

PSCI 1330
US Government & Politics
Fall 2026

Instructor: Prof. Hyo-Won Shin (she/her)

Email: hshin@uca.edu

Lecture:

- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00-9:50 AM Irby Hall 212

Office Hours:

- Monday and Wednesday 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM Irby Hall 217H
 - Walk-ins welcome but first come first serve. If you want to reserve a spot, please sign up using the link below.
 - Sign up: <https://calendly.com/hyoshin/officehours>
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Course Description

This introductory course in U.S. Federal government and politics familiarize students with a variety of concepts related to American national government. Students will explore the theory and practice of U.S. politics and its institutions, as well as the structure and function of the U.S. government, political culture, and civic life. By the end of the course, students will have developed critical thinking skills and the ability to engage in informed discussion of topics related to U.S. politics and government. In addition, students will strengthen their reading comprehension and presentation skills.

Course Requirements and Assignments

The grade in the course will be determined by the following:

1. Exam (4-unit exams) worth 100 points each (40%)
2. Sage Vantage homework/quizzes (30%)
3. In-class activities (15%)
4. Class participation (15%)
5. Extra Credit (2%)

- **Exams** (40 percent)

There will be **four exams in total**. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions, 2 points each. They will not be cumulative but only based on the following unit. The exam will take place during class time, except for the last exam. The last exam will take place during final exam week and will be given during the university's assigned exam time. Please refer following for exam dates. Professor Shin will drop the *lowest* exam score.

- **Unit I Exam: September 14 (Monday)**
- **Unit II Exam: October 12 (Monday)**
- **Unit III Exam: November 16 (Monday)**
- **Unit IV Exam: December 9 (2-4PM, Wednesday)**

- **Weekly Homework and Quizzes** (30 percent)

All homework and quizzes are administered online through SAGE VANTAGE online platform.

- **Homework:** The homework is found in the course's e-book accessed via online in the supplement called VANTAGE. Each assigned homework is found in the assigned e-book

chapter. Each chapter's homework has a designated set of assigned "knowledge checks", data exercises, and video clip exercises. These will be completed outside of class. Students will have TWO attempts to complete each assigned homework exercises. **The student's best score will be recorded for a grade.**

- o **Quizzes:** Quizzes will also be completed online – and outside of class. They are embedded in the Sage VANTAGE e-book at the **end of each assigned chapter**. They are called "chapter tests" on the VANTAGE platform. Each quiz is composed of **15 multiple choice questions that are 2 points each**. Students have ONE attempt to complete each quiz. These quiz scores add up, so take them seriously. **See the course schedule for quiz due dates.**

- **In-class Activities** (15 percent)

Students will participate in two in-class activities, scheduled during Weeks 9 and 12. Each activity is designed to reflect the topic covered that week and require students to collaborate in small groups and present their completed work to the class. Students will be evaluated on both teamwork and collaboration with classmates as well as the quality of their presentation.

- **Class Participation** (15 percent)

Students are expected to attend lectures having done the assigned readings and prepared to discuss them. Regular attendance is required but does not constitute full participation. To receive full participation points, students should actively engage in small-group discussions and be responsive to questions asked during lecture and section. Students are encouraged to ask clarifying questions of the instructor and of each other.

Students who feel uncomfortable speaking up in large groups are encouraged to participate more actively in small-group discussions to compensate for being less active in big-group discussions during lecture.

For reference, full attendance at all lectures without active participation will earn students no higher than a B (85%). Regular, active participation in lecture along with regular attendance is required to earn students an A (95%) in participation. Active participation can make up for some unexcused absences, but one should not be thought of as a substitute for the other.

Grade	Evaluation
"A" Contributor	• Full attendance (exception of one self-care day). • Student's contribution in class discussion (small and/or large group discussions) reflects exceptional preparation as evidenced by frequent use of textual/material evidence. • <i>If this person were absent in class, the quality of the discussions would be diminished markedly.</i>
"B" Contributor	• High attendance. • Student's contribution in class discussion reflects preparation as evidenced by some use of textual/material evidence. • <i>If this person were absent in class, the quality of the discussions would be diminished.</i>
"C" Contributor	• Some attendance. • Student's contribution in class discussion reflects some preparation as evidenced by little use of textual/material

	evidence. • <i>If this person were absent in class, the quality of the discussions would be diminished somewhat.</i>
“D-F” Contributor	• Little or no attendance. • Student’s contribution in class discussion reflects no preparation as evidenced by no use of textual/material evidence.

- **Extra Credit**

Students will be provided an assessment test along with the Unit 4 exam. This will consist of 25 questions that will be coming from your Unit 1 through 4 exams. The assessment exam will *not* count against your final grade but rather be counted as 2% extra credit. As a result, the maximum score a student can get in this class will be 102%, counting the extra credit. 2% extra credit is enough to bump a student from a high B to an A, therefore, students should take this assessment test seriously.

Course Materials

The following textbook is required for the course and is available at the University of Central Arkansas bookstore. If you are buying it from somewhere else, be sure to check that it is the same edition. Either the paper or electronic edition of the textbook is fine.

Kernell, Samuel and Gary Jacobson et al. *The Logic of American Politics (11th ed.)* SAGE/CQ Press. Sage Vantage Access book ISBN: 9781071846537.

- **BOOKSTORE:** If you bought your course pack through the UCA bookstore, you received a supplemental sheet with instructions on how to REDEEM YOUR ACCESS CODE. The instructions will tell you how to sign-up for the online course materials. Go to this course’s Blackboard page and navigate to the “sign-up here” tab, click on the link in that tab, and READ and follow the instructions on the supplemental sheet from the bookstore to redeem your purchased access code for the online Vantage course material.
- **DIRECT PURCHASE FROM THE PUBLISHER (SAGE):** students can purchase access to the online course materials directly from SAGE vantage by going to the course’s Blackboard page and navigate to the “sign-up here” tab. Click the link in the tab and follow the instructions carefully to sign up for the course and set up your account. You can purchase your subscription using a credit card there from the publisher.
- If you do not purchase access up front, you will have activated a 2 WEEK/14 DAY GRACE PERIOD. After the 2-week window expires you will no longer have access to the course Vantage course online platform and you will be removed from the instructor's vantage gradebook dashboard.
- Students must purchase a subscription BEFORE the 2-weeks expire to avoid removal. To be reinstated, students will need to call the Vantage customer service number and speak to a representative and pay over the phone to be reinstated.
- There are NO extensions granted for the homework and quizzes due if you get locked out for reason of not purchasing the vantage subscription before the 2-week grace period expires.

Grade scale

90-100%	A
80-89.99%	B
70-79.99%	C
60-69.99%	D
<60%	F

Late Policy

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the dates and times specified on the syllabus. **Late assignments will NOT be accepted.** If a student anticipates being unable to complete an assignment on time, the student should contact the instructor *in advance of the assignment due date*.

Office Hours

Student office hours are generally first-come, first served opportunities to meet with the professor. The instructor will be available to answer questions via email, but do not expect a response for at least 24-36 hours. If the student wants to meet outside the instructor's office hours, please email me at hshin@uca.edu.

If you are unsure about how to word an email to your professor, read this blog post (be aware that it has some profanity): <https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-being-annoying-af-cf64ae0e4087>

Academic Honesty, including AI

The work that you submit in this class must be your own. Unless an assignment is explicitly designed to be collaborative, you are expected to work independently of other students. When you make use of external sources, you are required to cite them. When in doubt about whether a citation is necessary or not, provide a citation.

The use of AI in academic work is currently a subject of debate, and there is no definitive, universal rule for when it can and cannot be used. Personally, I believe AI can be used positively to help students achieve academic success. However, students must be entirely transparent about its use. Students should NEVER turn in an AI-generated assignment as-is, or with minor modifications, as your own work. Over-reliance on AI to complete your assignments not only violates UCA's academic integrity standards but also robs you of the opportunity to learn and grow as a scholar. If you choose to use AI tools for your coursework, you must clearly indicate that you used them and how they helped you. For example, if you use AI to complete an R assignment, you should include a note such as "I used ChatGPT to fix coding errors." Failure to disclose your use of AI will be reported as academic misconduct. If you have any questions about this policy, please reach out – I am happy to help!

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

Recommended Study Habits

All of the class assignments will draw on the material covered in the lectures. Therefore, it is important to attend class lectures and to interact with the material during lecture through careful note-taking and good question-asking. In the event that you are unable to attend a class meeting, it is highly recommended that you obtain notes from a classmate. (Hint: make sure you have the contact information for a classmate!) If there is material that you are struggling with, it is highly recommended that you meet with the instructor in order to seek clarification.

Preferred Pronouns

Please call me either **Professor/Dr. Shin**. My preferred pronouns are she/her/hers. In class, I will call you by the name that you use when introducing yourself to me. Over email, I will use the name that appears in your email address. If you prefer I use a different name, please let me know and I will be happy to accommodate. I will try to default to the they/them pronouns when referring to students, but if you have other preferred pronouns, please let me know and I will try my best to accommodate.

Family Care & Self Care Policy

If a student needs to miss a class or assignment due to family care or childcare arrangements, please contact me and let me know as soon as you can. If you have a consistent or recurring issue, meet with me individually to discuss potential or necessary solutions.

Each student is allowed *one* “self-care” pass per semester. These cannot be used on exams. They can be used to exempt you from class attendance and may turn in the weekly assignment a week late (please let me know that you are using your pass for this week’s journal entry assignment if you choose to turn it in). You do not need to tell me the reason for using your self-care pass, but I am here to talk and help you find resources if you need me to be. To use your self-care pass, please email directly at hshin@uca.edu.

Diversity Policy

It is the instructor’s intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that diversity within the classroom be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. The instructor will strive to present materials and activities in ways that respect and affirm such differences. The instructor expects the same from the students: while discomfort is an important part of the learning process, no one should feel unsafe in the classroom. The instructor will not create or allow space for offensive language or behavior related to differences in gender, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, immigration status, intellectual and physical disability, sexual orientation, income, faith, socio-economic class, family status, primary language, military experience, and political identification.

Classroom Behavior

There are several ways in which students can help make the classroom conducive to learning. First, students should treat one another with respect during classroom discussion. We will discuss contentious issues in this class, and if you find yourself disagreeing with a claim made by someone else, you should work on expressing that disagreement in a constructive and impersonal fashion. Second, students using laptop computers should be using them for class-related purposes. Other uses are distracting to your fellow students and hinder overall learning in the classroom.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services. The Disability Support Services Office is reachable at 501-450-3616.

Consult the University of Central Arkansas’s Student Handbook for university policies on admissions, academic appeals, departments, UCA services, sexual harassment, and academic dishonesty/plagiarism.

Title IX Disclosure

If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each

situation differs and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on those specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. *Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.

Course Evaluations

Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the thirteenth week of instruction [November 16th] through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

Course Schedule

The following is our course schedule. Please note that this schedule is subject to change by the instructor in accordance with students' needs or course progression. All materials listed are required of all students. Those students interested in further background on any particular topic are encouraged to ask the instructor for additional readings and resources.

UNIT I: Foundations of US Government and Politics (Chapters 1, 2, and 3)

Week 0: Introduction to US Government & Politics

Friday, 8/21 – Introduction to PSCI 1330

- Hyo-Won Shin. 2025. "Syllabus for PSCI 1330."

Week 1: The Logic of Institutional Design and Political Concepts

Monday, 8/24 – Friday, 8/28

- Read Chapter 1 "The Logic of American Politics"
- Chapter 1 Quiz & Homework DUE: 8/30/26

Week 2: The Politics of Establishing the Republic

Monday, 8/31 – Friday, 9/4

- Read Chapter 2 "The Constitution"
- Read copies of the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution in the Appendix
- Chapter 2 Quiz & Homework DUE: 8/30/26

Week 3: Federalism: the politics of sharing power

Monday, 9/7 – Labor Day (No Class)

Wednesday, 9/19 – Friday, 9/11

- Read Chapter 3 "Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations"
- Chapter 3 Quiz & Homework DUE: 9/8/26

UNIT I Exam September 14 (Monday)

UNIT II: The Federal Institutions (Chapters 6, 7, and 9)

Week 4: The US Congress I

Wednesday, 9/16 – Friday, 9/18

- Read Chapter 6 "Congress"

Week 5: The US Congress II

Monday, 9/21 – Friday, 9/25

- Read Chapter 6 "Congress"
- Chapter 6 Quiz & Homework DUE: 9/20/26

Week 6: The American Presidency

Monday, 9/28 – Friday, 10/2

- Read Chapter 7 "The Presidency"
- Chapter 7 Quiz & Homework DUE: 9/27/26

Week 7: The US Supreme Court

Monday, 10/5 – Friday, 10/9

- Read Chapter 9 "The Federal Judiciary"
- Chapter 9 Quiz & Homework DUE: 10/4/26

UNIT II EXAM October 12 (Monday)

UNIT III: Political Behavior and the Electoral Process (Chapters 10, 11, 12, and 14)

Week 8: Political Parties

Wednesday, 10/14

- Read Chapter 12 “Political Parties”

Friday, 10/16 – Fall Break (No Class)

Week 9: Political Parties

Monday, 10/19 – Friday, 10/23

- Read Chapter 12 “Political Parties”
- In-class activity week
- **Chapter 12 Quiz & Homework DUE: 10/18/26**

Week 10: Campaigns and Elections

Monday, 10/26 – Friday, 10/30

- Read Chapter 11 “Voting, Campaigns, and Elections”
- **Chapter 11 Quiz & Homework DUE: 10/25/26**

Week 12: The Role and Effect of Media and Press in Politics

Monday, 11/9 - Friday, 11/13

- Read Chapter 14 “Media”
- **Chapter 14 Quiz & Homework DUE: 11/8/26**

UNIT III EXAM November 16 (Monday)

UNIT IV: The Politics of Civil Rights and Social Movements (Chapters 4 and 5; documentary)

Week 13: Civil Liberties

Wednesday, 11/18 – Friday, 11/20

- Read Chapter 5 “Civil Liberties”
- **Chapter 5 Quiz & Homework DUE: 11/22/26**

Week 14: Civil Rights

Monday, 11/23

- Read Chapter 4 “Civil Rights”
- **Chapter 4 Quiz & Homework DUE: 11/22/26**

Wednesday, 11/25 – Friday, 11/27: Thanksgiving Break (No Class)

Week 15: Civil Rights

Monday, 11/30 – Wednesday, 12/2

- Read Chapter 4 “Civil Rights”

Week 16: Final Exam

Wednesday, 12/9 @ 2 – 4 PM