



The mission of Concord University is to provide quality, liberal arts based education, to foster scholarly and creative activities and to serve the regional community (<http://www.concord.edu/academics/>).

## **Course Prefix, Number and Title:** POSC 430, Seminar in American Government

**Course CRN # and Section:** CRN# 20529, Section 01

**Semester Taught:** Spring 2019

**Professor:** James A. White, Ph.D.

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Office Location:** 214 Admin. Bldg.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Time:** W 1:00 to 3:30 p.m

**Email:** [jwhite@concord.edu](mailto:jwhite@concord.edu)

**Phone:** 304-384-6061

**Building and Room Number:** 301 Admin. Bldg.

**Office Fax:** 304-384-6091

**College/Department Website:** <http://www.concord.edu/political-science/node/1>

**Office Hours:** T 12:30-1:30 p.m. and 2:30-3:30 p.m. (Beckley); W 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.; Th 8:15-9:15 a.m., and by appointment

**Course Description/Rationale:** This upper-level seminar explores the roles, functions, structures, and activities of American governing and linkage institutions, with particular focus on the historic and evolving relationship between those who govern and those who are governed. This course pre-supposes that seminar participants already possess a thorough understanding of the theory and practice of American government.

**Course Management System:** Blackboard

**Hardware/Software Needed:** Students must purchase an i-clicker for this course (these are available from the campus bookstore) and are required to regularly read The Washington Post online.

### **Text requirements:**

William Bowen, Matthew Chingos, and Michael McPherson, Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities, Princeton University Press, 2009.

David T. Cannon, John J. Coleman, and Kenneth R. Mayer, The Enduring Debate, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Norton, 2017.

Arne Duncan, How Schools Works, Simon and Schuster, 2017.

Theodore J. Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere, American Government Power and Purpose, Brief 14<sup>th</sup> Edition, W.W. Norton, 2017.

**Concord University Educational Goals:** Students who successfully complete this course will have demonstrated competencies consistent with Concord's Educational Goals, particularly: 1) skills related to a) evaluating information and ideas on the basis of appropriate criteria while demonstrating, b) an ability to learn and work effectively both independently and collaboratively; and 2) attitudes conducive to self-knowledge, personal growth and development and responsible citizenship as demonstrated by respectful attentiveness to differing perspectives and willingness to engage in dialogue across differences in order to seek mutual understanding and equitable conflict resolution.

**Specific Learning Outcomes:** Through detailed examination of many historically influential political theorists, this seminar will seek to facilitate independent and critical student analysis of that theory and practice. Students successfully completing the course should be well prepared not only for informed participation in the American political system but also for further academic study of and professional employment within that system.

**Course Requirements:** Each student must participate in the course as directed (this includes appropriate participation via Blackboard) and must complete each section's reading assignments prior to the beginning of the first class in each section (this required reading includes textbook readings, PowerPoint presentations and other material uploaded to Blackboard, and regular reading of The Washington Post, on-line). Students will also be expected to present to the class on a regular basis. All written assignments must be submitted by the beginning of the class period on the due date, and exams must be taken at the scheduled date and time (that is, there are no make-up exams and late work is not considered).

#### *Attendance, Class Participation, and Student Conduct*

Class attendance is mandatory; students must attend class, be prepared (that is, students must bring required texts and materials to each class), and contribute positively. In classrooms, online, laboratories, and during any activities that are part of course requirements, students are expected to observe reasonable rules of conduct (see additional statements below about attendance and conduct).

All absences are excused, but they are limited and they must be documented by an e-mail from the student to the instructor from the student's "mycu.concord.edu" e-mail address. In general, students who miss more than ten percent of the semester's classes will be dropped from the class by the instructor (see the Concord University Academic Catalog for further discussion of University expectations regarding class attendance).

#### *Written Assignments*

Each student must submit and actively discuss six topical Washington Post articles (see the discussion schedule below). Students should engage each other in thoughtful and professional discussions, highlighting differences accurately and respectfully. Also, each student must complete and be prepared to present four PowerPoint summaries of the assigned readings. The summaries are to be submitted to Blackboard as PowerPoints to be discussed during class. Students will also participate in a semester-long Citizen Action Leadership Project; additional information regarding this project will be provided during the first few weeks of class.

#### *Midterm, Comprehensive and Final Examinations*

There will be a midterm examination and a final essay examination. Also, as a precondition of successful course completion, students taking this class as POSC 430 must successfully complete a comprehensive examination prepared, administered, and graded by the political science faculty. This pass/fail examination will be offered during the week of March 25<sup>th</sup>. Students may repeat this examination, but students who fail to pass this examination will not pass this capstone course.

**Grading Policy and Scale, Make-up Policy, Late Work:** All written assignments must be submitted by the beginning of the class period on the due date, and exams must be taken at the scheduled date and time (that is, there are no make-up exams and late work is not considered).

*Academic Integrity*

Failure to adhere to University policy on academic integrity will not be tolerated and will result in appropriate disciplinary action (see statement on academic dishonesty and the Concord University Honor Code below).

**GRADES**

The instructor will grade each assignment, assigning A's for work demonstrating mastery of all major and minor concepts, B's for work demonstrating mastery of all major and most minor concepts, C's for work demonstrating mastery of all major and some minor concepts, D's for work demonstrating mastery of only some major concepts, and F's for work demonstrating mastery of no major concepts.

The final class grade will be determined as follows:

<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>VALUE (% OF TOTAL)</b>
Class participation, discussions, and summaries	N/A	20
Midterm Exam	2/27	25
Citizen Action Leadership Project Paper	5/1	25
Final exam	5/8	30

**Course Timeline (Schedule of Assignments/Assessments/Presentations):** You should check this syllabus regularly, but also be aware that the schedule and other elements of the syllabus are subject to change based on the needs of the class.

January 16-23: Foundations

American Government (A): Chapters 1-3; The Enduring Debate (E): Chapters 1-3.

January 30: Congress

A: Chapter 5; E: Chapter 5.

February 6: The Presidency and Executive Branch

A: Chapters 6-7; E: Chapters 6-7.

February 13-20: Federal Courts, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties

A: Chapters 8, 4; E: Chapters 8, 4.

February 27: Midterm

March 6: Public Opinion and Elections

A: Chapters 9-10; E: Chapters 9-10.

March 20: Political Parties and Interest Groups

P&P: Chapter 9; FL: Chapter 9.

March 27—April 3: Educational Success, Part I

How Schools Work (all).

April 10-24: Educational Success, Part II

Crossing the Finish Line (all).

Discussion topics and due dates (i.e., you must post a link to a recent Washington Post article and relate the article to topics discussed in the assigned texts; 11:59 pm on the date listed is the latest the discussion can be engaged, and anytime before is fine).

Congress	January 30
Presidency	February 6
Bureaucracy	February 6
Courts	February 13
Public Opinion	March 6
Political Participation	March 6
Political Parties	March 20
Interest Groups	March 20

### **Accessibility/Accommodations:**

Concord University is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please inform your instructor at the beginning of the class semester if you have a disability and are requesting accommodations. It is your responsibility to self-disclose that you are requesting accommodations. The University and instructor will provide you with a reasonable accommodation. You should register with CU's Disability Services Office, located in the Athens campus Jerry and Jean Beasley Student Center, Bottom Floor, across from the Campus Post Office. The Disability Services Office phone is 304-384-6086 or you can email the Director, Nancy Ellison, at nellison@concord.edu for assistance.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty is morally unacceptable as well as destructive to the learning and teaching atmosphere. Academic dishonesty includes the giving or receiving of improper help on examinations or assignments, falsifying documents, and plagiarism (the act of stealing and using, as one's own, the ideas or the expression of the ideas of another). Such dishonesty can lead to a variety of penalties — including but not limited to failure of assignment, failure of course, loss of institutional privileges, or dismissal from the University. (See University Catalog Academic Policies and Procedures.)

### **Concord University Honor Code**

A Concord University Honor Code was approved by students, staff, faculty, administration, and the CU Board of Governors. The Code states:

*"As a member of the Concord University Community I will act with honesty and integrity in accordance with our fundamental principles and I will respect myself and others while challenging them to do the same."*

The Honor Code is intended to unite the Concord community behind a culture of honesty, integrity, and civility.

### **Class/Online Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is part of a student's academic obligation at Concord. Irregular attendance may affect academic performance adversely and is detrimental to the atmosphere of a class. (See University Catalog Academic Policies and Procedures.)

### **Emergency Alert System**

In an effort to increase safety and security on our campus, Concord University encourages everyone to register for instant text message alerts. Alerts will only be used for security and safety notices. All students, faculty, and staff are eligible to receive text message alerts on their cell phones or email alerts. Please contact the IT Help Desk for further assistance (304-384-5291).

## **Emergency Information**

Emergency/courtesy telephones are located at the main entrance of each residence hall and at various other locations on campus. Emergency telephones can be identified by the flashing blue light and will provide the user with a direct link to Public Safety at the press of a button. To report an on-campus emergency, call 304-384-5357 or 911. The Office of Public Safety is located on the bottom floor of the Rahall Technology Center. For further emergency information go to:

<http://www.concord.edu/administration/office-public-safety>.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

As a general policy, the University will remain in normal operations during adverse weather conditions. In the event of severe weather conditions, the following may occur:

### University Closure

No students or employees are to report.

### Classes Cancelled

Students do NOT report BUT employees are expected to report to work at their normal time.

### Operating on an Inclement Weather Delay

Under this schedule, all 8 a.m. classes will start at 10 a.m. Students and faculty will follow the Inclement Weather Schedule. (See <http://www.concord.edu/emergency-alerts> for Athens/Beckley Inclement Weather Schedules.)

*\*Announcements invoking the late schedule or other options referenced above are aired on area radio and television stations and are sent as text and email messages to those enrolled for this service.*

## **Student Conduct**

In classrooms, online, laboratories, and during any activities that are part of course requirements, students are expected to observe reasonable rules of conduct.

## **Sexual Harassment & Assault**

Federal law, Title IX, and Concord University policy prohibits discrimination, harassment, and violence based on sex and gender (Including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can receive confidential counseling support through the Concord University Counseling Center (304-384-5290). Alleged Violations can be reported non-confidentially to the Concord University Title IX Coordinator at 304-384-6327 or [titleix@concord.edu](mailto:titleix@concord.edu). Reports to Campus Security can be made at (304-384-5357). As an employee at Concord University, I am a mandatory reporter which means I must report any sexual misconduct I am made aware of. This includes verbal or written (such as in an assignment) disclosures of sexual harassment or sexual assault.

## **Technology Services**

Contact the CU Help Desk at extension 5291 from campus or 304-384-5291 off campus. You may also e-mail [cuhelpdesk@concord.edu](mailto:cuhelpdesk@concord.edu).