

Introduction to American Government

POLS 1101, Fall 2016

Tuesday & Thursday 2:00-3:15

Instructor: Jason S. Byers
E-mail: byersjs@uga.edu
Website: www.jasonsbyers.com

Room: Social Work G12
Office: Bank of America 404
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:00-3:00

Course Description and Goals

The primary objective of this course is to provide students with a broad overview of the political system in the United States. By the end of the course, students should be able to describe the structure and function of American institutions, as well as the motivations behind their construction and the consequences of their actions. To learn more about the nature of American political institutions, we will examine features of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches as well as the role of political parties, interest groups, the media and the bureaucracy. Specifically, students should be able to explain how these institutions influence the behavior of both politicians and constituents.

Required Texts

There are two required texts for this course:

- Lowi, Theodore, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2014. *American Government: Power and Purpose*. Thirteenth Core Edition. New York: Norton. ISBN: 978-0-393-32245-5
- Charles S. Bullock III and Ronald Keith Gaddie. 2013. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*. Pearson Custom Edition. New York: Pearson. ISBN-13: 9781256769378

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services office will be accommodated according to university policy. If you have documentation for accommodations from Disabilities Services, please present it to me as soon as possible. For more information, contact Disabilities Services at **706-542-8719**. If you cannot reach the classroom or my office, please notify me as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

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. Tests and written assignments should be your own work, while studying and class preparation can (and should) be done with others. The university policy on academic integrity is posted at: <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/>.

Course Requirements and Evaluations

Attendance	10 percent
Quizzes	15 percent
Exam One	25 percent
Exam Two	25 percent
Exam Three	25 percent

Attendance and Participation: Each student will be granted 3 unexcused absences. After those are exhausted, the attendance grade will be the proportion of all classes attended. For example, a student who attends all classes will receive all 10 points. A student who attended all but 3 classes will also receive all 10 points. A student who missed 4 classes but had a university approved excuse will also receive all 10 points. However, a student who used all 3 “freebies” but also missed 10 percent of the classes will only receive 90 percent of the available points.

Quizzes: Periodically throughout the course of the semester, 5 quizzes will be given at the beginning of class related to assigned readings or material covered in previous class meetings. They will vary in length and question type. Additionally, they may or may not be announced beforehand. Each quiz will be graded out of 3 points for a total of 15 points toward your final grade, and make-up quizzes will not be allowed without a university approved excuse. If an absence is excused, make-ups will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Exams: There will be 3 exams that will be administered in class on predetermined dates outlined here. Each will be worth 25 percent of your final grade. They will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions and at least one short answer question. Make-up exams will not be allowed without a university-approved excuse. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule a make-up exam as quickly as possible after her or she has provided an excuse. Any potential conflicts should be cleared with the instructor as soon as possible. Exams may not be taken early.

Overall Grades: Grades are constructed to reflect the university standards posted at [http://bulletin.uga.edu/Bulletin Files/acad/Grades.html](http://bulletin.uga.edu/Bulletin%20Files/acad/Grades.html), which are summarized below. Grades will be based on how many points you earn according to the following distribution:

A = 93-100	A- = 90-92	
B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D = 60-69		
F = 0-59		

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.

Student Resources

You can increase your chance of success in this course by using UGA's academic services. The Academic Resource Center offers tutoring in Study Strategies that can help with test preparation and in Writing. You can set an appointment at <http://tutor.uga.edu/arc/tutoring/> and the phone number is 706-542-7575. You also may check out opportunities at the Miller Learning Center (<http://mlc.uga.edu/>) and the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.english.uga.edu/>).

Course Schedule (Subject to change as events warrant):

Date	Reading
	Introduction/The Five Principles of Politics
Aug. 16	Introduction
Aug. 18	Lowi, Chapter 1
	The Founding
Aug. 22	Lowi, Chapter 2, p. 32-49
Aug. 25	Lowi, Chapter 2, 49-71
	Federalism and the Separation of Powers
Aug. 30	Lowi, Chapter 3, p. 72-93
Sept. 1	Lowi, Chapter 3, p. 93-102
	Civil Liberties
Sept. 6	Lowi, Chapter 4, p. 104-130
Sept. 8	Lowi, Chapter 4, p. 130-144
	Civil Rights
Sept. 13	Lowi, Chapter 5, p. 146-168
Sept. 15	Lowi, Chapter 5, p. 168-184
	Exam Week 1
Sept. 20	Review
Sept. 22	Exam 1
	Congress: The First Branch
Sept. 27	Lowi, Chapter 6, p. 186-209
Sept. 29	Lowi, Chapter 6, p. 209-245
	The Presidency as an Institution
Oct. 4	Lowi, Chapter 7, p. 248-273
Oct. 6	Lowi, Chapter 7, p. 273-300

	The Executive Branch: Bureaucracy
Oct. 11	Lowi, Chapter 8, p. 302-319
Oct. 13	Lowi, Chapter 8, p. 319-340
	The Federal Courts
Oct. 18	Lowi, Chapter 9, p. 342-361
Oct. 20	Lowi, Chapter 9, p. 361-391
	Exam Week 2
Oct. 25	Review
Oct. 27	Exam 2
	Public Opinion
Nov. 1	Lowi, Chapter 10, p. 392-418
Nov. 3	Lowi, Chapter 10, p. 418-445
	Elections
Nov. 8	Lowi, Chapter 11, p. 446-476
Nov. 10	Lowi, Chapter 11, p. 476-511
	Political Parties
Nov. 15	Lowi, Chapter 12, p. 512-533
Nov. 17	Lowi, Chapter 12, p. 533-557
	Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 22	No Class
Nov. 24	No Class
	Groups and Interest
Nov. 29	Lowi, Chapter 13, p. 558-575
Dec. 1	Lowi, Chapter 13, p. 575-596
	Final Exam
Dec. 13	3:30 - 6:30 pm