

# **INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**Office Hours: By appointment only**

# **COURSE INFORMATION**

**Course Name: U.S. Government/American National Government**

**Course ID/Section: POS 2041/15853**

**Term/Year: Fall 2021**

**Modality: Online**

**Length of Term: 15 weeks**

**Credit Hours: 3**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

I realize that the general attitude toward government and politics can be dry, frankly boring, and, for many, not relatable. It is my very goal to show you just how much your vote and voice matters, how much command you hold in your government, and how knowing your civic rights and responsibilities can render you an empowered and engaged citizen. I strive to take the facts presented in your text and bring them into the real world through debates, current cases and events, and your individual interests. I am invested in your success in this course and providing you with meaningful content and engagement that you can hopefully refer back to and build upon as you continue on in life.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**Catalog 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.

**Prerequisites:**None

## **COURSE OUTCOMES**

Students will explain:

* the philosophical theories that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution
* the checks and balances system created by the U.S. Constitution, including an understanding of the major powers and responsibilities given to each branch

Students will analyze:

* the relationship between the individual and the government in pursuit of social, political, and economic goals.
* how the U.S. electoral system impacts the level of political participation of the individual.

Students will describe:

* the basic principles of American democracy and how they are applied in our Republican form of government

## **COURSE COMPETENCIES**

The course seeks to strengthen students’ skills applicable to Valencia’s Student Core Competencies: **Think**, **Value**, **Communicate**, and **Act** (TVCA). TVCA Statement Part of your VCC experience will be related to acquiring the core VCC values of thinking, valuing, acting, and communicating. This course will further that process in the following ways: 1. Each student will come to value the role of the individual in American politics. 2. Each student will be encouraged to think about how American politics affect him/her. 3. Each student will be asked to communicate their own beliefs and values regarding American politics. 4. Each student will be encouraged to act upon their political beliefs and aspirations regarding American politics (in a peaceable manner).

## **TEXTBOOK & REQUIRED MATERIALS**

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Ginsberg, B., Lowi, T.J., Weir, M., Tolbert, C. J., Campbell, A. L., & Spitzer, R. J.(2019). *We the People* (12th ed.). New York, NY: Norton.

**ISBN:** 9780393664645

## **COMPUTER/EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Computer and internet access will be necessary for the completion of all chapter quizzes, unit exams, discussions, and make-up testing.

## **TECHNOLOGY ACCESS/SKILLS**

Students will be required to demonstrate and are responsible for Canvas fluency. First time canvas users may benefit from watching this [introductory video.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UI_VsFHkF5U) Stationery computers are available for use in the downtown library located in the Dr. Phillips Academic Commons on the 2nd floor in room 265. They can be reached at 407-582-3504. More information on library services can be found later in this document, under “library services.” Computers are also available for rent with **Downtown Campus Tech Lending. They can be reached at** 407-235-3598.

# **COURSE POLICIES**

## **Classroom Policy**

Politics consist of opposing views and can be controversial and engaging (and fun!). It is important for you to develop and fortify the ability to at the very least acknowledge dissenting opinions and at the very best engage them with respect. Disrespect of others' opinions or disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated.

## **Communication Policy**

***Expectations of Student***

* Students are expected to check their Atlas email and Canvas inbox on a regular basis throughout the week.
* Students can expect to devote 15-18 hours each week to this course.
* For guidelines on how to interact with your instructor and peers in an online learning environment, read through [Our Practice of Respect and Community Building](http://valenciacollege.edu/PJI/principles.cfm). Some highlights from these principles are:
	+ Create a hospitable and accountable community
	+ Suspend judgment
	+ All voices have value

***Expectations of Instructor***

* The Instructor will provide a variety of feedback on submitted assignments within 2-3 days, Monday-Friday, with the exception of college closures.
* The Instructor will return emails within a 24-48 hour period Monday-Friday, with the exception of college closures.
* The Instructor will address students following the guidelines as indicated in [Our Practice of Respect and Community Building](http://valenciacollege.edu/PJI/principles.cfm).
* The Instructor will notify students of changes to the course work via the Inbox or Announcements tools.

Students have the option of contacting me via the Canvas mail tool and at the listed Atlas email. Professional formatting and content are expected (e.g., "Professor P." or "Professor Pittaluga" vs. "Miss" or "Hey"). If you are not utilizing Canvas mail, please make sure to include your class, meeting time, and full name. I have an "open-door" policy with emails, if you need to ask questions or communicate something, please do not worry about time or non-class meeting days. I will check my email at least once a day, and the notifications do not disturb me. I encourage you to express yourself the time you do it is not an issue. Please be sure to add “Urgent” to the subject line if you have an issue that needs to be addressed with high importance and time constraints.

***A Note for the New Obligatory Online Enrollment***

We are all adjusting to the transition to all-online courses. There are resources available to you to build your confidence in being an online student. Consider enrolling in the [Student Success](https://valenciacollege.edu/students/student-success/) course, or attend a [Skillshop](https://valenciacollege.edu/students/student-services/skillshops.php) that relates to your needs. For more immediate sources, consider the [Study Skills Diagnostics](https://sarconline.sdes.ucf.edu/learning-skills-resources/study-skills-diagnostics/) handouts from UCF’s [Student Academic Resource Center](https://sarc.sdes.ucf.edu/). The online environment, in my opinion, isn't as personable as the classroom and so they vibe you build with classmates and me is considerably different, or worse, doesn't manifest at all. I am actively trying to do what I can to keep those avenues open and the main thing I want you to know is I'm here for you at the same capacity online as I would be in-class, don't hesitate to reach out to me via any of the listed avenues provided.

***Netiquette***

It is important to be aware of your behavior in an online learning environment to ensure positive interactions with your instructor and peers. This requires you to follow some [guidelines for behaviors](http://valenciacollege.edu/oit/learning-technology-services/student-resources/academic-integrity/netiquette.cfm).

All students are expected to:

* Be respectful of other’s views and opinions. Always remember that you are talking to another human being. If you disagree with someone’s opinion, do so in a polite manner.
* Be sensitive to the fact that there will be people of different cultural, linguistic, religious, and political backgrounds. Respecting diversity is a must.
* Use good taste when posting your responses. Avoid profanity and slang.
* Do not use all capital letters when composing responses. This is the equivalent of “shouting” on the internet and it is rude. Additionally, this text can be hard on the eyes for others trying to read your message.
* Use good grammar and punctuation. Please refrain from text talk and shortcuts.

*If you violate the rules of netiquette at any point in the semester, the professor reserves the right to remove you from the course and issue you a failing grade.*

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Per [Valencia policy](http://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/academicpoliciesprocedures/courseattemptscoursewithdrawal/) a student who withdraws from class before the established deadline for a particular term will receive a grade of “W." A student is not permitted to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline. After the withdrawal deadline, faculty will not withdraw a student and the student will receive the grade earned at the end of the course. Any student who withdraws from a class during a third or subsequent attempt in the same course will be assigned a grade of “F.” If you do not intend to complete the course, you must withdraw yourself prior to the withdrawal date. Attendance is recorded for financial aid records, and students who do not meet the set standards of attendance will forfeit disbursement and be withdrawn automatically.

## **College Student Conduct Policy**

Valencia is dedicated not only to the advancement of knowledge and learning but also to the development of responsible personal and social conduct. As a registered student, you assume the responsibility for conducting yourself in a manner that contributes positively to Valencia’s learning community and that does not impair, interfere with, or obstruct the orderly conduct, processes, and functions of the college as described in the [Student Code of Conduct](http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/documents/Volume8/8-03-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf).

## **Academic Honesty**

All forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited at Valencia College. [Academic dishonesty](http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/documents/Volume8/8-11-Academic-Dishonesty.pdf) includes, but is not limited to, acts or attempted acts of plagiarism, cheating, furnishing false information, forgery, alteration or misuse of documents, misconduct during a testing situation, facilitating academic dishonesty, and misuse of identification with intent to defraud or deceive.

All work submitted by students is expected to be the result of the students' individual thoughts, research, and self-expression. Whenever a student uses ideas, wording, or organization from another source, the source shall be appropriately acknowledged. If a student is caught submitting plagiarized work a first offense will result in a zero score on the assignment, a second offense will result a class grade of F.

## **Attendance Policy**

You are responsible for obtaining the knowledge required to successfully complete this course. Because this is an online class, online discussions are vital to the comprehension of the material and are included in the unit exams. Participation in discussions constitutes attendance/participation and is calculated in points that will be added to your final grade.

## **Late Work/Makeup Policy**

Missed quizzes and discussions without prior notice and arrangements will result in a 50% reduction of the grade. Unit Exams without prior notice and arrangements will result in scoring no higher than 75%. All late submissions are subject to a percentage of points deducted. All assignments will remain open until December 9th, 2021. You do not need approval to submit late assignments, but your score will eventually be reduced by the stated amounts, above.

## **Extra Credit Policy**

Extra credit opportunities may present as the course progresses.

## **Third Party Software & FERPA Policy**

Valencia College has a firm commitment to protecting the [privacy rights](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10DyUpVNN8y9WP2kJeIjGPTvqiNMUc9Udhdo7PI-Rh-w/edit) of its students.

## **Final Exam Policy**

The final Unit Exam will constitute the final exam for this course. It is not cumulative. Because of time constraints, ***make-ups cannot be afforded under any circumstances.***

## **GRADING POLICIES**

### **Grading Scale**

90% -100% A

89%-80% B

79%-70% C

69%- 60% D

59%- 50%

and lower F

Final grades ending in xx.45 and up are rounded up to the nearest whole percent; xx.44 and down are rounded down to the nearest percent.

### **Grading Breakdown**

##### **Unit Exams - 65%**

There will be four unit exams in total for the term. Exams are open from the Friday before they are due, for five days. Exams are due on Tuesdays by 11:59. Because they are open for five days, last-minute issues (e.g., technical errors, falling in rabbit holes, computers exploding, new world order, etc.) will not be remediable. Each exam equates to 13.75% (i.e., more than a letter grade) of your final grade. These exams are made up of questions and concepts pulled directly from the weekly chapter quizzes and any pertinent online classroom discussions. For the first unit exam, you will have two attempts, and you will keep your highest score. This is to get you familiar with what is expected from you and to ease your nerves about the exams, in general. The three remaining unit exams will only consist of one attempt.

##### **Chapter Quizzes - 15%**

There will chapter quiz assignments due every week on Thursdays by 11:59. Quizzes are open from the Monday before they are due, for four days. For the first chapter quiz, like the unit exam, you will have two attempts, and you will keep your highest score. This, again, is to get you familiar with what is expected from you and to ease your nerves about the quizzes, in general. The remaining chapter quizzes will only consist of one attempt. They are 15 minutes, each. The time constraints can only be amended if you have documented accommodations. If you learn the key terms before opening the quiz, will time will be ample.

##### **Online Discussions - 20%**

There will be weekly discussions, due on Fridays by 11:59, to evaluate participation, material comprehension, and to introduce real-world concepts that tie into your text lessons. To earn full credit for these discussions, you will need to post at least one initial response to the discussion, and then reply to at least two other students. Your post and response will need to be more than "I agree" or "I disagree." It is difficult to write up a rubric on what constitutes a full thought, but try to explain why you feel the way you feel and that should suffice. If you are still uncertain about what a qualifying response should look like, do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Do not be intimidated by the grade breakdown. Yes, this course may seem assessment heavy, but you will see that the quizzes are a sort of foundation/study guide for the unit exams, which are the heftier part of your grade. For the chapter quizzes, focus on the key terms, the questions tied into your infographics (e.g., “Who are Americans”), and the chapter outcomes listed in each module. The unit exams cover only the chapters before them and they are strictly based on chapter quiz content, the questions posed about the infographics, and class discussions. No curve balls, guessing games, or surprises. They are just more conceptual than definition based.

Example:

Multiple-Choice question on a quiz-A system of rule that permits citizens to vote directly on laws and policies is termed:

Multiple-Choice question on the exam-In the township of Belle Isle, Florida, residents meet and vote directly on legislation that affects their community, this exemplifies:

Everything is "open book," and you can refer back to your chapter quizzes to study, but know your stuff! I don't recommend "winging it." My goal is for you to get your money's worth and actually know what you're paying to know and how it actually affects your life. Absorb what you're presented with, it's worth it.

# **Course Schedule:**

| Assignment | Due Date | Due Time |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Academic Activity | August 27, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter One Quiz | September 2, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion One | September 3, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Two Quiz | September 9, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Two | September 10, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Three Quiz | September 16, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Three | September 17, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Four Quiz | September 23, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Four | September 24, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Unit Exam I | September 28, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Five Quiz | September 30, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Five | October 1, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Six Quiz | October 7, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Six | October 8, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Seven Quiz | October 14, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Seven | October 15, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Eight Quiz | October 21, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Eight | October 22, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Unit Exam II | October 26, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Nine Quiz | October 28, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Nine | October 29, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Ten Quiz | November 4, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Ten | November 5, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Eleven Quiz | November 11, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Eleven | November 12, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Unit Exam III | November 16, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Twelve Quiz | November 18, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Twelve | November 19, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Thirteen Quiz | November 30, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Chapter Fourteen Quiz | December 2, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Discussion Thirteen | December 3, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |
| Unit Exam IV | December 7, 2021 | Due by 11:59 |

# **Student Resources**

## **Library Services**

The library space is located on the 2nd floor of the Dr. Phillips Academic Commons and will have a shared collection of print materials, provide access to electronic resources, have librarians from both Valencia College and UCF, and provide a welcoming study atmosphere.

* Books circulated from DTC can be returned to any Valencia Campus.
* The public will have library access during library hours and guest access to the 6 computers in the library.

## **Learning Support Services**

The Downtown Campus Learning Support Center (LSC) is comprised of two areas:

* The Tutoring Center located in Dr. Phillips Academic Commons (DPAC) 330.
* The Writing Center located in DPAC 320.

During the first week of classes, students are welcome to visit the centers and become familiar with the location and space. Tutoring and writing consultations begin the second week of the semester. The Tutoring Center offers walk-in tutoring for biology, chemistry, anatomy & physiology and mathematics. Additionally, there are equipment loans available for items such as laptops, TI-84 calculators, scientific calculators, and headphones.

These services will be offered at various times within the following hours of operation:

* Monday– Thursday: 9 am – 9 pm
* Friday: 9 am – 3 pm
* Sunday: 1 pm – 5 pm

## **Student Services Center**

First Stop is the name for the area known as the Answer Center on other Valencia Campuses.

The First Stop Kiosks will serve as the area known as the ATLAS Lab on other Valencia Campuses.

The Student Services Center will have:

* Integrated model with cross-trained staff support
* Financial Aid and Admissions exclusive to each institution
* First Stop self-service computers
* There will be no Business Office
* Testing and Accessibility Services

**Note:** There is Campus Housing which is managed by UCF.

For more information and helpful student services resources, visit the [Student Services Webpage](https://valenciacollege.edu/locations/downtown/student-services.php).

## **LifeMap**

[LifeMap](https://valenciacollege.edu/about/lifemap/) is a student's guide to figuring out "what to do when" in order to complete their career and education goals. LifeMap links all of the components of Valencia (faculty, staff, courses, technology, programs, services) into a personal itinerary to help students succeed in their college experience.

### **Guide to My LifeMap**

* LifeMap tools for planning your education and career are within Atlas on the My LifeMap tab.
* LifeMap stage links at the top of the screen provide more detail on how to progress through Valencia programs and services.
* LifeMap resource links on the right bar provide additional Valencia resources.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Valencia is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and services are accessible to students with disabilities. [The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)](http://valenciacollege.edu/osd/) determines reasonable and appropriate accommodations for qualified students with documented disabilities based upon the need and impact of the specific disability.

Any student requiring course accommodations due to physical, emotional or learning disability must contact the instructor and provide a *Notification to Instructor* form by the end of the second week of class. To obtain a letter of accommodation, contact OSD at 407-582-2229.

## **Baycare Student Assistance Services**

Valencia College strives to ensure all our students have a rewarding and successful college experience. To that purpose, Valencia students can get immediate help with issues dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, substance abuse, time management as well as relationship problems dealing with school, home or work. [BayCare Behavioral Health Student Assistance Program (SAP)](http://catalog.valenciacollege.edu/studentservices/baycarestudentassistanceservices/) services are free to all Valencia students and available 24 hours a day by calling (800) 878-5470. If needed, the counselor may refer the student to appropriate resources or to speak face-to-face with a licensed counselor.

## **Office for Students with Disabilities and Testing Services**

Disability accommodations will be provided through the Valencia Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and UCF Student Accessibility Services (SAS). This office is located in Union West room 210. Testing Services is also located in this same space. For more information about the services that these offices provide or to find contact information, please see their respective webpages.

[Valencia Office for Student Disabilities](https://valenciacollege.edu/students/office-for-students-with-disabilities/)

[UCF Student Accessibility Services](https://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/)

Course Testing offered at the downtown campus includes:

* Face-to-Face course exams **only** proctored for OSD/SAS accommodated testing
* Valencia Online or Mixed Mode courses with proctored exams
	+ *A Valencia College faculty member whose primary campus is downtown and teaches fully online or mixed-mode courses and requires a proctored test.*
* Valencia College make-up exams
	+ *Valencia Make-up testing is intended for students who missed a classroom test or quiz due to an extenuating circumstance and have the faculty member’s permission to sit for the test or quiz in the testing center. Faculty must submit all test information and materials to the testing center in advance of the test.*

Here are some other important details about testing services:

* Students are required to set an appointment, there will be no walk ins.
* Students will not be able to set an appointment until the professor has submitted an exam through **Register Blast** and it has been approved by the testing center.

If there are any questions you may reach Testing Services by phone or email.

* Phone: 407-235-3825
* Email: DTCtestingCenter@valenciacollege.edu

## **Security**

* Downtown students will have on campus security, individuals needing immediate assistance should call 911.
* UCF Police Department will provide law enforcement services to the campus 24/365 days a week.
* UCF Police Department handle all reports for crimes, damages or injuries.
* Be sure to download the Valencia College Safety App.
* UCF Police Department Office Location: 398 West Amelia Street Orlando, FL 32801 407-823-5555
* The Downtown Campus will get the same emergency notifications as the other campuses via text, email and calls.
* Blue lights will be in specific areas & you can call for safe walk escorts.

## **ID Cards**

* All students will need a **DTC ID**card.
	+ You may acquire an ID at the UCF Card Services Center which will be temporarily located at the UCF Communication and Media building.
* Students should not need keys to access the main entries at the DTC. Students will have access to open areas with ID card access capabilities for those authorized.
* UCF Card Services will manage any issues with ID’s.
* Valencia College students will receive their first ID for free. A replacement ID is $15.00.

## **Parking**

* Parking is not free for students at the Downtown Campus (DTC), a parking permit is needed at all times. Permits can be ordered online at [parking.ucf.edu](https://parking.ucf.edu/). Violators may be subject to a fine.
* UCF will provide shuttle service between the UCF main campus and DTC.
* LYNX and SunRail are public transport options to DTC. SunRail free passes (for a limited time) are available at the DTC Parking Office.
* In the event of any car issues, Parking & Transportation can offer vehicle assistance.
* Two charging stations in the new parking garage at Union West.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

[**College Calendar**](http://valenciacollege.edu/calendar)

## **COLLEGE LINKS**

[**Academic Calendar**](https://valenciacollege.edu/academics/calendar/documents/academic-calendar-2019-2020.pdf)

[**College Catalog**](http://valenciacollege.edu/catalog/)

**Valencia** [**Financial Aid**](https://valenciacollege.edu/finaid/)

**UCF** [**Financial**](https://www.ucf.edu/financial-aid/) **Aid**

[**Valencia Transfer Readiness Information**](https://valenciacollege.edu/students/student-services/transfer-readiness.php)

**Degree** [**Requirements**](https://valenciacollege.edu/academics/programs/aa-degree/course-requirements.php)

**Career** [**Center**](https://valenciacollege.edu/students/career-center/)

[**Valencia Policy Manual**](http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/)

[**Student Handbook**](http://valenciacollege.edu/pdf/studenthandbook.pdf)

[**Microsoft Office Instructions for free software**](http://valenciacollege.edu/support/howto/documents/Valencia_Office-ProPlus-Instructions.pdf)

[**Course Support**](http://valenciacollege.edu/learning-support/)**: onsite, online tutoring, writing help, etc.**

## **DISCLAIMER STATEMENT**

This course syllabus is unsigned contract. Once submitted to a student, if a student chooses to stay in the course they have nonverbally agreed to the terms and conditions stated in the course syllabus. Any part of this syllabus, up to and including exam dates or grade requirements, may be changed at the discretion of the professor at any time for any reason during this term. Changes to the course calendar may be made at the discretion of the professor, and students will be notified of any changes in class and/or via the Canvas Inbox conversations tool.