

POLS 1101: American Government Maymester 2022

Instructor

Dr. Michael S. Lynch
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Office Hours: by appointment

Class Schedule

Monday through Friday
9:00AM – 11:45AM
Baldwin Hall #101D

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/2463927>.

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 during the semester. 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** (20% 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. **Attendance and Participation** (20% of final grade): Students are required to attend all class meetings during the semester. Additionally, you are expected to participate, not just attend, during class meetings. This means that you need to be ready to discuss the readings or participate in class activities.
3. **Midterm Exam** (27.5% of final grade) The Midterm Exam will take place on May 27 during regular class time. This exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Exams will cover material from both the course readings and lectures.
4. **Final Exam** (32.5% of final grade): The final exam will be administered in person and is scheduled for June 8. It will feature a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative, but will focus primarily on materials from the second half of the course.

If a student is unable to take one of the exams on the scheduled date, they should contact 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. 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. Be respectful of other students' thoughts and opinions during class discussions.
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>).

Course Schedule

May 18 – Intro/Why Government?

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 1

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

May 19 – Constitution and Founding

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 2

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

May 20 – Federalism/Civil Liberties

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 3 and 4

May 23 – Civil Liberties/Civil Rights

Bianco and Canon, Chapters 4 and 5

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

May 24 – Public Opinion

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 6

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.

May 25 – Political Parties

Bianco and Canon, Chapter 7

May 26 – Elections/Interest Groups
Bianco and Canon, Chapters 8 and 9

May 27 – Review/Midterm Exam

May 30 – Memorial Day (NO CLASS)

May 31 – Congress
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 10

June 1 – Presidency
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 11
Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapters 3.

June 2 – Bureaucracy
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 12

June 3 – Courts
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 13
Readings on leaked abortion opinion, TBA.

June 6 – Economic and Social Policy
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 14

June 7 – Foreign Policy/Final Exam Review
Bianco and Canon, Chapter 15

June 8 – Final Exam