

**Introduction to American Government  
POLS 1101, Fall 2016  
M, W, F 10:00-11:00, MLC 350**

**PART 1: Instructor & Course Identification**

**Instructor Name:** Bryan Black

**Instructor's Contact Information:** [bblack@uga.edu](mailto:bblack@uga.edu)

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 11:30 am -1:30 pm or by appointment. My office is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Bank of American building located on E. Clayton Street. Enter through side door located to the left of the building and take elevator to 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. Follow signs to SPIA front office. Office hours will be held in the conference room.

**Course Description**

This course provides a broad overview of the political system in the United States, thereby providing a foundation for future courses you may take regarding American politics. This course will accomplish this by looking at American politics through the lens of Political Science. In other words, we will try to develop an understanding of cause-and-effect relationships in politics. This theoretical understanding of cause-and-effect should inform your understanding of political interaction even as political personalities and issues change in future years. Since these goals require you not only to know and understand information, but also think for yourself, we will design lectures, discussion, and writing in a way that encourages active thought.

**PART 2: Course Policies**

**Reading**

There are two required texts for this course:

Ken Kollman. 2015. *The American Political System, Second Full Edition (with policy chapters), 2014 Election Update* (ISBN:978-0-393-26420-3)

Bullock, Charles S. and Ronald K. Gaddie. 2013. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, Pearson Learning Solutions, UGA Custom Edition.

For the most part, reading from the Ken Kollman textbook will be required on days of lecture, which are usually Monday and Wednesday. For days labeled "Discussion," which are usually Friday classes, the readings will come from the Bullock and Gaddie's *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*. This material will help drive our discussions for these classes.

## Course Goals and Objectives

This course asks: "How does American politics work?" By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Argue how fundamental principles of American politics can best be implemented.
- Explain the basic procedures, rules, and structure of major American political institutions and argue how institutions shape strategic behavior.
- Discuss what influences the principal forms of mass political behavior.

In learning skills of Political Science, you should be able to:

- Apply theoretical principles from Political Science to understand real political situations.
- Write a logical and coherent argument.
- Use evidence and data to evaluate theoretical arguments.

## General Expectations

I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. I will not tolerate disruptive behavior in the classroom, including (but not limited to) talking during lectures, reading newspapers, the ringing of cell phones or pagers, leaving class early, inappropriate or offensive remarks, and personal attacks against other students or the instructor. Although class attendance in lecture is not mandatory, you will be held responsible for all material in the textbooks and in lectures, even if you miss a class. If you are absent, be sure to get the notes from a fellow classmate.

How to succeed in this course

- Be respectful of your own and others' ideas.
- Attend class consistently.
- Keep up with the readings.
- If something is not clear, ask a question.
- Clarify expectations with the instructor.
- Utilize all resources available to you.
- No cell phones during class, but laptops are fine

## Course Grading System, Requirements, and Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments:

Quizzes	10%
Participation	15%
Group Project	15%
First Exam	20%
Second Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

**Quizzes:** To ensure that students come to class prepared to participate, several quizzes will be randomly given throughout the course of the semester. Quizzes will be closed book and may cover material from the assigned readings or from previous days' lectures. As a general rule, you cannot make-up a quiz if you are absent on the day one is given. These quizzes represent 20 percent of your final grade.

**Participation:** You are expected to participate, not just attend this class. In addition, be mindful that not attending class on a regular basis makes it difficult for you to participate in class discussions. Though this course is largely lecture based, students are still expected to actively engage with the material in class. This consists of showing up on time, completing assigned readings, participating in any class discussions, and answering questions posed by the instructor. A detailed rubric can be found on page 3.

**Group Project:** This class will be taking place during the 2016 presidential election. As such, we will use the 2016 election for a class project. Students will be randomly assigned into four groups: Group Hillary Clinton, Group Donald Trump, Group Gary Johnson, and Group Jill Stein. Each of the four groups represents a different candidate for president. Your random assignment to a group is for the purposes of the class project only and in no way represents your individual views about the candidates. Throughout the course of the semester, we will have three mock debates in which we will discuss the candidates' views on economic, social, and foreign policy. More details will follow. This project will be worth 15 percent of your grade.

**Exams:** The first two exams will take place within regular class periods during the semester. *The first exam is scheduled for September 14<sup>th</sup> and the second exam is scheduled for November 11<sup>th</sup>.* The final exam will take place during the allocated exam time. *The final exam is scheduled for December 12<sup>th</sup>.* These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Exams will cover material from both the course readings and lectures. The first two exams will be non-cumulative. The final may or may be cumulative.

**Missed Exams and Late Work:** Missed exams can be made up only in cases of university approved absences, such as travel related to university activities, or extreme circumstances (prolonged illness or death in the family). If you know you will miss an exam, please contact me no later than one week in advance of the exam so other arrangements can be made.

**Course grades will be assigned as follows:**

A	(93.0 – 100.0)	A –	(90.0 – 92.0)	
B +	(87.0 – 89.0)	B	(83.0 – 86.0)	B –
C +	(77.0 – 79.0)	C	(73.0 – 76.0)	C –
D	(60.0 – 69.0)			(70.0 – 72.0)
F	(Below 60)			

\*\*\*All work must be your own.

## Participation Rubric

- A Student attends every class while consistently demonstrating that he or she has completed and understands the assigned readings by participating in class discussion meaningfully.
- B Student only attends most class meetings while completing all readings and actively participating in a meaningful way
- C Student has perfect attendance but regularly fails to demonstrate completion of readings or participate in any meaningful way.
- D Student only attends most class meetings and regularly fails to demonstrate completion of readings or participate in any meaningful way.
- F Student misses classes regularly, does not complete assigned readings, does not engage in class discussion meaningfully, or is disruptive or disrespectful.

\*\*\*Further, inappropriate behavior such as using cell phones, sleeping, or surfing the web during class will cause a deduction in your participation grade, regardless of your fulfillment of the above expectations.

## PART 3: Course Schedule

### Part I – Foundations

*Week 1: Class Introduction, Why Study Politics*

*Week 2: The Logic of American Politics*

- Aug. 15 Understanding American Politics  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 1, p. 3-11
- Aug. 17 Collective Action Problems  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 1, p. 11-29
- Aug. 19 Discussion – Collective Dilemmas  
Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Interlude: votefordanae.com

*Week 3: The Founding*

- Aug. 22 Features of the Constituion  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 2, p. 31-50
- Aug. 24 Concerns of the Framers  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 2, p. 50-65
- Aug 26 Discussion – Ratifying the Constitution  
Reading: Kollman, Federalist Papers 10 & 51 p.655-664, Federalist Paper 78

*Week 4: Federalism*

- Aug. 29 Concepts of federalism and the federal system's evolution  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 3, p.67-82
- Sept. 31 Federalism in Practice  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 3, 82-99
- Sept. 2 Discussion – The Georgia Constitution and Local Government  
Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 4 and 8

*Week 5: Civil Rights and Liberties*

- Sept. 5 No Class – Labor Day**
- Sept. 7 Civil Rights  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 4, 101-117
- Sept. 9 Civil Liberties and Exam Review  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 4, 117-135

*Week 6: Exam Week*

- Sept. 12 Exam Review and Discussion – Voting Rights in Georgia  
Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 9
- Sept. 14 **FIRST EXAM**
- Sept. 16 Return Exams

Part II – Public Policy*Week 7: Public Policy: Economic and Social Policy*

- Sept. 19 Government and the Economy  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 15, p. 515-533
- Sept. 21 Types of Policies  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 15, p. 533-550
- Sept. 23 What are Social Policies  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 16, 553-566

*Week 8: Social and Foreign Policy*

- Sept. 26 Political Ideologies and Social Policy  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 16, 566-586
- Sept. 28 Collective Dilemmas and Foreign Policy  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 17, p.589-610
- Sept. 30 Making Foreign Policy  
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 17, p. 611-620

*Week 9: Mock Presidential Debates (Group Project Due)*

- Oct. 3            Economic Policies  
 Oct. 5            Social Policies  
 Oct. 7            Foreign Policies

Part III – Voter and Electoral Behavior*Week 10: Political Parties*

- Oct. 10          Party Systems  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 12, p. 409-435  
 Oct. 12          Why only Two Parties  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 12, p. 435-443  
 Oct. 14          Discussion – The Role of Parties  
                     Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 11

*Week 11: Interest Groups and Social Movements*

- Oct. 17          Models of Group Organization  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 11, p. 377-392  
 Oct. 19          Group Strategies for Influence  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 11, p. 393-406  
 Oct. 21          Discussion – Interest Groups and Policy  
                     Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 12

*Week 11: Elections and Campaigns*

- Oct. 24          The Role of Elections  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 13, p. 445-460  
 Oct. 26          Campaigns and Voter Decisions  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 13, p. 460-481  
**Oct. 28          No Class – Fall Break**

*Week 12: Political Participation*

- Oct. 31          Collective Action Problems and Participation  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 10, p.341-356  
 Nov. 2          Patterns in Participation  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 10, p.356-375  
 Nov. 4          Background effects and considerations  
                     Reading: Kollman, Chapter 9, 299-320

*Week 13: Public Opinion and Exam Week*

- Nov. 7        How Opinions Aggregate  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 9, 320-339
- Nov. 9        Exam Review and Representative Pressures  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 5, 137-153
- Nov. 11        SECOND EXAM**

Part IV – Institutions*Week 14: Congress and the President*

- Nov. 14        Congressional Structures and Legislative Process  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 153-183
- Nov. 16        Return Exams and Presidential Power I  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 6, p.185-203
- Nov. 18        Presidential Power II  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 6, p. 203-223

*Week 17: No Class – Thanksgiving Break**Week 18: The Judiciary*

- Nov. 28        Judicial Organizations and Selection  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 8, p.263-280
- Nov. 30        Judicial Decision-Making  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 8, p. 280-297
- Dec. 2        Discussion– The Georgia General Assembly, the Executive Branch in Georgia  
 and the Judicial System in Georgia  
 Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapters 5, 6 and 7

*Week 19: The Bureaucracy and Final Exam Review*

- Dec. 5        The Principal – Agent Problem and Final Exam Review  
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 7, p. 225-261
- Dec. 12        FINAL EXAM (8 am – 11 am)**

**PART 4: Other Issues**

**Special Considerations:** The University of Georgia makes every effort to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Students are responsible for providing accurate and current documentation of their disability and for making a written request to the director before receiving accommodations. Students with special needs (disabilities,

problems, or any other factors that may affect their performance or that require special instructional strategies) should also make these needs known to the professor/instructor during the first class session. Please Contact Disability Services for more information.

**Instructor Availability:** Students are at the heart of everything we do at the University of Georgia. I am available to meet with students by appointment if anyone cannot attend my posted office hours. Please email me to schedule a meeting.

**Statement on Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is a core value of institutions of higher learning. All students, upon enrolling, must pledge: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. The university policy on academic integrity is posted at: <http://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty>.

**Student Email Policy:** All University of Georgia students are encouraged to utilize their UGA email account. Your UGA email account will be the official communications channel for this class. Students are responsible for all information distributed to them through their UGA email account. Students are expected to check it daily.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Please see the academic calendar on the Office of Registrar's website for dates and deadlines relating to withdrawing from this course.