

POLS 1101S: Introduction to American Government with Service-Learning
University of Georgia
Fall 2020

Instructor:

Dr. Brittany Bramlett¹
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Class meets:

Our assigned room can safely include 6 to 8 people at a time. This means that 3 groups of students (each with 6 to 8 people) will meet rotating Mondays & Wednesdays at 9:10am to 10:00am in Baldwin Hall, 0104 (or outside when possible). Fridays will be strictly digital.

Course description

This course aims to introduce students to the foundations and organization of American government through service-learning.

Course objectives

- Study the origins and workings of American government
- Analyze American government, considering democratic ideals
- Develop a working knowledge of current events in American politics
- Learn the course material by working individually and as a team through service-learning
- Improve critical thinking and communication skills by considering various political perspectives, reflecting on the development of personal views, and communicating those views effectively

Course texts

Required:

American Government: Roots and Reform (2018 Elections and Updates Edition, 13th Edition), Karen O'Connor & Larry J. Sabato (**older versions are fine!**)

Recommended but not required:

Georgia Politics in a State of Change (2nd Edition), Charles S. Bullock and Ronald Gaddie.

Other assigned readings will be made available to you via E-Learning Commons (<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>)

¹ Instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus as needed.

Assignments and grading

Participation (10%)

Throughout the semester, there will be 9 online discussion posts (and one extra online discussion post for bonus points) in response to class discussion and reflection slides. To receive full participation points for the assignment, the student should:

- Respond to the discussion prompt with a new thread
- Respond to another classmate's thread with a comment and question

Short online quizzes (5% each, 25% total, lowest grade dropped)

Anything from the eLC modules is considered fair game to show up on the quizzes.

Service-learning reflection (3 short, 5% each; final, 10%; 25% total)

Reflection is a critical component of service-learning. Students will be asked to do this individually, by responding to a written prompt, and collectively, through class discussion. Each individual will complete 3 short written reflections, and one longer final written reflection. The three shorter written reflections will be due the week after service-learning projects are due.

Service-learning team participation and assignments (10% each, 40% total)

Each student will be assigned to 1 of 3 groups which will be responsible for planning and completing 4 different service-activities during the semester. There will be time set aside for group work in-class (Mondays or Wednesdays, outside if possible). These meeting times are optional, but they are there for you to meet as a group or ask me questions. I will not take attendance. If you want to meet in digital spaces, that's fine. The targeted audience for our service-learning includes University of Georgia students. Our focus is voter education. MANY MORE DETAILS TO COME!!!

Administrative Items

ELearning

Students must become acquainted with eLearning Commons for this class (<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>). Sign into eLC using your UGA MyId and password. If registered for the class, the course link should show up on the student's eLC homepage.

All content will be available via eLC.

Students must check in to eLC multiple times a week.

Students will submit all assignments via eLC.

Missed deadlines

A student who has a conflict with a due date should let the professor know ASAP. If done this way, typically things can be worked out, so the student's grade will not suffer. We are living during a pandemic. Flexibility is key, but communication also helps.

Classroom safety

Students should wear masks inside Baldwin Hall and abide by social distancing guidelines. We'll hold class outside when possible.

Disability resource center

If the student anticipates needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, they 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>

UGA culture of honesty policy

The policy is in place to encourage academic honesty among students, faculty and other members of the university community. Students and faculty are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating and much more. It's in the student's best interest to understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F for the course, and their names will be forwarded to the University. Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here:

<https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services

(<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support

(<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).

If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Tentative Course Outline

Course intro. August 21

eLC intro module:

- Welcome video
- Course syllabus
- Student survey

Week 1. August 24 – 28

eLC module 1:

- *Roots & Reform 1* (Introduction)
- *Roots & Reform 2* (The Constitution), *Georgia Politics 4*
- Service-learning projects introduction
- Practice quiz

In-class service-learning project planning / questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 1 – Monday, August 24
- Group 2 – Wednesday, August 26

Week 2. August 31 – September 4

eLC module 2:

- *Roots & Reform 12* (Voting & participation)
- Class discussion & reflection (engagement & knowledge)

In-class service-learning project planning / questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 3 – Monday, August 31
- Group 1 – Wednesday, September 2

Due: Friday, September 4

- Quiz 1
- Discussion & reflection 1

Week 3. September 9 – 11 (Labor Day, holiday: Monday, September 7)

eLC module 3:

- *Roots & Reform 3* (Federalism)
- *Roots & Reform 4* (Liberties)

In-class service-learning project planning / questions (OPTIONAL):

- No groups – Monday, September 7 (Labor Day, holiday)
- Group 2 – Wednesday, September 9

Week 4. September 14 – 18

eLC module 4:

- *Roots & Reform 5* (Civil rights)
- Class discussion & reflection – Rights & voting

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 3 – Monday, September 14
- No groups – Wednesday, September 16

Due: Friday, September 18

- Service-learning project 1
- Quiz 2
- Discussion & reflection 2

Week 5. September 21 – 25

eLC module 5:

- *Roots & Reform 6* (Congress)

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 1 – Monday, September 21
- Group 2 – Wednesday, September 23

Due: Friday, September 25

- Written reflection 1

Week 6. September 28 – October 2

eLC module 6:

- *Roots & Reform 6* (Congress), *Georgia Politics 5*
- Class discussion & reflection – Congress & voting

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 3 – Monday, September 28
- Group 1 – Wednesday, September 30

Due: Friday, October 2

- Quiz 3
- Discussion & reflection 3

Week 7. October 5 – 9

eLC module 7:

- *Roots & Reform 7 (Presidency), Georgia Politics 6*

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 2 – Monday, October 5
- Group 3 – Wednesday, October 7

Due: Friday, October 9

- Service-learning project 2

Week 8. October 12 – 16

eLC module 8:

- Class discussion & reflection – Presidency & voting
- *Roots & Reform 8 (Bureaucracy)*

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 1 – Monday, October 12
- Group 2 – Wednesday, October 14

Due: Friday, October 16

- Discussion & reflection 4
- Written reflection 2 due

Week 9. October 19 – 23

eLC module 9:

- *Roots & Reform 9 (Judiciary), Georgia Politics 7*
- Class discussion & reflection – Courts & voting

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 3 – Monday, October 19
- Group 1 – Wednesday, October 21

Due: Friday, October 23

- Discussion & reflection 5
- Quiz 4

Week 10. October 26 – 28

eLC module 10:

- *Roots & Reform* 15 (Interest groups)
- *Roots & Reform* 11 (Parties)

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 2 – Monday, October 26
- Group 3 – Wednesday, October 28

Due: Wednesday, October 28

- Service-learning project 3

Week 11. November 2 – 6

eLC module 11:

- *Roots & Reform* 12 & 13 (Campaigns & elections)
- Class discussion & reflection – Campaigns & elections & voting

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 1 – Monday, November 2
- Group 2 – Wednesday, November 4

Due: Friday, November 6

- Discussion & reflection 6
- Quiz 5
- Written reflection 3 due

Week 12. November 9 – 13

eLC module 12:

- *Roots & Reform* 14 (Media)
- Class discussion & reflection – Media literacy & voting

In-class service-learning project planning/ questions (OPTIONAL):

- Group 3 – Monday, November 9
- FINAL Group 1 – Wednesday, November 11

Due: Friday, November 13

- Discussion & reflection 7

Week 13. November 16 – 20

eLC module 13:

- *Roots & Reform* 10 (Political socialization)
- *Roots & Reform* 10 (Public opinion)

In-class service-learning project planning / questions (OPTIONAL):

- FINAL Group 2 - Monday, November 16
- FINAL Group 3 – Wednesday, November 18

Due: Friday, November 20

- Quiz 6
- Service-learning project 4

Week 14. November 23 (Thanksgiving break, holiday: November 25 & 27)

eLC module 14:

- Class discussion & reflection – political socialization

Due: Monday, November 23

- Discussion & reflection 8

***** All remaining classes take place online after Thanksgiving break*****

Week 15. November 30 – December 4

eLC module 15:

- Class discussion & reflection – Service-learning & voting

Due: Friday, December 4

- Discussion & reflection 9
- Final written reflection

Week 16. December 7 – December 9

eLC module 16:

- Watch *Please Vote for Me*
- Complete course evaluation

Due: Wednesday, December 9

- Discussion & reflection (Bonus)

Finals period, Friday, December 11 – Thursday, December 17

List of Due Dates

Quiz 1 – Friday, September 4
Quiz 2 – Friday, September 18
Quiz 3 – Friday, October 2
Quiz 4 – Friday, October 23
Quiz 5 – Friday, November 6
Quiz 6 – Friday, November 20

Service-learning project 1 – Friday, September 18
Service-learning project 2 – Friday, October 9
Service-learning project 3 – Wednesday, October 28
Service-learning project 4 – Friday, November 20

Written reflection 1 – Friday, September 25
Written reflection 2 – Friday, October 16
Written reflection 3 – Friday, November 6
Final written reflection – Friday, December 4

Discussion & reflection 1 – Friday, September 4
Discussion & reflection 2 – Friday, September 18
Discussion & reflection 3 – Friday, October 2
Discussion & reflection 4 – Friday, October 16
Discussion & reflection 5 – Friday, October 23
Discussion & reflection 6 – Friday, November 6
Discussion & reflection 7 – Friday, November 13
Discussion & reflection 8 – Monday, November 23
Discussion & reflection 9 – Friday, December 4
Discussion & reflection bonus – Wednesday, December 9

OPTIONAL in-class service-learning project dates

Group 1
Monday, August 24
Wednesday, September 2
Monday, September 21
Wednesday, September 30
Monday, October 12
Wednesday, October 21
Monday, November 2
Wednesday, November 11

Group 2
Wednesday, August 26
Wednesday, September 9
Wednesday, September 23
Monday, October 5
Wednesday, October 14
Monday, October 26
Wednesday, November 4
Monday, November 16

Group 3
Monday, August 31
Monday, September 14
Monday, September 28
Wednesday, October 7
Monday, October 19
Wednesday, October 28
Monday, November 9
Wednesday, November 18