

POLS 1101H
Tues & Thurs, 2:20–3:35 p.m.
Baldwin 302
Fall, 2024

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American Government, Honors

This course introduces students to the organization and principles of American Government. Roughly two-thirds of the course covers “facts” about the institutions and history of American Government, while the remaining third introduces a couple of “theories” that help us explain some political phenomena.

My section is organized around historical developments and themes from the Federalist Debates. After engaging in our own debate, we will investigate whether the fears of the Anti-Federalists have come to pass. We will also address questions such as why is our government organized the way it is? Why have political candidates traditionally appeared moderate? Do voting rules in Congress affect political outcomes, and if so, how? Does our system guarantee that every citizen's interest is equally represented? If not, what does this mean for democracy? Applying themes from the Federalist debates should energize the topics and give you an understanding of one of the most important debates in American political history.

Polling

Occasionally we will use Google Forms for in-class polling. That means you will pick an answer online. I won't know who answered a question nor have any record of individual responses. However, Google Forms will show us how the group responds in real time. If the QR-codes don't work for you, the Google Form login is <https://forms.gle/2jbWtCLQ5xunWTXg9>.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources for students seeking mental health services or crisis support. If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit [BeWellUGA](#) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Grading

You will be assigned a debate, a mid-term exam, an assignment on political parties, a term paper, and an in-class final exam. I expect students to attend all classes and assume that you are mature enough to understand what happens when you miss a class. Ask another student for notes if you miss a class before asking me for help. All assignments can be downloaded and uploaded using [eLC](#).

Although I generally think of 90-100 as an A, 80-90 as a B, etc., your overall grade for the course will be based upon the following scale:

| | | | | | |
|----|----------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | A | 92 or above | A- | 90-91.99 | |
| B+ | 88-89.99 | B | 82-87.99 | B- | 80-81.99 |
| C+ | 78-79.99 | C | 72-77.99 | C- | 70-71.99 |
| D+ | 68-69.99 | D | 62-67.99 | D- | 60-61.99 |
| F | 59.99 or below | | | | |

Federalist Debates

Shortly after the course begins you will be divided into groups of three to four students and assigned to one of three debates. With the members of your group you will prepare to debate one side of a Federalist / Anti-Federalist issue. These debates will allow you to understand the philosophical theory behind the United States Constitution and some important issues in democratic theory. You will be graded on a five page summary of your party's position on the issue (due the first day of the debates), a presentation before the class, and your response to questions from the audience. These debates can be very entertaining, but they also represent 15% of your final grade. Your groups should provide great study partners for the exams and a source of notes if you miss class. **Students who are absent during the presentation of their debate will be required to turn in a 5 page paper in lieu of their presentation. The paper will summarize the philosophical tradition of the entire Federalist/Anti-federalist debates and be due in the class immediately following the student's assigned debate. This is in addition to the 3-4 page written assignment you are required to submit. Late penalties apply.**

Election Madness

The 2024 Election Madness is just like March Madness, but rather than betting on basketball teams, you will bet on twenty-four federal and gubernatorial elections that have been carefully chosen for qualities that will motivate students to learn about, and weigh the importance of, different variables in American elections. Unlike March Madness, you will not bet money. Instead, your group will turn in a written justification for each of your picks then register your choices on a national website, worth 5% of your grade. Registering your picks allows you to compete with students from around the country.

Term Paper

20% of your grade is reserved for a term paper on one of three theoretical issues addressed in class. You will have a list of essay questions to choose one from. The essay typically requires research, so please get started as soon as the assignments are posted on eLC.

Exams

The final part of your grade will be a mid-term and a final exam. Both exams will contain multiple choice, fill in the blank, possible problem solving, and essay type questions worth 30% each. The idea is to give you multiple types of questions to evaluate your understanding of the material, not your aptitude for a particular type of test question. Since the lectures and the readings sometimes cover different material, please be prepared to answer questions from *assigned* readings that were not covered in class. Questions from readings *will* be on the exams. The final is *not* cumulative.

| | <u>Date</u> | <u>Percent of Grade</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| FEDERALIST DEBATES | Sept 5-12 | 15% |
| MIDTERM | Oct 17 | 30% |
| 2024 ELECTION MADNESS | Oct 29 | 5% |
| TERM PAPER | Nov 24 | 20% |
| FINAL EXAM | Dec 10 | 30% |

Make-ups

Assignments and term papers require a fair amount of analysis time. Please plan ahead to avoid turning them in late. **Late assignments will be lowered one letter grade for every day they are late.** Grades are lowered for every *day* they are late, not every class day they are late. If an assignment is late, it would be a good idea to upload it on eLC then e-mail me so I know it is posted. Do this as soon as possible to avoid any unnecessary late penalties.

If you miss the first exam for a good reason, pre-approved by me, you will be allowed to complete a make-up exam on Tuesday, October 22 at 4:00 pm, meeting in Baldwin 408. Make-ups are not available any other time or date. The make-up is more difficult than the regular exam and should be avoided.

Student Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about these standards before performing academic work. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. Also note that the course syllabus is a general plan for the course and that deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary, particularly if we have to adjust to COVID protocol.

Required Texts

Reading assignments vary in length. When you are assigned a short reading you may want to read ahead so that you don't fall behind in the future. Readings come from three sources: 1) the Jillson text book, 2) the Bullock and Gaddie book on Georgia Politics, and 3) on-line readings (posted on eLC). All are required. The Jillson text outlines the American Government system and is fairly easy to read. Although my lectures will diverge from this text, I will test you on some of the readings from both the Jillson text and the Bullock and Gaddie text that are not discussed in class.

Please read the entire assignment once (at least superficially) before coming to class. Remember, if you work hard and complete all the readings, this should be a very rewarding class. Allow two hours of reading for every hour of class time, except during the exams. The following books can be purchased from the campus book store (and various off campus bookstores).

1. Jilson, Cal. 2016. *American Government: Political Development and Institutional Change, 9th Edition*. New York: Routledge Press (used books should work as well).
2. Bullock, Charles S and Ronald Keith Gaddie. 2011. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change: Fourth Custom Edition for the University of Georgia*. New York: Pearson. ISBN: 978-1-256-81336-1.
3. On-line readings, posted on eLC.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Aug 15 | 1. Introduction |
| Aug 20 | *Jillson, <i>American Government</i> , Chapter 1, The Origins of American Political Principals. |
| | 2. The Constitution and Foundations of the U.S. Republic |
| Aug 22 - 27 | *Jillson, <i>American Government</i> , Chapter 2, The Revolution and the Constitution. |
| Aug 29 - Sept 3 | *Jillson, <i>American Government</i> , Appendix C, Constitution of the United States, bring a copy of the Constitution to class for highlighting. There's one in the back of your textbook. |

*Bullock and Gaddie, *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, Chapter 1, Georgia and the Rule of the Rustic, Chapter 3, Republican Rebirth, Democratic Delaying Actions, and Chapter 4, Constitutions and Institutions.

Sept 5 - 12 THE FEDERALIST DEBATES (see on-line handout for readings)
(written federalist assignment due Sept 5)

3. Federalism

Sept 17 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 3, Federalism and American Political Development.

4. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Sept 19 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 14, Civil Rights.

Sept 20 CONSTITUTION DAY (optional)

*5 extra credit points on your federalist debate assignment for [attending](#).
If you can't make the lecture but want the extra points, please email me a 1.5 page summary of Thomas Jefferson's role in creating the Constitution by 5 pm Saturday, Sept 21.

Sept 24-26 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 13, Civil Liberties, and Chapter 14, Civil Rights.

5. The Judiciary

Oct 1 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 12, The Federal Courts.

Oct 3 **"Griswold v Connecticut," on-line reading, see eLC.
**"Roe v. Wade," on-line reading, see eLC.

Oct 8 **"Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey," on-line reading, see eLC.
**"Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt," on-line reading, see eLC.

Oct 10 **"Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization," on-line reading, see eLC.

Oct 15 Catch-up & Review

Oct 17 **Midterm Exam**

8. Elections

- Oct 22 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 8, Voting, Campaigns, and Elections.
- Oct 24 *Downs, “An Economic Theory of Democracy,” on-line reading, see eLC (password: dougherty).

2024 Election Madness assignment due October 29

- Oct 29 What are the policy positions of the major presidential candidates (primaries and general election)? What were/are their best strategies for gaining more votes in terms of modifying their stances on policy?
*2020 election ([click here](#))
*2024 election ([click here](#))

6. The Legislature

- Oct 31 - Nov 5 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 9, Congress.
*Bullock and Gaddie, *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, Chapter 5, The Georgia General Assembly.
- Nov 7 - 12 *Hinich and Munger, “The Spatial Model of Downs and Black,” *Analytical Politics*, on-line reading, see eLC (password: dougherty).

7. The Executive

- Nov 14 - 19 *Jillson, *American Government*, Chapter 10, The President.
*Bullock and Gaddie, *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, Chapter 6, The Executive Branch.

- Nov 21 Catch-up and Review

Term papers due Nov 24

- Nov 27 - 29 NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

- Dec 3 Attend your Friday classes.

- Dec 10** FINAL EXAM: 3:30-5:30 pm (same location)