**Course Syllabus**

POS 2041 – U.S. Government

Spring 2021, CRN 26426 3 Credit Hours

**Instructor:** Professor Brittany Shaul

**Contact:** The best way to contact me is via the email function in Canvas. If you do not have access to Canvas at any time, you may also contact me at bshaul@valenciacollege.edu.

**Office Hours:** By appointment only. We can also set up a meeting via Skype.

**Course Description**

Analysis of the organization structure and operational dynamics of the U.S. national government, both past and present, and an examination of the U.S. Constitution, including principles and theories supporting it. This course includes learning activity designed to ensure competence in the basic use of computers.

**Valencia Competencies**

Valencia faculty have defined four interrelated competencies (Think, Value, Communicate, ACT) that prepare students to succeed in the world community. These competencies are outlined in the College Catalog. In this course, you will further develop these competencies through discussion and other learning activities, as this course seeks to engage students in activities that promote informed and active citizens outside of the classroom.

**Course Text**

**1.  We the People 12th Edition.**Ginsberg, Lowi, et al.**Norton. 2019.** ISBN: 0393679675.

**2.  Since this entire course takes place on Canvas, it is important that you have access to Canvas and a** reliable internet connection.

**Course Grading Scale**

90 –100% = “A” Outstanding coursework

80 –89.99% = “B” Above average coursework

70 -79.99% = “C” Average coursework

60 –69.99% = “D” Below average coursework

0 –59.99% = “F” Failing coursework

Do not request for your grade to be rounded at the end of the semester. You will have ample opportunity during the course to succeed. If you feel you are falling behind, contact me earlier in the semester so you will have the opportunity to improve before the end of the course!

**Course Evaluation**

Your grade will be based on the following assignments:

Discussions – 30%

Weekly Quizzes – 30%

Short Assignments – 20%

Final Exam – 20%

**Discussions**

* You will complete discussions throughout the semester to assess your ability to apply the class materials. Due dates are typically Fridays for your initial post and Sundays for your discussion with classmates (although these dates may be altered for college closures and finals). There will be a total of 7 assigned discussions for the course.
* Follow your course schedule for specific due dates.
* The discussion prompts will be posted in the modules and will vary based on the topics covered in the readings for that week. Be mindful that some discussions will require you to use Internet search engines such as Google to conduct research to answer the prompts.
* All referenced materials, including your course text, must be cited using MLA format (refer to the module “Citations and MLA Format” for information on how to cite using MLA format).

**Weekly Quizzes**

* You will complete weekly quizzes to assess your knowledge of the assigned readings. Due dates are typically Sundays at 11:59 p.m. (although the date may be altered for college closures and finals).
* Quiz questions may include multiple choice, true/false, or short answer questions.
* Follow your course schedule for specific due dates.

**Short Assignments**

* You will complete short written assignments that will be submitted as individual submissions (assignments must also be submitted as Word documents, as I may be unable to open any submissions that are not Word documents). Assignment prompts will be posted in the modules and will vary based on the topics covered in the readings for that week.
* Follow your course schedule for specific due dates.
* All referenced materials, including your course text, must be cited using MLA format (refer to the module “Citations and MLA Format” for information on how to cite using MLA format).

**Final Exam**

The final exam will be a cumulative exam consisting of fifty questions. Questions may include multiple choice, true/false, or short answer questions. **No late submissions will be accepted for the final exam.**

**General Guidelines for Discussions**

* Your replies must be substantive (replies must be at least 50 words)
	+ Avoid simply reiterating what your classmates said
	+ Avoid only stating things such as “great job” or “I agree.” While you may post encouraging remarks such as these to your classmates, make sure you also provide replies that are more descriptive and substantive. For example, you may state that you agree or disagree with something your classmate said, but it is important to also include *why* you agree/disagree.
* Always be respectful in your postings/replies to your classmates. You are likely to disagree on some points made during a discussion (in fact, it would be odd if we all agreed on every issue!), but make sure you always try to articulate your point or areas of disagreement in a respectful manner.
* **You must cite all referenced materials using MLA format,** including your course text!

**Extra Credit**

You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit by completing all **7** discussion posts. You may choose to only complete **6** discussions without penalty (meaning you get one week you can choose not to complete a discussion post), or you can complete all discussion posts, and the last post will count as extra credit toward your discussion grade.

**Late Assignments**

Assignments will be graded with a 10 percent penalty for everyday late. After 10 days, the assignment will no longer be accepted. Make-up assignments without penalty will not be accepted, except under extreme circumstances that will be determined by the professor. Plan ahead and avoid waiting until the last minute to submit an assignment. Remember, anything that can go wrong, will go wrong!

**Note: Late submissions will not be accepted for the final exam, as grades are due shortly after the exam date.**

**What I Expect from Students**

* You are expected to check Canvas at least three times per week.
* You are expected to read the announcements posted in the course and your Canvas email.
* You are expected to keep track of assignment deadlines.
* You are expected to complete multiple assignments in one week. With online courses, it is important that you plan ahead and dedicate enough time to keep up with the assignments.
* Since this course is worth three credit hours, you are expected to spend around five to nine hours per week on the course.

**What You can Expect from Me**

* When you send me an email, you can expect a response from me within 24 hours during the week (responses may take longer on the weekends, during holidays, or campus closures).
* I will try to work to have grades returned to you within one week of the assignment due date. I want to ensure you have the tools you need to succeed, which includes knowing what improvements can be made. I want to make sure you have feedback in a timely manner, that way you have the opportunity to improve for future assignments.
* I will send out weekly announcement reminders for upcoming deadlines and updates on grading.

**Grade Inquiries**

If you feel an error has been made in the grading of your assignment, you may email me via the email function in Canvas to request a review of your grade within **5 days of the grade being posted**. In order for your assignment to be reviewed, you must do the following:

* Review the feedback on the assignment
* Review the rubric and all assignment requirements to ensure all parts of the assignment were fully completed and all deadlines were met
* Provide an explanation for why your grade should be different

Essentially, you should take the time to review and reflect on your own work and the assignment requirements before making a case on why your grade should be different. I will take time to carefully review all submitted work and provide feedback, but there are cases where mistakes may be made, or I may misinterpret your answers in assignments. This being said, do not be afraid to ask for a review of your assignment!

Avoid inquiring about a grade via the comment function on an assignment. I may not see your comment, or my response may be delayed. The best way to inquire about a grade is via the email function in Canvas.

**Withdrawal Policy**

Per Valencia Policy 4-07 (Academic Progress, Course Attendance and Grades, and Withdrawals), a student who withdraws from class before the withdrawal deadline (March 26, 2021) will receive a grade of “W.” Students are not permitted to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline, so if you choose to stay in the course after this date, you are responsible for all required coursework. Any work that is not completed by the appropriate deadline will receive a zero. Students can still be withdrawn by the college for violations of the college’s code of conduct policies. I will not withdraw students for failure to attend, so you must withdraw from the course if you wish to do so. For more information on withdrawals, refer to:

https://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/academicpoliciesprocedures/courseattemptscoursewithdrawal/

**Incompletes**

Per college policy, an incomplete may be assigned if you are progressing satisfactorily and, for valid, well documented, reasons (emergencies such as serious illness requiring hospitalization), cannot complete the work of a course within the term. Proper documentation must be provided upon request. https://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/academicpoliciesprocedures/incompletes/

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a Notification to Instructor (NTI) form from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities. Contact information: West Campus SSB, Rm. 102 Ph.: 407-582-1523 Fax: 407-582-1326. https://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/studentservices/officeforstudentswithdisabilities/

**Personal Conduct**

I will uphold all of Valencia College’s policies regarding academic dishonesty and classroom conduct as per the Valencia College catalog section 6HX28:10-16 and 6HX28:10-18 and violation of Student Code of Classroom Conduct shall result in disciplinary action as prescribed in the Valencia College Catalog:  <http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/documents/Volume8/8-03-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

All material related to cheating or plagiarism will be given a grade of zero and will possibly be referred to the dean for further action including possible withdrawal from the course as well as other legal/college penalties.  See catalog for details:  <http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/documents/Volume8/8-03-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

This is a political science course that will cover topics that may be considered sensitive to some students. You are expected to always respond to other students in a respectful manner and try to be open to listening to the other perspectives you are likely to be exposed to. Per Valencia policy, hateful or intimidating speech of any nature will not be tolerated and will result in ejection from the virtual classroom.

**Student Resources**

**Academic Advising:**

* Call: 407-582-1507
* Email: advising@valenciacollege.edu
* Link to “chat” [https://valenciacollege.edu/students/advising-counseling/](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvalenciacollege.edu%2Fstudents%2Fadvising-counseling%2F&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062055506&sdata=JFOQhzjN551HrJLHM47G1pTFies7EfU%2FqV3uKXElMyw%3D&reserved=0)
* Hours
	+ Mon-Fri: 7 AM – 10 PM
	+ Sat and Sun: - 10 AM - 10 PM

**Virtual Answer Center:**

·         M-F 7a-10p

·         Sat/Sun 10a-10p

·         [Zoom Link to Virtual Answer Center](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvalenciacollege.zoom.us%2Fj%2F114067187%3Fstatus%3Dsuccess&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062055506&sdata=7UzDhrnTOpDlvtNH6gDULq2x4XLZeJC8DqedwHWhSts%3D&reserved=0)

·         [Website](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvalenciacollege.edu%2Fstudents%2Fanswer-center%2F&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062065500&sdata=Z9aOXJLp5KWsC0AdF640tfK6EBOXDR0ejw3I1WF6nck%3D&reserved=0) for Virtual Answer Center

**Counseling Services:**

·         M-Th 8a-8p

·         Friday 8a-5p

·         Sat/Sun 10a-3p

·         Valencia Counselor Coronavirus resources: [https://create.piktochart.com/output/45137110-counselors-reponse-coronavirus](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcreate.piktochart.com%2Foutput%2F45137110-counselors-reponse-coronavirus&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062065500&sdata=7Loh5kBmmBwZQLIbkNSCIlZuV6mRsMIYmTs6Q9jS%2BJM%3D&reserved=0)

·         Student Self-Refer form: [www.bit.ly/VCounselingSupport](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bit.ly%2FVCounselingSupport&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062075495&sdata=8s5ij0Ues5jhdKJkVpESS01iqh2gNprP6TAcGfBuGt4%3D&reserved=0)

·         Refer Students to Counseling: [www.bit.ly/VCounselingReferral](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bit.ly%2FVCounselingReferral&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062075495&sdata=eWqJKrLAgW%2FotG62gGRL6Cf7dfHp%2BDB0hLbvK1dyLVk%3D&reserved=0)

**Financial Aid:**

* Contact FinAidOffice@valenciacollege.edu for their financial aid questions, as well as for potential assistance with financial support

**Community Resources:**

* Community resource guide: [https://valenciacollege.edu/alerts/coronavirus-community-resources.php](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fvalenciacollege.edu%2Falerts%2Fcoronavirus-community-resources.php&data=02%7C01%7Cbshaul%40valenciacollege.edu%7C9ee7cfde9d264669ca9708d7e9298f13%7C0e8866953d1741a88544135b0a92a47c%7C1%7C0%7C637234237062085487&sdata=ObulmsZZop4%2BkP%2Bj6b%2F1l44R2ePIR7rzsF2%2FVG3ucDo%3D&reserved=0)

**Disclaimer Statement**

This syllabus is subject to change. Due notice will be provided for any changes made to the content of the syllabus.

**Course Schedule**

Week 1, January 11-17: Chapter 1

Week 2, January 18-24: Chapter 2

Week 3, January 25-31: Chapter 3

Week 4, February 1-7: Chapter 4

Week 5, February 8-14: Chapter 5

Week 6, February 15-21: Chapter 6

Week 7, February 22-28: Chapter 7

Week 8, March 1-7: Chapter 8

Week 9, March 8-14: Enjoy your Spring Break!

Week 10, March 15-21: Chapter 9

Week 11, March 22-28: Chapter 10

Week 12, March 29-April 4: Chapter 11

Week 13, April 5-11: Chapter 12

Week 14, April 12-18: Chapter 13

Week 15, April 19-25: Chapter 14

**Submit the Final Exam by Thursday, April 29 at 11:59p.m.**

**Important Dates**

Withdrawal Deadline: March 26, 2021

College Closed: January 18, 2021 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day), February 12, 2021 (Learning Day), March 8-14, 2021 (Spring Break)