

POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government

Spring 2020

Lecture: Monday and Wednesday, 1:25pm-2:15pm

Discussion Section: Friday (Time varies by section)

Instructional Plaza S306

Professor: Geoffrey Sheagley

Office: Baldwin Hall 380G

Email: geoff.sheagley@uga.edu

Office Hours: Monday 2:30-4:00pm, or by appointment.

Lead Teaching Assistant: Simon Williamson

Office: Baldwin Hall Coffee Shop

Email: simon.williamson25@uga.edu

Office Hours: Friday, 12:30-1:30pm

Description

This course will introduce you to the institutions, actors, and processes that make up the American political system. Students will have the opportunity to learn about the historical development of the American political system and about contemporary debates that define daily political life in the US. This course is not simply about discussing current events but rather our focus throughout the semester will be on understanding and critically assessing the American political system.

Structure

This course has two components. Our meetings on Monday & Wednesday will largely be lecture based, although many classes will include small and large-group activities. On Friday students will meet with a small group of their peers and a teaching assistant for a discussion section.

Office Hours & Help

I will strive to make sure that the course is understandable and that you do not feel lost. If you have questions about course content, structure, or assignments please start by contacting your teaching assistant. If you have a personal matter that you need to discuss (such as an accommodation from DRC) you should contact me via email or come to my office hours.

Course Materials

1. *We the People* (12th essentials edition) – by Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J. Tolbert, and Robert J. Spitzer **with access to InQuizitive**
2. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change* (4th custom edition for the University of Georgia) – by Charles S. Bullock III and Ronald Keith Gaddie
 - **Please do not buy this book until after the first breakout session**

Discussion Sections

You are required to attend one discussion on Friday. Please note that section attendance is mandatory.

Section	Time	Location	Instructor	Email
22488	8:00-8:50	Leconte Hall 135	Ben Ayres	benjamin.ayres@uga.edu
22485	9:05-9:55	Leconte Hall 135	Ben Ayres	benjamin.ayres@uga.edu
22494	9:05-9:55	Journalism 511	Blake Smith	wbsmith@uga.edu
22492	10:10-11:00	Journalism 511	Blake Smith	wbsmith@uga.edu
22489	10:10-11:00	Journalism 515	Zhihao Wang	zhihao.wang@uga.edu
22487	11:15-12:05	Journalism 511	Benton Sample	bwsample@uga.edu
22486	11:15-12:05	Journalism 515	Simon Williamson	simon.williamson25@uga.edu
22484	12:20-1:10	Journalism 513	Jacob Lambeck	jacob.lambeck@uga.edu
22491	12:20-1:10	Journalism 511	Benton Sample	bwsample@uga.edu
22490	1:25-2:15	Journalism 513	Jacob Lambeck	jacob.lambeck@uga.edu
22493	1:25-2:15	Journalism 510	Zhihao Wang	zhihao.wang@uga.edu

Grading

Your grade in this class will be based on a mixture of exams, reading quizzes, written assignments, and activities.

Exams (45% of grade)

Midterm Exam (20% of grade): The midterm will cover roughly the first half of course material and will consist primarily of multiple-choice questions of varying difficulty. As of now, the midterm exam is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 4th** during our regular lecture time.

Final Exam (25% of grade): The final exam is **not** cumulative and will cover material assigned after the midterm exam. The format will be the same as the midterm. The final exam will take place according to the UGA final exam schedule.

Reading Quizzes (20% of grade)

Most weeks you will have a short online reading assignment that you will access through InQuizitive, which accompanies your textbook. You will need to create an account in order to submit your assignments, which are due by **5pm** on Friday of each week.

Participation (15% of grade)

Attendance in the breakout session is required. Your participation grade will primarily be based on your performance in the section. There will be group discussions that should demonstrate your critical reflection on the material covered in class as well as on weekly assignments.

Writing Assignment (15% of grade)

You are required to complete **one** writing assignment during the semester. There are three options for paper topics, and you will select which one you want to write at the start of the semester. You will find guidelines for each assignment on eLC. The due date for the paper depends on the topic you choose to write about, so pay attention to when you need to submit your paper.

Online Research Study (5%)

You are required to participate in an online research study. The study will take approximately 15-20 minutes and is supposed to provide you with an understanding of political science research.

Grades and other Course Policies

Grades directly pertain to your achievement in the course. University policy defines the meaning of grades and to what level of achievement grades reported on your transcript pertain. I use the following grading scale:

Grade	Percent
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	<60

Grade Change

Any questions you have regarding grades should be directed to your teaching assistant. If you are unable to resolve the matter with your TA, you may appeal the grade to me. If you decide to appeal your grade to me, you are required to write up a short (roughly 1 paragraph) justification for your appeal. If I regrade one of your assignments (like a paper) your grade may go up or down. Any appeals of a grade must be made at least **24-hours after** I hand back the assignment or test.

Late Work & Make-up Exams

Make up exams will only be given in cases of an extended excused absence in accordance with the university's policy on excused absences. Some examples of excused absences are jury duty, military duty, religious observances, illness, illness of a dependent, and bereavement for an immediate family member. These excuses should be coordinated with your teaching assistant and should be provided prior to date of the exam or assignment.

If you turn in work late and do not have an excused absence, your final score will be deducted 5% for each day it is late.

Academic Honesty

The University of Georgia has an academic honesty policy. Academic integrity is required for a positive learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F in the course. Additionally, I will forward your name to the University. You can read the policies in their entirety here: [https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Definitions for Purposes of this Policy/](https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Definitions%20for%20Purposes%20of%20this%20Policy/)

Disability resource center

If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Disability Resource Center. Additional information can be found here: <http://drc.uga.edu/>

Withdrawal policy

Undergraduate students can only withdraw from four courses and receive a withdrawal-passing (WP) grade while enrolled at the University. Students can drop any class without penalty during the drop/add period at the beginning of every semester. Dropped courses during the drop/add period do not qualify as withdrawals. Instructors have the ability to withdraw a student from the class due to excessive absences. Please carefully review the

policy in its entirety here: <http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals>
Class Recordings

Please do not take audio or video recordings of course lectures or discussions without my express permission. In addition, please do not take audio or video recordings of any person during this course without her or his express permission. Finally, do not take any photographs of any person during this course without his or her express permission.

Class Schedule

Below you will find an outline of our class schedule. This is a tentative schedule and I reserve the right to modify it during the semester. If I do so, I will make an announcement in class and post a revised schedule on eLC.

Week 1 (Starting Jan. 8)

Topic: Introductions & Syllabus Review

Readings: None

Weekly Online Assignment: None

Note – No TA discussion section meeting this week

Week 2 (Starting Jan. 13)

Topic: Government & the Founding

Readings: “We the People” – Ch. 1 (pgs. 2-8); Ch. 2 (pgs. 30-40)

Weekly Online Assignment: None

Week 3 (Starting Jan. 22)

Topic: The Constitution

Readings: “We the People” – Ch. 2 (pgs. 40-60) & The Constitution of the United States of America, pp. A11-A23.

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 2 on InQuisitive

Week 4 (Starting Jan. 27)

Topic: Federalism

Readings: “We the People” – Ch. 3

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 3 on InQuisitive

Week 5 (Starting Feb. 3)

Topic: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Readings: “We the People” – Ch. 4

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 4 on InQuisitive

- **Deadline:** Paper Option 1 (Due: 2/3)

Week 6 (Starting Feb. 10)

Topic: The Federal Courts

Readings: “We the People” - Ch. 12

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 12 on InQuisitive

Week 7 (Starting Feb. 17)

Topic: Congress

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 9

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 9 on InQuisitive

Week 8 (Starting Feb. 24)

Topic: The Presidency

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 10

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 10 on InQuisitive

Week 9 (Starting Mar. 2)

Topic: Midterm Exam

- Monday, Mar. 2: Exam Review
- Wednesday, Mar. 4: Midterm Exam

Note – No TA discussion section meeting this week

Week 10 (Starting Mar. 16)

Topic: The Bureaucracy

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 11

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 11 on InQuisitive

- **Deadline:** Paper Option 2 (Due: 3/16)

Week 12 (Starting Mar. 23)

Topic: Interest Groups

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 8

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 8 on InQuisitive

Week 13 (Starting Mar. 30)

Topic: Public Opinion

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 5

Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 5 on InQuisitive

Week 14 (Starting Apr. 6)

Topic: The Mass Media

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 6

Weekly Online Assignment:

Week 15 (Starting Apr. 13)

Topic: Participation & Political Campaigns

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 7 (220-240)

Weekly Online Assignment: None

- **Deadline:** Paper Option 3 (Due: 4/13)

Week 16 (Starting Apr. 20)

Topic: Political Parties & Polarization

Readings: "We the People" – Ch. 7 (207-220)

Weekly Online Assignment: None

Week 17 (Apr. 27)

Topic: Final exam review

Note – No TA discussion section meeting this week