

**POLS 4645E: Applied Civic Engagement Syllabus**  
University of Georgia  
Summer 2019, Thru Session

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Virtual office hours

Email me at any time Monday – Friday. I will respond no later than 24 hours after the first contact and probably much sooner than that. It may take longer for a response if the student emails through eLC. If you email after 8pm, I probably won't respond until morning. We can also meet via Google Hangout by appointment.

Course description

Through online and experiential learning, students explore definitions of civic engagement as it relates to democratic citizenship and its historical context, identify and demonstrate methods of civic engagement that encourage civic life individually and within a community, and understand limits of engagement in society.

Technical requirements for the course

Having regular access to the Internet is necessary for completing course assignments. Reliable Internet service is also important because quizzes will be time sensitive. You will also need access to a computer where you can engage with course content like videos or podcasts.

Course objectives

Students will:

- Participate in experiential learning throughout the course.
- Develop working knowledge of civic engagement scholarship as it relates to political science and other related fields.
- Recognize and analyze personal values, experiences and potential for becoming civically and politically engaged.
- Demonstrate methods of civic engagement individually and in community.
- Identify engagement opportunities with a particular issue and relate local, national, and global social policy to the issue.
- Relate personal academic interests with civic interests, and plan steps to pursue these interests simultaneously.

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<sup>1</sup> Instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus as needed.

### Course structure

**Thursdays:** You will receive an email from me with information about what should be completed during the upcoming week. This is when I'll post materials for you to view, an outline to guide your reading, online discussion questions, etc.

**Wednesdays:** You will submit assignments, usually by noon (unless otherwise stated).

**Tuesdays:** When there is a week with a quiz, it will take place on a Tuesday.

### Course texts

You are required to gain access to the book listed below.

- Zukin, et al, *A New Engagement*, 2006

All other assigned readings will be made available to you via eLearning Commons.

### Learning Activities

Throughout the course, students should participate in the following learning activities: reading the text, viewing and interacting with the weekly outline, responding to discussion posts by professor and peers, completing exams, and engaging in their communities through activity and reflection.

These activities will be graded and should be completed by the due date listed on the syllabus and on the eLC calendar.

## Assignments and grading

### **Online class discussion & reflection (20%)**

The instructor will post two sets of discussion questions every week. One set will relate to the week's readings. Another set will ask students to reflect on how their personal civic engagement relates to the course material. Responding to the questions will help you understand the readings, prepare for the quizzes, and provide an opportunity for you to get to know your classmates and learn about their civic engagement experiences.

### **Online midterm exams (2 exams, 20% each, 40% total)**

There will be two exams during the semester, taken through eLC. The exams will be timed and include a mix of different questions formats. The exams will take place:

- Exam1, Tuesday, June 25
- Exam2, Tuesday, July 30

### **Applied civic engagement & portfolio (40%)**

This is the applied part of the course, where students practice being civically engaged in an intentional way and document their experiences.

Students will participate in at least 30 hours of civic/ political engagement with one or more civic/ political organizations to be completed over the course of the semester.

The course runs 8 weeks, but the majority of the applied civic engagement should be completed during the 6-week period after the first week of class and prior to the last week of class: June 13 to July 24.

The portfolio includes:

- One page-report (5%): Students should notify the instructor of their civic engagement intentions by completing a one-page report to the instructor by Wednesday, June 12. Students will provide details about their organization(s). If you have questions about whether an organization qualifies, the student should talk to the instructor during the first week of the semester, prior to turning in this assignment.
- Weekly log of activity (5%): Students must keep a weekly log of engagement hours and duties. You will report activity throughout the semester and submit the log in full on Wednesday, July 24.
- Documentation (5%): This may be submitted any time during the semester but no later than Wednesday, July 24. Documentation should be submitted in either of the following ways:
  - Through the student's supervisor emailing the instructor directly to verify participation.
  - Through the student's providing documentation, signed by a superior, scanned and uploaded to eLC.

- Interview (5%): The student will interview their superior/contact with the political/ civic organization about the organization's engagement with the community during the course of the semester. The student will submit their one-page document with interview questions by Wednesday, July 17.
- Final report (20%): The student will incorporate interview comments and reflect on their personal engagement as well as local community engagement with the organization. They will also integrate course readings. The report will be due Wednesday, July 31.

This seems like a good place to remind students of the University of Georgia's Academic Honesty Policy: (<https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>). If a student is dishonest in reporting their applied civic engagement, the student will fail the course. Please be clear and upfront about your engagement. If you run into any issues with obtaining documentation, reach out to your instructor ASAP.

### Administrative Items

#### **Missed deadlines**

Assignments are due by noon on the date noted on the syllabus, unless otherwise stated. If you have a conflict with a due date, please come talk to me about it as soon as you know about it. This way we can work something out and your grade may not suffer. If you have an emergency conflict (i.e. personal, family or medical emergencies), you should e-mail me within two days of the missed due date to discuss the timely completion of the assignment. Documentation is required for make-up exams. If you miss a deadline for a non-emergency, most assignments can still be completed and will be accepted for up to a week—but they will be penalized a letter grade for every additional day late.

#### **UGA Culture of Honesty policy**

The policy is in place to encourage academic honesty among students, faculty and other members of the university community. You and I are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating and much more. It's in your best interest to understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University.

Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here: <https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>

### **Online Learning Environment**

UGA eLC will host this course. You will need to check eLC at least a few times per week to be successful in the course. If you run into any problems with eLC, please contact the EITS Help Desk:

- 706-542-3106 (8am to 10pm M-Th, 8am to 6pm F, 1pm to 7pm Sat & Sun)
- [helpdesk@uga.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uga.edu)
- Submit a request for support at <http://www.eits.uga.edu/request>
- Chat with a representative from the Help Desk (8am to 5pm M-F), <https://confluence.eits.uga.edu/display/HDSH/Help+Desk+Support+%28HDS%29+Home>

## Agreement

As an enrolled student in this course, you are agreeing to the policies listed above and to doing good, honest work. You are also agreeing to work with Dr. Bramlett to have a positive course outcome and learn about civic engagement through course assignments and experiences.

Students agree to not collaborate on exams. Any student caught cheating will fail the course, and academic dishonesty will be reported to the University. Exams will be open book but they will be timed. Students should be prepared to complete the exam in the time allotted.

Please stay in touch throughout the course. We will move quickly, so you should stay up to date on your assignments and communicate with Dr. Bramlett if a conflict arises.

Please indicate that you agree with these statements during the first week of class.

## Course Outline and Schedule

### **What is civic engagement? What are the main ideas associated with civic engagement?**

Week 1. Friday, June 7 – Wednesday, June 12

- Readings
  - *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in America* By Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, Henry Brady
    - Chapter 1
    - Chapter 2
  - *Civic Engagement in Higher Education* By Barbara Jacoby et al, Chapter 1 “Civic Engagement in Today’s Higher Education”
- Due Wednesday, June 12
  - Email instructor, indicating agreement to terms stated in syllabus
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week
  - Submit your first one-page report for your civic engagement portfolio

Week 2. Thursday, June 13 – Wednesday, June 19

- Readings
  - *A New Engagement?* By Zukin et al
    - Chapter 1 “Introduction”
    - Chapter 3 “Engagement in Public Life”
  - “National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement: Campus Report, Student Voting Rates for University of Georgia”
  - “Youth Voting Rose in 2018 Despite Concerns over the State of American Democracy” by CIRCLE
    - [https://civicyouth.org/youth-voting-rose-in-2018-despite-concerns-over-the-state-of-american-democracy/?cat\\_id=6](https://civicyouth.org/youth-voting-rose-in-2018-despite-concerns-over-the-state-of-american-democracy/?cat_id=6)
- Due Wednesday, June 19
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week

## Why civic engagement?

Week 3. Thursday, June 20 – Wednesday, June 26

- Readings
  - *Democracy in America* By Alexis de'Tocqueville
    - Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 6
    - Volume 2, Part 2, Chapter 5
  - *Bowling Alone*, Chapter 16 in "Introduction" to Section Four, "So What?"
  - "Political Outreach to Youth Effective in 2018 Midterms, But Many Still Left Out" by CIRCLE
    - [https://civicyouth.org/political-outreach-to-youth-effective-in-2018-midterms-but-many-still-left-out/?cat\\_id=6](https://civicyouth.org/political-outreach-to-youth-effective-in-2018-midterms-but-many-still-left-out/?cat_id=6)
- Exam1, Tuesday, June 25
- Due, Wednesday, June 26
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week

## What is the historical context of democratic citizenship in the United States, and how do different notions of democracy influence ideas of engagement?

Week 4. Thursday, June 27 – Wednesday, July 3 (midterm & withdrawal deadline)

- Readings
  - *Bowling Alone* By Robert Putnam
    - Chapter 1 "Thinking about Social Change in America"
    - Chapter 15 "What Killed Civic Engagement? Summing Up"
  - *A New Engagement?* By Zukin et al Chapter 2 "Coming of Age in a Post-Boomer World"
- Due Wednesday, July 3
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week

Week 5. Thursday, July 4 – Wednesday, July 10 (holiday: Thursday, July 4)

- Readings
  - *A More Perfect Constitution* By Larry Sabato, Chapter 5 "A Citizenship of Service: Asking What We can do for Our Country...and Ourselves"
  - *Bowling Alone* By Robert Putnam, Chapter 23 "Lessons of History: The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era"
- Due Wednesday, July 10
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week

Week 6. Thursday, July 11 – Wednesday, July 17

- Readings
  - *What Americans Know about Politics and Why it Matters* By Michael X. Delli Carpini, Chapter 1 “From Democratic Theory to Democratic Practice: The Case for an Informed Citizenry”
  - *A New Engagement?* By Zukin et al, Chapter 6 “Where Do Young People Stand Politically?”
  - *The Politics of Millennials: Political Beliefs and Policy Preferences of America’s Most Diverse Generation* By Stella Rouse and Ashley Ross, Chapter 9 “A Force in Waiting? Millennials and Political Engagement”
- Due Wednesday, July 17
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week
  - Submit your interview questions

## **What are the limits to engagement?**

Week 7. Thursday, July 18 – Wednesday, July 24

- Readings
  - *America: The Owner’s Manual*, 2016 By Bob Graham and Chris Hand, Prologue, “Green Tea”
  - *The Turnout Gap*, By Bernard Fraga, Introduction
  - *Fragmented Democracy: Medicaid, Federalism, and Unequal Politics* By Jamila Michener, Chapter 1 “Medicaid, Political Life, and Fragmented Democracy”
- Due Wednesday, July 24
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week
  - Submit documentation for civic engagement portfolio
  - Submit final activity log for civic engagement portfolio

Week 8. Thursday, July 25 – Wednesday, July 31 (last day of class)

- Readings
  - *Bowling Alone* By Robert Putnam, Chapter 24 “Toward an Agenda for Social Capitalists”
  - *A New Engagement?* By Zukin et al, Chapter 7, “Civic Engagement, Political Engagement, and Generational Change”
- Exam2, Tuesday, July 30
- Due Wednesday, July 31
  - Submit your discussion responses for the week
  - Submit final report for civic engagement portfolio

Final Exam period: Thursday, August 1 & Friday, August 2



## List of Important Dates

- Due Wednesday, June 12
  - Email instructor, indicating agreement to terms stated in syllabus
  - Submit your first one-page report for your civic engagement portfolio
- Exam1, Tuesday, June 25
- Due Wednesday, July 17
  - Submit your interview questions
- Due Wednesday, July 24
  - Submit your documentation for civic engagement portfolio
  - Submit final activity log for civic engagement portfolio
- Exam2, Tuesday, July 30
- Due Wednesday, July 31
  - Submit final report for civic engagement portfolio

\*\*\*Every Wednesday – Submit your discussion responses for the week\*\*\*