

POLS 1101: American Government Fall 2022

Instructor

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Office Hours: Tuesdays
9:30 AM-11:00 AM and by appointment

Class Schedule

Mondays and Wednesdays
1:50PM – 2:40PM
Instructional Plaza S306

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 in-person lectures, in-person breakout sessions, 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 be available at the campus bookstore:

Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. 2021. *American Politics Today*, 7th Essentials Edition, W.W. Norton and Company.

An Ebook version of this text is available at: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/amerpoltoday7ess>. Links to the Ebook and supporting materials are also available on the course's eLC page: <https://uga.view.usg.edu/d21/home/2463904>.

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.

There will be additional readings assigned for the some of the weeks of the course. Some of

these appear on the course syllabus now, and some will be assigned by your Friday breakout session leader. All of these readings will be provided to students via eLC.

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/d21/home/2463904>.
2. **Discussion Sections** (10% of final grade): Students are required to attend a Friday discussion section each week of the semester. 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.
3. **Midterm Exams** (50% of final grade) Three midterm examinations (worth 16.66% each) will be given throughout the course. The dates are listed on the syllabus as February 7, March 16, and April 13. These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Exams will cover material from both the course readings and lectures. The midterm examinations will be non-cumulative.
4. **Final Exam** (25% of final grade): The final exam will be administered online and is scheduled for May 6. 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

Week 1 (1/10 and 1/12 – Intro/Why Government?)

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 1

[“The Democrats Have a Lot of Cutting to Do.”](#) *New York Times*. Oct. 20, 2021.

Week 2 (1/17 MLK Day – No Class, and 1/19 – Constitution and Founding)

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 2

Hardin, Garrett. 1968. [“The Tragedy of the Commons.”](#) *Science*. 162:1243-1248.

Week 3 (1/24 – Constitution and Founding, and 1/26 – Federalism)

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 3

[U.S. Constitution.](#)

Week 4 (1/31 and 2/2 – Civil Liberties)

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 4

Week 5 (2/7 – MIDTERM #1, 2/9 – Civil Rights)

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 5

Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapter 6.

Week 6 (2/14 and 2/16 – Public Opinion)
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 6

Week 7 (2/21 and 2/23 – Political Parties)
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 7

Week 8 (2/28 and 3/2 – Elections)
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 8
Abramowitz, Alan I. 2008. “[Forecasting the 2008 Presidential Election.](#)”
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.

Week 9 Spring Break – No Class

Week 10 (3/14 – Interest Groups, 3/16 – **MIDTERM #2**)
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 9

Week 11 (3/21 and 3/23 – Congress)
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 10

Week 12 (3/28 and 3/30 – Presidency)
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 11
Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapters 3.

Week 13 (4/4 – Bureaucracy, 4/6 – Courts)
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 12 and 13

Week 14 (4/11 – Courts, 4/13 – **MIDTERM #3**)
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 13

Week 15 (4/18 and 4/20 – Economic and Social Policy)
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 14

Week 16 (4/25 and 4/27– Foreign Policy)
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 15

Week 17 (5/2 – Final Exam Review)

Week 18 (5/6 – Final Exam, 12:00PM – 3:00PM)