

Introduction to American Government
Political Science 1101
Spring 2018
Class Time: MWF 11:15am – 12:05pm
Instructor: Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD

Contact Information:

Office Hours: MW 1:30pm - 3:00pm

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Course Prerequisites: None

I. Course Description:

This course is a college level introduction to American government. Students will begin to develop the body of knowledge necessary for informed civic participation. More specifically, students will learn about democratic principles, the structure and institutions in government, and the role that ethnicity, race, gender, class, culture, and the economy play in shaping the political landscape in America. By the end of the course students will understand:

(1.1) Course Goals

The primary goal of this course is introduce students to the scientific study of politics. To this end the course is designed to provide students with an historical and conceptual background of politics in the United State of America as well as a scientific perspective for understanding the relationships between different levels and branches of government, the operation of these political institutions. By the end of this course students should be understand:

(1.1) what the fundamental characteristics of American government are and how the U.S. Constitution affects the organization of government

(1.2) the relationship between national and state governments, and the relationship between government and citizens.

(1.3) the evolution of the American political system from historical developments to its current effects on government and society.

(1.4) the role of politics and strategy in the operation of government in the United States.

(1.5) human political behavior as it is expressed individually and collectively.

(1.6) explain how political socialization shapes the political preferences and behaviors of individuals in our society.

(1.7) how the executive, legislative, and judicial branches are organized and the role that they play in the policy-making process.

II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

(2.1) Required Text

Kernell, Samuel, et al. *The logic of American politics*, 8th edition
ISBN: 9781506358666

Bullock, Charles and Ronald Gaddie. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, 2nd edition.
ISBN: 9780205864676

(2.2) Exams

There will be three exams in this class. Each exam is worth 30% of your grade. (The exams together constitute 90% of your final grade)

(2.3) Assignments, Discussion, and Attendance

Learning is an active exercise. Students at all levels of learning and accomplishment benefit when they are actively engaged in class. I will assess your attendance and participation through weekly assignments/quizzes, group activities, and class discussions worth 10% of your final grade.

(2.4) Exam Schedule

First Midterm Exam	30%	February 14 th
Second Midterm Exam	30%	March 21 st
Final Exam	30%	April 27 th
Participation	10%	Weekly

(2.5) Grading

All grades (including final grades) will be assigned following the system depicted below:

A	=	94-100	C+	=	77
A-	=	90	C	=	74
B+	=	87	C-	=	70
B	=	84	D	=	60 – 69
B-	=	80	F	≤	59

III. Class Policies

(3.1) Absences

Come to class! Attendance is critical for the successful completion of this course. If you are more than ten (10) minutes late for this class DO NOT ENTER the class unless we previously discussed your tardiness.

(3.2) Makeup Exams

If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero. If you are late to an exam, you must take it in the time that remains when you arrive. Make-up exams are only given to students with legitimate and documented excuses. All make-up exams are administered by the Department of Political Science on Fridays from 1pm – 4pm.

(3.3) Missed/Late Assignments

Missed assignments are awarded a grade of zero. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of five points for each calendar day late.

(3.4) Cheating and Academic Misconduct

Violations of the academic dishonesty rules are grounds for receiving an “F” in the course as well as possible expulsion from the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, academic misconduct, or plagiarism, examine the university policy and /or ask the instructor.

(3.5) Problems and Emergencies

If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from attending an exam or coming to class, you should contact Professor Glas as soon as possible.

(3.6) Disability Disclosure Statement

Please advise the instructor if you have a documented disability that needs to be accommodated. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations must be registered with the Office of Disability Services before an instructor can modify instruction or expectations.

(3.7) Policy on Disruptive Behavior

- 1) Turn communication devices to silent.
- 2) Be polite during class discussion.

(3.8) Withdraw Policy

Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without failing is March 19th. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a “WF”.

IV. Course Schedule and Assignments¹

Week of January 1st – Syllabus

*** Classes Begin – January 4th ***

Week of January 8th: The Logic of American Politics

Read Chapter 1 of *The Logic*

*** Drop/Add End – January 10th ***

Week of January 15th: The Constitution

Read Chapter 2 of *The Logic*

*** No Classes – MLK Day – January 15th ***

¹ The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Week of January 22nd: Federalism

Read Chapter 3 of *The Logic*

Read Chapter 4 of *Georgia Politics*

Week of January 29th: Civil Rights

Read Chapter 4 of *The Logic*

Read Chapter 9 of *Georgia Politics*

Week of February 5th: Civil Liberties

Read Chapter 5 of *The Logic*

Week of February 12th: Exam 1

Week of February 19th: Congress

Read Chapter 6 of *The Logic*

Read Chapter 5 of *Georgia Politics*

Week of February 26th: Presidency

Read Chapter 7 of *The Logic*

Read Chapter 6 of *Georgia Politics*

*** Semester Midpoint ***

Week of March 5th: Judiciary

Read Chapter 9 of *The Logic*

Read Chapter 7 of *Georgia Politics*

Week of March 12th

*** No Classes – Spring Break – March 12th – 16th ***

Week of March 19th: Exam 2

*** Withdrawal Deadline – March 19th ***

Week of March 26th: Public Opinion

Read Chapter 10 of *The Logic*

Week of April 2nd: Voting, Campaigns and Elections

Read Chapter 11 of *The Logic*

Read Chapters 13 of *Georgia Politics*

Week of April 9th: Political Parties and Interest Groups

Read Chapters 12 & 13 of *The Logic*

Week of April 16th: The Media

Read Chapter 14 of *The Logic*

Week of April 23rd: Exam Week

*** Last Day of Classes – April 25th ***

*** Reading Day – April 26th ***

Final Exam – Friday, April 27th @ 12pm