 1, 3, and 5).

All posts should be between 100-150 words. Primary posts should include something you learned from that week’s lecture video and a question you have about that week’s material (something you are confused about). Response posts should provide your best attempt to answer a question from another student’s Primary post. Each post is worth 2% of your final course grade; your lowest score will be dropped at the end of the semester. Further instructions can be found on the Canvas assignment page.

Quizzes (15%)

At the end of each chapter in the assigned textbook, there is a Chapter Quiz found on the *Revel* platform. You must complete the assigned chapter quizzes each week, as indicated in the syllabus schedule below. Note that you do NOT need to take the sub-chapter quizzes (e.g., “Quiz 1.1”) – only the quiz at the end of each chapter (e.g., “Chapter 1 Quiz”). It is recommended that you take the quizzes *after* reading the assigned chapters and viewing the material in the course module for that week. ***Your lowest three quiz scores will be dropped at the end of the semester.***

Mock Op-Ed (15%)

For this assignment, you will write a short (750-850 word) op-ed piece designed to be sent to a local newspaper of your choice (*note: sending it is optional*). You will be given a choice of three possible topics on which to write. The goal is to learn how to formulate an informed stance on a substantive political issue, persuasively convey that stance to a wide audience, and reflect on the benefits and limitations of this means of involvement in American government. Further instructions can be found on the Canvas assignment page.

Policy Memo (15%)

For this assignment, you will write a short (1-2 page, single-spaced) policy memo designed to be sent to an elected representative of your choice (*note: sending it is optional*). You will be given a choice of three possible topics on which to write. The goal is to learn how to conduct research on a substantive political issue using reputable sources, present a significant amount of information in a concise and clear manner, and reflect on how policy memos help to inform the work of political representatives. Further instructions can be found on the Canvas assignment page.

Exams (45%)

Three exams worth 15% each will be administered throughout the semester. Each exam will consist of 60 multiple choice questions. You will have 1 hour and 20 minutes to complete the

exam once you start it. Exams will be administered on Canvas using Respondus Monitor proctoring, which means that **you will need a working webcam**. For more information on online proctoring, see this website: <https://www.fau.edu/keep-learning/proctoring/>

Exams will be available to take from 9:00am – 9:00pm Eastern Time on the dates listed below.

**Exam #1: Available on Canvas 9:00AM – 9:00PM on Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Exam #2: Available on Canvas 9:00AM – 9:00PM on Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Exam #3: Available on Canvas 9:00AM – 9:00PM on Friday, Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

### Grading Policies

- *Exams*: Make up exams will be administered only for university-approved reasons (see university attendance policy below), and in all but the most extraordinary of circumstances must be taken within 48 hours of the original exam at a time designated by the instructor. Note that I reserve the right to administer a different version of the exam.
- *Papers*: Late papers will be penalized 5% if less than an hour late. Beyond an hour late (even by a single minute), papers will be penalized 10% per every 24-hour period late. This means that your paper will not be accepted for any credit if it is 10 or more days late. **Since you have the deadlines well ahead of time, experiencing technological difficulties will not count as a valid excuse for submitting late work.** The best way to avoid a late penalty is to make sure to submit your work well ahead of the deadline. **Note that copy-editing and revision are integral parts of the writing process. Papers that show an unacceptably high level of error or carelessness (for instance, five or more errors in a paragraph) will be returned for you to proofread before resubmitting them. You will have five business days to edit the paper and to resubmit it with an automatic penalty of 10%. After five days, the grade on the paper will automatically drop to an F.**
- *Assignment Feedback Policy*: I will provide feedback on all submitted assignments within one week of the submission date. If an assignment requires a longer review period, I will communicate that to you.
- *Graded Work*: I will not discuss grades on any assignments for 24 hours after they have been returned. If, after 24 hours reflection, you do not understand why you received a particular grade, send me a written memo via email and I will respond as soon as possible.
- *Extra Credit*: You can earn up to 3% added to your final course grade (e.g., go from a 90% B+ to a 93% A-) by completing the following extra credit assignments:
  - 1) For a 1% bump to your final course grade, schedule an office hour visit to discuss the material either with me or your TA. To receive the extra credit, you must prepare a few questions or ideas from the textbook/lecture that you want to discuss. You can only receive the extra credit points once.
  - 2) For a 2% bump to your final course grade, communicate with one of your legislators on an issue you care about! To receive the extra credit, you must: (1) prepare a 1-page fact sheet concerning your issue (note: issue must be different from your op-ed and policy memo assignments); (2) contact your legislator and express your concerns to them regarding this issue; and (3) submit your fact sheet along with the representative's name and when and how you contacted them to the extra credit submission folder on Canvas. You can only receive the extra credit points once. If you reside in Florida, these pages are a good starting point:
    - ⇒ <https://www.flsenate.gov/About/EffectiveCommunication>

⇒ <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/contentViewer.aspx?Category=website&File=contact%20us.htm>

**All extra credit must be completed by 11:59PM on Friday, Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

### Grading Scale

A = 94-100	A- = 91-93.99	B+ = 87-90.99	B = 83-86.99
B- = 80-82.99	C+ = 77-79.99	C = 73-76.99	C- = 70-72.99
D+ = 67-69.99	D = 63-66.99	D- = 60-62.99	F = below 60

***Please be aware that you can track grades for individual assignments on the Canvas 'gradebook' but do not rely on the Canvas reported grade. The percentages do not calculate correctly and many assignments cannot be inputted correctly into the interface. Throughout the semester, if you have any concerns you can ask me for an update on your grade.***

### Netiquette

Due to the casual communication common in the online environment, students are sometimes tempted to relax their grammar, spelling, and/or professionalism. Please remember that you are adult students and professionals—your communication should be appropriate. For more in-depth information, please see the [FAU statement on netiquette](#).

### Minimum Technology & Computer Requirements

#### HARDWARE & SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

##### Hardware

- Dependable computer
- Operating system: Windows 10 or macOS Sierra (or higher).
- Computer speakers
- Built-in microphone or headset with microphone
- Webcam

##### Software

- Microsoft 365 Suite
- Reliable web browser (recommended [Chrome](#) or [Firefox](#))
- [Respondus Lockdown Browser](#)
- Canvas mobile app: Download instructions for iOS device or **ANDROID DEVICE**
- **ADOBE READER**
- **ADOBE FLASH PLAYER**

#### INTERNET CONNECTION

- Recommended: Broadband Internet connection with a speed of 4 Mbps or higher.
- To function properly, Canvas requires a high-speed Internet connection (cable modem, DSL, satellite broadband, T1, etc.). The minimum Internet connection speed to access Canvas is a consistent 1.5 Mbps (megabits per second) or higher.
- **CHECK YOUR INTERNET SPEED HERE.**

## PERIPHERALS

- A backup option should be available to minimize the loss of work. This can be an external hard drive, a USB drive, cloud storage, your folder on the FAU servers, or your [Microsoft OneDrive account](#).

## Minimum Technical Skills Requirements

The general and course-specific technical skills you must have to succeed in the course include but are not limited to:

- Accessing Internet.
- Using Canvas (including taking tests, attaching documents, etc.).
- Using Pearson Revel (including taking quizzes).
- Using your Microsoft OneDrive account.
- Using email with attachments.
- Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats such as Microsoft Office Tools.
- Copying and pasting functions.
- Downloading and installing software.
- Using presentation, graphics, and other programs.
- Posting and commenting in an online discussion.
- Searching the FAU library and websites.

## Technical Support

In the online environment, technical issues are always possible (e.g., lost connection, hardware or software failure). Many of these can be resolved relatively quickly, but if you wait until the last minute before due dates, the chances of these glitches affecting your success are greatly increased. Please plan appropriately. If a problem occurs, it is essential you take immediate action to document the issue so your instructor can verify and take appropriate action to resolve the problem. Most issues in Canvas can be resolved by clicking on the “Help” tab located on the menu bar.

When a problem occurs, click “Help” to:

- Report a Problem
- Live Chat with Canvas Support
- Search Canvas Guides

## ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT

1. Contact the eLearning Success Advisor for assistance: (561) 297-3590
2. If you can, make a Print Screen of the monitor when the problem occurs. Save the Print Screen as a .jpg file. If you are unfamiliar with creating a Print Screen file, see **PRINT SCREEN INSTRUCTIONS**.
3. Complete a **HELP DESK TICKET**. Make sure you complete the form entirely and give a full description of your problem so the Help Desk staff will have the pertinent information in order to assist you properly. This includes:
  - a. Select “Canvas (Student)” for the Ticket Type.
  - b. Input the Course ID.

- c. In the Summary/Additional Details section, include your operating system, Internet browser, and Internet service provider (ISP).
- d. Attach the Print Screen file, if available.
4. Send an email to your instructor with all pertinent information of the incident.
5. If you do not have access to a computer, call your instructor with all pertinent information of the incident. If he/she is not available, make sure you leave a detailed message.
6. If you do not hear back from the Help Desk or your instructor within a timely manner (48 hours), it is your responsibility to follow up with the appropriate person until you obtain a resolution.

### **Attendance Policy**

*Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.*

### **Honor Code Violations**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg\\_4.001\\_5-26-10\\_FINAL.pdf](http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg_4.001_5-26-10_FINAL.pdf).

Please note that I take academic dishonesty very seriously. If I catch you plagiarizing or cheating, you will receive an automatic "F" in the course and will be reported to the university, which will likely result in a permanent honor violation notation on your transcript. So that we are all on the same page, here is the university's definition of plagiarism (found in the document linked above):

- “1. The presentation of words from any other source or another person as one's own without proper quotation and citation.*
- 2. Putting someone else's ideas or facts into your own words (paraphrasing) without proper citation.*
- 3. Turning in someone else's work as one's own, including the buying and selling of term papers or assignments.” (FAU Code of Academic Integrity, 2.B)*



### **Disabilities**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at [www.fau.edu/sas/](http://www.fau.edu/sas/). If you require a special accommodation, please make an appointment at the beginning of the semester to discuss the accommodation with me.

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAP) Center**

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to <http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>.

### **Policy on the Recording of Lectures**

Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

It should also be noted that one of the objectives of this course is to facilitate critical thinking and debate around topics, theories, and concepts where disagreement is not only anticipated, but encouraged. The ability to think critically, express your ideas clearly, and respond to the professor and other students civilly is the keystone of the academic experience. In this course, the professor may articulate positions and make statements for the purpose of accomplishing this objective and enhancing the learning environment. As a result, students should keep in mind that, at times, the ideas conveyed during class may not necessarily reflect the professor's personal beliefs or opinions on the subject matter.

### **Course Schedule**

**WEEK 1: SATURDAY, JUNE 22 – FRIDAY, JUNE 28**

#### **Module 1: Foundations of American Government**

*Required readings:*

- Textbook, ch. 1-3

- Appendix II: The Constitution

*Recommended readings:*

- Appendix I: The Declaration of Independence
- “The Articles of Confederation” (on Canvas)
- Appendix III: Federalist No. 51

*Assignments Due:*

- Ch. 1 Quiz (on Revel)
- Ch. 2 Quiz (on Revel)
- Ch. 3 Quiz (on Revel)
- Module 1 Discussion Board Post

**WEEK 2: SATURDAY, JUNE 29 – FRIDAY, JULY 5**

**Module 2: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights**

*Required readings:*

- Textbook, ch. 4-5

*Assignments Due:*

- Ch. 4 Quiz (on Revel)
- Ch. 5 Quiz (on Revel)
- Module 2 Discussion Board Post
- **Exam #1 (on Canvas, available 9:00AM – 9:00PM on Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>)**

**WEEK 3: SATURDAY, JULY 6 – FRIDAY, JULY 12**

**Module 3: Three Branches of the U.S. Government**

*Required readings:*

- Textbook, ch. 6, 7, and 9

*Recommended readings:*

- Federalist No. 48 (on Canvas)
- Federalist No. 69 (on Canvas)
- Federalist No. 78 (on Canvas)

*Assignments Due:*

- Ch. 6 Quiz (on Revel)
- Ch. 7 Quiz (on Revel)
- Ch. 9 Quiz (on Revel)
- Module 3 Discussion Board Post
- **Mock Op-Ed (due by 11:59PM on Friday, July 12<sup>th</sup>)**

**WEEK 4: SATURDAY, JULY 13 – FRIDAY, JULY 19**

**Module 4: Political Socialization and Civic Participation**

*Required readings:*

- Textbook, ch. 10-11

*Assignments Due:*

- Ch. 10 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Ch. 11 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Module 4 Discussion Board Post
- **Exam #2 (on Canvas, available 9:00AM – 9:00PM on Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>)**

**WEEK 5: SATURDAY, JULY 20 – FRIDAY, JULY 26**

**Module 5: Elections and Political Influence**

*Required readings:*

- Textbook, ch. 12-14

*Recommended readings:*

- Wagner and Gainous, “Tweeting Politics: How the Internet has Allowed Politicians to Influence Political News Coverage in the U.S.” (on Canvas)

*Assignments Due:*

- Ch. 12 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Ch. 13 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Ch. 14 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Module 5 Discussion Board Post
- **Policy Memo (due by 11:59PM on Friday, July 26<sup>th</sup>)**

**WEEK 6: SATURDAY, JULY 27 – FRIDAY, AUG. 2**

**Module 6: U.S. Domestic and Foreign Policy**

*Required readings:*

- Textbook, ch. 15-16

*Assignments Due:*

- Ch. 15 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Ch. 16 Quiz (on *Revel*)
- Module 6 Discussion Board Post
- **Exam #3 (on Canvas, available 9:00AM – 9:00PM on Friday, Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>)**