**POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government**

**Class Time: T/TH 8:00- 9:00 AM**

**Classroom: Baldwin 102**

**Instructor: Spencer Hardin**

**Contact Information:**

Office Hours: By Appointment

Office Location: Baldwin Hall (will update room number)

Email: spencer.hardin25@uga.edu

Course Prerequisites: None

**I. Course Description:**

This course is a college level introduction to government and politics. The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to the scientific study of politics using the United States and Georgia as the primary examples. To this end the course is designed to provide students with an historical and conceptual background of government and politics 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. While much of this course focuses on governing and political institutions at the federal level and the State of Georgia perhaps the most important lessons will cover the role you, as a citizen or resident, play in the shaping of these institutions and the outcomes we observe in American politics.

**By the end of this course you should:**

1. Understand the constitutional foundations of United States (U.S.) government as well as and how the Constitution sets the stage for political activity in the U.S and Georgia.
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. Understand the institutional arrangements and powers of the government of The State of Georgia.
4. Reconcile the opinions of the public and conduct of our elections with the governing actions taken by our representatives in government at both the federal level and in The State of Georgia.
5. Evaluate the performance of one of your representatives in government and offer a strategic policy recommendation.
6. Understand how our humanity influences democratic politics in the U.S., Georgia, and around the world.

**II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation**

(2.1) **Required Texts**

Kernell, Samuel, et al. The Logic of American Politics (10th edition)

ISBN: 9781544322995

Bullock, Charles and Ronald Gaddie. Georgia Politics in a State of Change (2nd edition).

ISBN: 9780205864676

(2.2) **Exams**

There are three exams in this class. Each exam is worth 25% of your grade. These exams contain multiple choice and short answer items.

(2.3) **Quizzes, Discussion, and Attendance**

Learning is an active exercise. Students at all levels of learning and accomplishment benefit when they are actively engaged with the course material. For most weeks of this class, you will have a short quiz to complete. These quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class. There is a total of quizzes to complete. I will drop the lowest two quizzes of the seven. This essentially makes each quiz worth 2% of your grade. Attendance is mandatory. You are allowed to have 5 unexcused absences throughout the semester, but after, those points will be deducted from your overall grade. As for discussion, there is a portion of your final grade that will be calculated off of how you participate in class. Try to engage with the content and it will make it better for all of us.

(2.4) **Exam Schedule and Grade Distribution**

Exam 1 25%

Exam 2 25%

Exam 3 25%

Quizzes 10%

Attendance/Participation 15%

(2.5) **Grading**

All grades (including final grades) will be assigned following the system depicted below:

A = 94-100 C+ = 77

A- = 90 C = 74

B+ = 87 C- = 70

B = 84 D = 60 – 69

B- = 80 F ≤ 59

**III. Class Policies**

(3.1) **Participation**

Apart from generally engaging in the classroom discussion, there will be a number of times we engage in group activities. Participation within these activities will be calculated within your final grade.

(3.2) **Exams**

If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero. All exams in this class are provided online using the Quizzes tool in eLC. You will be able to access exams on the dates and during the time frames listed on eLC. Time limits are strictly enforced, so be mindful of the timer. And yes, these time limits are put into place to assess what you have learned rather than your ability to look up the answers online.

(3.3) **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, examine the university policy and /or ask the instructor.

(3.4) **Problems and Emergencies**

If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from attending an exam, coming to class, or completing class assignments on time you should contact myself as soon as possible.

(3.5) **Disability Disclosure Statement**

Please advise the instructor if you have a documented disability that needs to be accommodated. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) before an instructor can modify instruction or expectations.

(3.6) **Withdraw Policy**

Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without failing is Monday, October 25th. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a “WF”.

**IV. Course Schedule**

**Week 1 – August 18th and 23rd –Perspectives on Politics and Government**

Syllabus

Chapter 1 of The Logic [of American Politics]

Quiz 1

**Week 2 –August 25th and 30th –Early American Government and the U.S. Constitution**

Chapter 2 of The Logic

Federalist #51

\*\*\*Drop/Add Ends – August 23rd\*\*\*

**Week 3 –September 1st and 6th –Federalism**

Chapter 3 of The Logic

Chapter 4 of Georgia Politics

Quiz 2

**Week 4 – September 8th and 13th –Civil Rights**

Chapter 4 of The Logic

Chapter 9 of Georgia Politics

https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/equal\_protection

Quiz 3

\*\*\*Labor Day – September 6th

– No Classes\*\*\*

**Week 5 –September 15th and 20th – –Civil Liberties**

Chapter 5 of The Logic

Chapter 9 of Georgia Politics

https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/due\_process

**Week 6 –September 22nd –Exam 1**

**Week 7 –September 27th and 29th –Legislative Politics**

Chapter 6 of The Logic

Chapters 5 & 10 of Georgia Politics

David Mayhew’s “Congress: The Electoral Connection” (Selection from)

Richard Fenno’s “U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration”

Quiz 4

**Week 8 –October 4th and 7th –Executive & Bureaucratic Politics**

Chapters 7 & 8 of The Logic

Chapter 6 of Georgia Politics

Richard Neustadt’s “The Power to Persuade” (Selection from)

**Week 9 –October 11th and 13th –Judicial Politics**

Chapter 9 of The Logic

Chapter 7 of Georgia Politics

Federalist #78

\*\*\*Semester Midpoint – October 11th\*\*\*

**Week 10 – October 18th –Exam 2**

**Week 11 –October 25th and 27th –Public Opinion**

Chapter 10 of The Logic

Quiz 5

\*\*\*Withdrawal Deadline – October 25th\*\*\*

\*\*\*Fall Break – October 29th

– No Classes\*\*\*

**Week 12 –November 1st and 3rd –Voting, Elections, and Campaigns**

Chapter 11 of The Logic

Chapters 9 & 13 of Georgia Politics

Quiz 6

**Week 13 –November 8th and 10th –Political Parties**

Chapter 12 of The Logic

Chapter 11 of Georgia Politics

George Washington’s Farewell Address

**Week 14 –November 15th and 17th –Interest Groups**

Chapter 13 of The Logic

Chapter 12 of Georgia Politics

Federalist #10

Quiz 7

**Week 15 - November 22nd –TBD**

\*\*\*Thanksgiving Break – November 23rd –25th –No Classes\*\*\*

**Week 16 –November 29th and December 1st –The American Media**

Chapter 14 of The Logic

**Week 17 –December 6th –TBD**

\*\*\*Last Day of Classes – December 6th \*\*\*

\*\*\*Reading Day – December 7th \*\*\*

**Week 18 –Exam 3**

\*\*\*Will post when final exam slot is confirmed\*\*