

POLS 1101: American Government Fall 2020

Instructor

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Virtual Office Hours: Tuesdays
10:00 AM-11:30 AM and by appointment

Class Schedule

lectures online
discussion sections on Mondays

Course Description

This course is an introduction to American politics and government. We will explore the origins, development, and functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. An introduction to Georgia politics will also be provided. Whenever possible, we will use historical or current political issues and events to better explain the functions of government. Using a combination online lectures, online and in-person discussions, and adaptive learning software, the course seeks to give students a better understanding and appreciation of the American political process.

Required Book

The following books are required and should available at the campus bookstore:

Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. 2019. *American Politics Today*, 6th Essentials Edition, W.W. Norton and Company.

An Ebook version of this text is available at: <https://wnorton.com/books/9780393679946>.

We will also make use of *American Politics Today's* InQuizitive software as a graded part of the course. InQuizitive is an adaptive quizzing tool that will help students work through the concepts presented in each chapter of the textbook. You will need access to InQuizitive. You can purchase an Ebook from the publisher that includes access to InQuizitive. New copies of the textbook will be available from the campus bookstore and new copies will include an access code that allows students to access InQuizitive. If you purchase a used textbook, you will need to purchase access to InQuizitive separately.

In addition to the book and InQuizitive software, reading the news on a daily basis will be important for this course. The [New York Times](#) and the [Washington Post](#) are two excellent sources of news on politics and government. There are many other great sources of political news.

Course Grading

Your grade in this class will be assigned according to the following:

1. **Quizzes** (15% of final grade): Students are required to complete online quizzes as part of their course grade. There will be a quiz to complete for each of the assigned textbook chapters using the InQuizitive system. These quizzes are adaptive and should help students both understand the course materials and prepare for exams. Additional information about InQuizitive can be found on the course's eLC page, which can be accessed at <https://uga.view.usg.edu>.
2. **Discussion Sections** (15% of final grade): Students are required to attend a discussion section for each of the course's seven modules. These discussion sections will be offered both in-person and online. Each section will be coordinated by one of the course's six teaching assistants. You are expected to participate, not just attend, during these discussion sections. This means that you need to be ready to discuss the readings or participate in the activity for that week. Your teaching assistant will keep track of attendance and participation grades in each of the discussion sections. Additional information about the location and schedule for discussion meetings can be found on the course's eLC page, which can be accessed at <https://uga.view.usg.edu>.
3. **Written Assignments** (15% of final grade): Students are required to complete a short writing assignment for each of the seven course modules. These assignments will encourage students to explore a course topic in more detail. Assignments should be about 1 double-space page in length. More details will be provided as each short paper is assigned.
4. **Midterm Exams** (30% of final grade): Two midterm examinations (worth 15% each) will be given throughout the course. These exams will be administered online. These exams will consist of multiple choice questions. Exams will cover material from both the course readings and lectures. The first midterm will be administered online on October 13 and will cover Modules 1, 2, and 3. The second midterm will be administered online on November 24 and will cover Modules 4, 5, and 6.
5. **Final Exam** (25% of final grade): The final exam will be administered online and is scheduled for December 17. It will feature a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative, covering materials from all seven course modules.

If a student is unable to take one of the exams on the scheduled date, they should contact their TA or the course instructor beforehand. Missed exams will only be excused in the most extraordinary circumstances. If you receive permission to take an exam at a time other than that listed on the syllabus, I reserve the right to alter the format and substance of any makeup exam (e.g. you may not get the same exam as everyone else).

Course grades will be assigned as follows: 93–100% = A, 90–93% = A-, 87–90% = B+, 83–87% = B, 80–83% = B-, 77–80% = C+, 73–77% = C, 70–73% = C-, 60–70% = D, 0–60% = F.

Other Issues

1. **Disabilities:** Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to tell me at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services Office will be accommodated according to university policy. Contact Disabilities Services for more information.
2. **Instructor Availability:** I am available to meet with students by appointment if anyone cannot attend my posted office hours. Please email me to schedule a meeting.
3. **Classroom Behavior:** Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Disruptive behavior in discussion sections will not be tolerated. Laptops may be used to take notes in class, but not in a way that is disruptive to other students. Texting is never appropriate in class, unless it is to let your friends know that a case concerning the Third Amendment has never been litigated before the Supreme Court, or some similar tidbit of mesmerizing political trivia. Be respectful of other students' thoughts and opinions in discussion sections. This semester showing respect for other students includes wearing a face coverings for all in-person portions of the course.
4. **Cheating and Plagiarism:** All course work must meet the standards put forth in the University of Georgia's Student Honor Code. See the Academic Honesty Policy for details on what is expected of you (<https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy/student-honor-code>).
5. **Covid 19:** Information related to Covid 19 and how this will impact our course and the University of Georgia more generally can be found at the end of this syllabus.

Course Schedule

Introduction to Course

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 1

August 20 through August 24

Module 1:

Why Government? / Constitution and Founding

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 2

Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science*. 162: 1243-1248.

August 25 through September 14

Module 2: **September 15 through September 28**
Federalism / Civil Liberties / Civil Rights

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 3
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 4
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 5
Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapter 6.

Module 3: **September 29 through October 12**
Public Opinion / Political Parties

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 6
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 7
T.B.A. polls from the 2020 presidential election

Midterm 1: **October 13**
covers Modules 1, 2, and 3

Module 4: **October 14 through October 26**
Elections / Interest Groups

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 8
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 9
Abramowitz, Alan I. 2008.
[“Forecasting the 2008 Presidential Election with the Time-for-Change Model.”](#)
PS: Political Science and Politics. 41(4):691-695
Abramowitz, Alan I. 2016. [“Will Time for Change Mean Time for Trump”](#)
PS: Political Science and Politics 49(4):659-660.

Module 5: **October 27 through November 9**
Congress / Presidency

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 10
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 11
Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapters 3.

Module 6: **November 10 through November 23**
Bureaucracy / Courts

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 12
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 13
additional reading T.B.A.

Midterm 2:
covers Modules 4, 5, and 6

November 24

Thanksgiving Break

November 25 through November 29

Module 7:
Public Policy
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 14
additional reading T.B.A.

November 30 through December 9

Final Exam:

December 17

Discussion Group Schedule

August 24

Introduction

All students (Groups A, B, and C) attend online meeting to discuss course logistics.

August 31

Module 1

Group A may meet face-to-face

September 7 – Labor Day

no face-to-face meetings due to university holiday

September 14

Module 1(cont.)

Group B may meet face-to-face

Group C and students that did not attend other face-to-face meetings
meet in online discussion groups sometime between Aug. 31 and Sept. 14

September 21

Module 2

Group C may meet face-to-face

September 28

Module 2 (cont.)

Group A may meet face-to-face

Group B and students that did not attend other face-to-face meetings
meet in online discussion groups sometime between Sept. 21 and Sept. 28

October 5

Module 3

Group B may meet face-to-face

October 12

Module 3 (cont.)

Group C may meet face-to-face

Group A and students that did not attend other face-to-face meetings
meet in online discussion groups sometime between Oct. 5 and Oct. 12

October 19

Module 4

Group A may meet face-to-face

October 26

Module 4 (cont.)

Group B may meet face-to-face

Group C and students that did not attend other face-to-face meetings
meet in online discussion groups sometime between Oct. 19 and Oct. 26

November 2

Module 5

Group C may meet face-to-face

November 9

Module 5 (cont.)

Group A may meet face-to-face

Group B and students that did not attend other face-to-face meetings
meet in online discussion groups sometime between Nov. 2 and Nov. 9

November 16

Module 6

Group B may meet face-to-face

November 23

Module 6 (cont.)

Group C may meet face-to-face

Group A and students that did not attend other face-to-face meetings
meet in online discussion groups sometime between Nov. 16 and Nov. 23

November 25

Thanksgiving Break Begins

All in-person instruction concludes

Module 7 discussion groups for Groups A, B, and C will occur online

COVID-19 Information

This information is by no means exhaustive, but is meant to provide resources for you that the University has identified.

Face Coverings:

Effective July 15, 2020, the University of Georgia – along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions – requires all faculty, staff, students and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings. Face covering use is in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at <https://drc.uga.edu/>.

DawgCheck:

Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck?on the UGA app or website?whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: <https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>.

What do I do if I have symptoms?

Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?// Students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 14 days consistent with Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. If you develop symptoms, you should contact the University Health Center to make an appointment to be tested. You should continue to monitor your symptoms daily on DawgCheck.

How do I get a test?

Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162.

UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.

What do I do if I test positive?

Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is required to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.