

**POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government  
Fall 2021**

**Instructor**

Dr. Roberto F. Carlos  
Office: Baldwin Hall #380B  
Email: rcarlos@uga.edu  
Office Hours: Tuesdays  
11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

**Class Schedule**

Tuesday and Thursday  
12:45 PM -1:35 PM  
Instructional Plaza S306  
Plus Monday Section

**Course Description and Objective**

This course examines the political system in the United States. We will explore the origins, development, and functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. The course will also focus on larger issues and controversies that surround the study of American politics. As a class, we will analyze the political culture of the United States and examine how the basic structure of American government is set up to take input from individual citizens and interest groups and turn it into policy outcomes. Additionally, an introduction to Georgia politics will be provided.

**Required Text and Technology**

***We the People* (13<sup>th</sup> Core edition)** – by Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J. Tolbert, and Robert J. Spitzer **with access to InQuizitive**

*Georgia Politics in a State of Change* (13<sup>th</sup> 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\*\*\*\***

**Sections**

You are expected to attend one section in addition to the main lectures on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please note that section attendance is mandatory. All sections take place on Monday.

Section #	Time	Place	Instructor	Email
	8:00 am – 8:50 am			
	9:10 am – 10:00 am			
	9:10 am – 10:00 am			
	10:20 am – 11:10 am			
	10:20 am – 11:10 am			

	11:30 am – 12:20 pm			
	11:30 am – 12:20 pm			
	12:40 pm - 1:30 pm			
	12:40 pm - 1:30 pm			
	1:50 pm – 2:40 pm			
	1:50 pm – 2:40 pm			

## Evaluation

**Response Paper:** You will complete **one** short paper in this course. Topics are listed in the syllabus and match each week’s theme. Note that the due date of the paper varies according to the topic you choose. The paper should be at least 750 words, no more than 1500 (double spaced) and are due a week after the week’s theme as listed on the syllabus. Please make sure to discuss the criteria of the paper with your TA in advance. Also note that there are only five spots available per topic and you must sign up with your TA by week 2. First come, first served.

**Midterm:** The midterm will primarily consist of multiple-choice questions with varying levels of difficulty. These questions will cover material from the first half of the semester. *As of now, the midterm exam is scheduled for **Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, in class.***

**End of Semester Exam:** The final exam is **not** cumulative and will primarily consist of multiple-choice questions with varying levels of difficulty. *As of now, the exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, in class.***

**Weekly Assignments:** There will be short weekly assignments which you can access on the **InQuizitive** website that accompanies your textbook (you can find their website here: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/wethepeople13core> ) You will need to create an account in order to submit your assignments, which are **due every Friday at 6pm of each week.**

When you create your account, you will be asked for a student set ID, which is linked to the section you choose. The set IDs and their corresponding breakout sections are listed below. If you have trouble with the registration process, please contact your TA.

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10937 from 8:00 am to 8:50 am (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10924 from 9:10 am to 10:00 am (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10918 from 9:10 am to 10:00 am (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10927 from 10:20 am to 11:10 am (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10919 from 10:20 am to 11: 10 am (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10926 from 11:30 am to 12:20 pm (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10920 from 11:30 am to 12:20 pm (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10928 from 12:40 pm to 1:30 pm (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10922 from 12:40 pm to 1:30 pm (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10925 from 1:50 pm to 2:40 pm (TA)

Student Set ID is **XXXXXXX** for section 10923 from 1:50 pm to 2:40 pm (TA)

**Readings and Quizzes:** The required readings typically include one chapter of the textbook per week. Additional readings that are assigned are available electronically on eLC. It is important that you stay current with these readings so that you can follow along with lectures and participate in discussions in your sections. I would strongly recommend you finish the readings before your section takes place since *there will be unannounced short quizzes (3-5 questions) based on the lectures and assigned readings for that week.*

**Lecture and In-Section Participation:** Please note that attendance in the breakout section is required. Your participation grade (15%) 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.

**Online Research Study:** You are required to participate in an online research study. The study will take approximately 20-25 minutes and is supposed to provide you with an understanding of political science research.

**Grading Breakdown by Percentage:**

Final Exam: 20%

Midterm: 20%

Response Paper: 15%

Quizzes: 15%

Attendance and Participation: 15%

Weekly Inquizitive Assignments: 10%

Participation in Online Research Study: 5%

## **Grading Scale for Final Semester Grades**

100-94 A; 93-90 A-

89-87 B+; 86-84 B; 83-80 B-

79-77 C+; 76-74 C; 73-70 C-

69-60 D

59-0 F

**\*\*\*\*Please note that there is no standard rounding policy. Rounding decisions can be made on a case-by-case basis and are largely determined by your TA.\*\*\*\***

## **Grade Appeals, Incompletes, Late Assignments, and Make-Up Policy**

Any questions you have regarding grades should be directed to your teaching assistant. If you are unable to resolve the matter with them, you may appeal the grade to me. Keep in mind that formal grade appeals must be made in writing, and in the case of a paper, I will re-grade your entire paper. Therefore, your grade can go up or down. A final grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in this course under exceptional circumstances and is solely at the discretion of the instructor. If an incomplete is given, it is the student’s responsibility to complete the necessary requirements as early in the following semester as possible. Legitimate excuses for absence from an exam (e.g., religious holiday, medical emergency, or illness) must be presented to the teaching assistant and accepted prior to the exam when feasible. Late assignments will be docked 5 percent per day (half letter grade), for each day that a project is late (including weekends). If you need a (reasonable) extension, talk to your teaching assistant.

## **Office Hours**

Students who are having difficulty with the course materials and/or assignments are encouraged to contact their teaching assistant. But don’t be afraid to come by to see me. However, please note that office hours are for clarification of material, not for recreating a lecture if you missed class. If you like to talk to me, feel free to stop by my office during office hours or make an appointment via email.

## **Syllabus Policy:**

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary. I will give you fair notice (at least a week) if something, such as a reading assignment, is to change.

**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 can withdraw a student from the class due to excessive absences (see course attendance policy). Please review the policy here:  
<https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/policies/withdrawals/>

**Culture of Honesty Policy:** You are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures relating to academic honesty. To understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University, please carefully review the policy here:  
[https://honesty.uga.edu/\\_resources/documents/academic\\_honesty\\_policy\\_2017.pdf](https://honesty.uga.edu/_resources/documents/academic_honesty_policy_2017.pdf)

**Email Policy:** Please give me at least 24 hours to respond to emails on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends.

**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.ubs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.ubs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>). If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.ubs.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.*

**Coronavirus Information: Face Coverings are NOT required.** But if you feel more comfortable wearing one, please do! Please note that I will likely not be wearing one (still not sure), this is largely a function of me trying to be visible for students including those with hearing disabilities and not a comment on whether you should wear one or not. Do what makes you feel comfortable. But we strongly urge you to get vaccinated if you have not. I finally got season tickets for UGA football, don't ruin it for me!

**Prohibition on Recording Lectures.** In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially

and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.

- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

### **Week 1 (Starting August 19<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Introduction to class and The Citizen and the Government

*Readings:* Chapter 1 in “We The People”

### **Week 2 (Starting August 24<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* The Founding and the Constitution

*Readings:* Chapter 2 in “We The People”

*Section:* Introduction to your section to discuss assignments and expectations\*

\*Remember section is held on Mondays, so while lecture starts on Tuesday the 24<sup>th</sup>, section is on Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 1 and 2 on *Inquisitive* due Friday August 27 at 6pm

### **Week 3 (Starting August 31<sup>st</sup>)**

*Topic:* Federalism

*Readings:* Chapter 3 in “We The People”.

*Section Readings:* Dahl, Robert A. *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* Yale University Press, 2003. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 3 on *Inquisitive* due Friday

*Potential Short Paper Topic:* Think about the marijuana issue, which puts state power in contention with national power. Write out your stance on whether the issue should be addressed at the national or state level. Justify your decision. (Due: September 10<sup>th</sup>)

#### **Week 4 (Starting September 7<sup>th</sup>)\***

*Topic:* Congress

*Readings:* Chapter 12 in “We The People”

\*Labor Day, no section this week.

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 12 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

#### **Week 5 (Starting September 14<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Congress

*Section Reading:* Mayhew, David R. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Yale university press, 2004. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* None

*Potential Short Paper Topic:* Look up your representative’s recent voting records and ideological placement (<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes>). Make a list of five issues they voted on, and state whether you would have voted the same way on behalf of your district taking into account your district’s economic and socio-economic characteristics. Justify your decisions. (Due: September 24<sup>th</sup>)

#### **Week 6 (Starting September 21<sup>st</sup>)**

*Topic:* The Presidency

*Readings:* Chapter 13 in “We The People”

*Section Reading:* Neustadt, Richard E. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. Simon and Schuster, 1991. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 13 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

**Week 7 (Starting September 28<sup>th</sup> No class on September 30<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* The Bureaucracy

*Readings:* Chapter 14 in “We The People”

*Section Reading:* James Q. Wilson, Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do it. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 14 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

*Potential Short Paper Topic:* Consider former President Obama’s action on DACA and President Biden’s decision to continue to support it. Explain why you think the president should or should not have the power to act on this issue. In your answer, discuss the implication for those impacted by DACA and whether there is a better solution. (Due: October 8<sup>th</sup>)

**Week 8 (October 5<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Finish up the Bureaucracy and introduce The Federal Courts

*Readings:* Chapter 15 in “We The People”

*Section Reading:* Gerald N. Rosenberg, The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring About Social Change?

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 15 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

**Week 9 (October 12<sup>th</sup>, Midterm on October 14<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Finish Up the Federal Courts and take Midterm

*Section:* Review for Midterm Exam

**Week 10 (October 19<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Public Opinion

*Readings:* Chapter 6 in “We The People”

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 6 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

*Section:* Go over Midterm Exam



## **Week 11 (October 26<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* The Media

*Readings:* Chapter 7 in “We The People”

*Section Reading:* Mason, Lilliana. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became our Identity*. University of Chicago Press, 2018. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 7 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

*Potential Short Paper Topic:* Pick a current political topic and compare how it is reported on one of the national news (ABC, CBS, or NBC), one of the cable news (CNN, MSNBC, or FOX NEWS), and one newspaper (New York Times, Wall Street Journal, or The Washington Post). Identify the different frames and describe their impact. (Due: November 5<sup>th</sup>)

## **Week 12 (November 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

*Topic:* Participation

*Readings:* Chapter 8 in “We The People”

*Section Reading:* Leighley, Jan E., and Jonathan Nagler. *Who Votes Now?: Demographics, Issues, Inequality, and Turnout in the United States*. Princeton University Press, 2013. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 8 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

*Potential Short Paper Topic:* Write a list of reasons individuals may not vote. Examine the role of personal motivation as well as institutional barriers in your answer and propose possible strategies to increase turnout. (Due: November 12<sup>th</sup>)

## **Week 13 (November 9<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Political Parties

*Readings:* Chapter 9 in “We The People”

*Section Readings:* Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press, 1980. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 9 on *Inquisitive due Friday*

## **Week 14 (November 16<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Campaigns and Elections

*Readings:* Chapter 10 in “We The People”

*Section Reading:* Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Vol. 4. Princeton University Press, 2017. Excerpt

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 10 on *Inquizitive due Friday*

## **Week 15 (November 23<sup>rd</sup>, No class November 25<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving)**

*Topic:* Interest Groups

*Readings:* Chapter 11 in “We The People”. Also, read:

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 11 on *Inquizitive due Friday*

*Section:* Review for Exam

## **Week 16 (November 30<sup>th</sup>)**

*Topic:* Civil Liberties and Civil Rights *Readings:* Chapter 4 in “We The People”

*Weekly Online Assignment:* Chapter 4 on *Inquizitive due Friday*

*Section:* Exam Review

## **Week 17 (December 7<sup>th</sup> Exam Day)**