

POLS 1101 – Introduction to American Government
Class Day/Time: Online Monday - Friday
Instructor: Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD

Contact Information:

Office Hours: By Appointment (via telephone or Zoom)

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Course Prerequisites: None

I. Course Description:

Government and politics impact our lives in many ways. Some are obvious, others almost invisible. The primary goal of this course is to introduce you to the scientific study of politics using the United States as the primary example. To this end the course is designed to provide you with an historical and conceptual background of politics in the United States as well as a scientific perspective for understanding the relationships between different levels and branches of government, the operation of these political institutions, and how citizens interact with government in the United States and the state of Georgia.

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- 1) Understand the constitutional foundations of United States (U.S.) government and how the Constitution sets the stage for political activity in the U.S.
- 2) Identify the different government institutions in the U.S., explain how they interact with each other and *The People* and how these interactions have changed over time.
- 3) Reconcile the opinions of the public and conduct of our elections with the governing actions taken by our representatives in government.
- 4) Evaluate the performance of one of your representatives in government and offer a strategic policy recommendation.
- 5) Understand how our humanity influences democratic politics in the U.S. and abroad.

II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

(2.1) Textbooks

We are using two textbooks in the class, both of which have been made freely available by the publisher on RedShelf.com through May 25th.

Kernell, Samuel, et al. *The Logic of American Politics*, 9th edition¹
ISBN: 9781544322995

Bullock, Charles and Ronald Gaddie. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*, 2nd edition or newer.
ISBN: 9780205864676

¹ Previous editions will definitely suffice. Just keep in mind that the names of the political actors used in textbook examples will be outdated.

(2.2) Exams

There are three exams in this class. Each exam is worth 25% of your grade. Exams will be administered through the Quiz tool in eLC. Exams will be timed, consist of a combination of closed and open response items,

(2.3) Course Participation

Learning is an active exercise. Students at all levels of learning and accomplishment benefit when they are actively engaged with the course material. This is no different with an online class. Your participation in the course will be assessed through a series of five short assignments covering American government and politics.

(2.4) Exam Schedule and Grade Distribution

First Exam	25%	May 26 th
Second Exam	25%	June 2 nd
Third Exam	25%	June 10 th
Assignments	25%	---

(2.5) Grading

All grades (including final grades) will be assigned following the system depicted below. You must earn a C or higher to pass this class. Grades will not be curved.

A	=	94-100	C+	=	78
A-	=	90	C	=	74
B+	=	88	C-	=	70
B	=	84	D	=	60 – 69
B-	=	80	F	≤	59

III. Class Policies

(3.1) Disability Disclosure Statement

Abled-ness should not impede your intellectual development. Please get in touch with me (Dr. Glas) about any accommodations you need in the classroom and for exams. We have some amazing resources for you here at UGA. For testing accommodations please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as soon as possible. For more information please check out the DRC's website (www.uga.drc.edu). The DRC is located at 825 Lumpkin Street (Clark-Howell Hall) and can be contacted by phone at 706.542.8719.

(3.2) Makeup Exams

If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero (and passing the class will be unlikely). If you are late to an exam, you must take it in the time that remains when you arrive. Make-up exams are only given to students with legitimate excuses.

(3.3) Missed/Late Assignments

Missed assignments are awarded a grade of zero. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of ten points for each calendar day late.

(3.4) **Cheating and Academic Misconduct**

Violations of the academic dishonesty rules are grounds for receiving an “F” in the course as well as possible expulsion from the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, academic misconduct, or plagiarism, please examine the university policy and /or ask the instructor.

(3.5) **Problems and Emergencies**

If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from completing coursework please contact me as soon as possible.

(3.6) **Withdraw Policy**

Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without failing is Friday, May 28th. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a “WF”.

IV. Course Schedule²

Wednesday, May 19th – Perspectives on Politics and Government

Syllabus

Chapter 1 of *The Logic [of American Politics]*

Josep Colomer’s “The Public Good” (see content folder in eLC)

Introducing Yourself

Thursday, May 20th – Early American Government and the U.S. Constitution

Chapter 2 of *The Logic*

[Colonial Assemblies](#)

Madison’s “Vices of the Political System of the United States” (see content folder in eLC)

Federalist #51 (see content folder in eLC)

Friday, May 21st – Federalism

Chapter 3 of *The Logic*

Chapters 4 and 8 of *Georgia Politics [in a State of Change]*

Shipan, C.R. and Volden, C., “Policy diffusion: Seven lessons for scholars and practitioners.”
(see content folder in eLC)

Importing Public Policy Assignment

² This is a general course out line, some deviations may be necessary.

Monday, May 24th – Civil Rights

Chapter 4 of *The Logic*

Chapter 9 of *Georgia Politics*

https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/equal_protection

Tuesday, May 25th – Civil Liberties

Chapter 5 of *The Logic*

https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/du_e_process

Randy Barnett's "Two Conceptions of the 9th Amendment" (see content folder in eLC)

Protest Song Assignment

Wednesday, May 26th – Exam 1

Exam 1 can be accessed on eLC between TIME TBD.

Time Limit: 90 minutes

Thursday, May 27th – Legislative Politics

Chapter 6 of *The Logic*

Chapters 5 and 10 of *Georgia Politics*

David Mayhew's "Congress: The Electoral Connection" (see content folder in eLC)

Richard Fenno's "U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration" (see content folder in eLC)

Better Know a District Assignment

Friday, May 28th – Executive and Bureaucratic Politics

Chapter 7 of *The Logic*

Skim Chapter 8 of *The Logic*

Chapter 6 of *Georgia Politics*

Richard Neustadt's "The Power to Persuade" (see content folder in eLC)

Withdraw Deadline

Monday, May 31st – Memorial Day

No Class

Tuesday, June 1st – Judicial Politics

Chapter 9 of *The Logic*

Chapter 7 of *Georgia Politics*

Federalist #78 (see content folder in eLC)

Wednesday, June 2nd – Exam 2

Exam 2 can be accessed on eLC between TIME TBD.

Time Limit: 90 minutes

Thursday, June 3rd – Public Opinion

Chapter 10 of *The Logic*

Friday, June 4th – Voting, Elections, and Campaigns

Chapter 11 of *The Logic*

Chapters 13 of *Georgia Politics*

Louis Menand's "The Unpolitical Animal: How Political Science Understands Voters" (see content folder in eLC)

Monday, June 7th – Political Parties

Chapter 12 of *The Logic*

Chapter 11 of *Georgia Politics*

George Washington's Farewell Address (see content folder in eLC)

Tuesday, June 8th – Interest Groups

Chapter 13 of *The Logic*

Chapter 12 of *Georgia Politics*

Federalist #10 (see content folder in eLC)

Better Know an Interest Group

Wednesday, June 9th – The American Media

Chapter 14 of *The Logic*

W. Lance Bennett's "Four Information Biases that Matter" (see content folder in eLC)

Plato's "Republic" (Book VII, 514a – 520a) (see content folder in eLC)

Thursday, June 10th – Exam 3

Exam 3 can be accessed on eLC between TIME TBD.

Time Limit: 90 minutes