

**Introduction to American Government
POLS 1101, Spring 2017
Tuesday-Thursday 2-3:15 pm, Fine Arts 201**

PART 1: Instructor & Course Identification

Instructor Name: Bryan Black

Instructor's Contact Information: bblack@uga.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday / Thursday 12:30 - 1:30 pm or by appointment. My office is located on the 4th floor of the Bank of American building (Room 415) located on E. Clayton Street. Enter through side door located to the left of the building and take elevator to 4th Floor.

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 Tuesday. For days labeled "Discussion," which are usually Thursday 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%
First Exam	25%
Second Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

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 10 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 4.

Exams: The first two exams will take place within regular class periods during the semester. *The first exam is scheduled for February 7th and the second exam is scheduled for March 28th.* The final exam will take place during the last day of class on **APRIL 25th** during regularly scheduled class time. These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Exams will cover material from both the course readings and lectures. All three exams will be non-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 – (80.0 – 82.0)
C +	(77.0 – 79.0)	C	(73.0 – 76.0)	C – (70.0 – 72.0)
D	(60.0 – 69.0)			
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

- Jan. 10 Understanding American Politics
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 1, p. 3-29
- Jan. 12 Discussion – Collective Dilemmas
Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Interlude: votefordanae.com

Week 3: The Founding

- Jan. 17 The Constitution
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 2, p. 31-65
- Jan. 19 Discussion – Ratifying the Constitution
Reading: Kollman, Federalist Papers 10 & 51 p.655-664, Federalist Paper 78

Week 4: Federalism

- Jan. 24 Federalism: Evolution and In Practice
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 3, p.67-99
- Jan. 26 Discussion – The Georgia Constitution and Local Government
Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 4 and 8

Week 5: Civil Rights and Liberties

- Jan.31 Civil Rights and Liberties
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 4, 101-135
- Feb. 2 Exam Review and Discussion – Voting Rights in Georgia
Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 9

Week 6: Exam Week

- Feb. 7 FIRST EXAM**
- Feb. 9 Return Exams

Part II – Voter and Electoral Behavior*Week 7: Political Participation*

- Feb.14 Collective Action Problems and Participation
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 10, p.341-375
- Feb. 16 Discussion – Redistricting
Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 10

Week 8: Public Opinion

- Feb. 21 Public Opinion: Background Effects and Aggregation
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 9, 299-339
- Feb. 23 Discussion – TBD
Reading – TBD

Week 9: Party Systems

- Feb. 28 Party Systems and Why Two Parties
Reading: Kollman, Chapter 12, p. 409-443
- Mar. 2 Discussion – The Role of Parties
Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 11

Week 10: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Week 11: Elections and Campaigns

- Mar. 14 The Role of Elections and Voter Decision-Making
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 13, p. 445-81
- Mar. 16 Discussion – The Electoral Process
 Bullock and Gaddie: Chapter 13

Week 12: Interest Groups and Social Movements

- Mar. 21 Group Organization and Strategies for Influence
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 11, p. 377-406
- Mar. 23 Discussion – Interest Groups and Policy
 Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapter 12

Week 13: Exam Week

- Mar. 28 SECOND EXAM**
- Mar. 30 Return Exams

Part III – Institutions*Week 14: Congress*

- Apr. 4 Representative Pressures and Legislative Process
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 5, 137-183
- Apr. 6 NO CLASS**

Week 15: The Presidency and Judiciary

- Apr. 11 Presidential Power
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 6, p.185-223
- Apr. 13 Judicial Organization and Selection
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 8, p.263-280

Week 16: The Judiciary and the Bureaucracy

- Apr. 18 Judicial Decision-Making and Discussion - Georgia Assembly, Georgia
 Governor, and Georgia Judicial Systems
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 8, p.280-297
 Reading: Bullock and Gaddie, Chapters 5, 6, and 7
- Apr. 20 The Principal – Agent Problem and Final Exam Review
 Reading: Kollman, Chapter 7, p. 225-261

Week 17: Final Exam Week

Apr. 25 FINAL EXAM

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.