

Introduction to American Government

POLS 1101, Spring 2017

Monday, Wednesday & Friday

9:00-9:50 & 10:10-11:00

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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 points
Quizzes	15 points
Exam One	25 points
Exam Two	25 points
Exam Three	25 points

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 end 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
Jan. 6	Introduction
Jan. 9	Lowi, Chapter 1
Jan. 11	Lowi, Chapter 2, p. 32-49
Jan. 13	SPSA Conference (No Class)
	The Founding
Jan. 16	MLK Day (No Class)
Jan. 18	Lowi, Chapter 2, 49-71
Jan. 20	UGA Elections Conference (No Class)
	Federalism and the Separation of Powers
Jan. 23	Lowi, Chapter 3, p. 72-93
Jan. 25	Lowi, Chapter 3, p. 93-102
Jan. 27	Bullock, Chapter 4/Discussion
	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
Jan. 30	Lowi, Chapter 4
Feb. 1.	Lowi, Chapter 5
Feb. 3	Discussion
	Exam Week 1
Feb. 6	Review
Feb. 8	Exam 1
Feb. 10	TBD
	Congress: The First Branch
Feb. 13	Lowi, Chapter 6, p. 186-209
Feb. 15	Lowi, Chapter 6, p. 209-245
Feb. 17	Discussion
	The Presidency as an Institution
Feb. 20	Lowi, Chapter 7, p. 248-273
Feb. 22	Lowi, Chapter 7, p. 273-300
Feb. 24	Discussion

The Executive Branch: Bureaucracy	
Feb. 27	Lowi, Chapter 8, p. 302-319
Mar. 1	Lowi, Chapter 8, p. 319-340
Mar. 3	Discussion
Spring Break	
Mar. 6	No Class
Mar. 8	No Class
Mar. 10	No Class
The Federal Courts	
Mar. 13	Lowi, Chapter 9, p. 342-361
Mar. 15	Lowi, Chapter 9, p. 361-391
Mar. 17	Discussion
Exam 2	
Mar. 20	Review
Mar. 22	Exam 2
Mar. 24	TBD
Public Opinion	
Mar. 27	Lowi, Chapter 10, p. 392-418
Mar. 29	Lowi, Chapter 10, p. 418-445
Mar. 31	Discussion
Elections	
April. 3	Lowi, Chapter 11, p. 446-476
April. 5	Lowi, Chapter 11, p. 476-511
April. 7	MPSA Conference (No Class)
Political Parties	
April. 10	Lowi, Chapter 12, p. 512-533
April. 12	Lowi, Chapter 12, p. 533-557
April. 14	Discussion
Groups and Interest	
April. 17	Lowi, Chapter 13, p. 558-575
April. 19	Lowi, Chapter 13, p. 575-596
April. 21	Discussion
Exam 3	
April. 24	Review
April. 26	Exam 3
April. 28	No Class