

POLS 1101H: Introduction to American Government
University of Georgia
Fall 2022

Instructor:

Dr. Brittany Bramlett¹
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Class meets:

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday at 11:30am, Baldwin 0302

Course description

This course aims to introduce students to the foundations and organization of American government.

Course objectives

- Study the origins and workings of American government
- Analyze American government, considering democratic ideals
- Develop a working knowledge of current events in American politics
- Learn the course material by working individually and as a team
- Improve critical thinking and communication skills by considering various political perspectives, reflecting on the development of personal views, and communicating those views effectively

Course texts

Required:

American Government: Roots and Reform (2018 Elections and Updates Edition, 13th Edition), Karen O'Connor & Larry J. Sabato (**older versions are fine!**)

Referenced but not required:

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

Other assigned readings will be made available to you via E-Learning Commons

(<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>)

¹ Instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus as needed.

Assignments and grading

Attendance and participation (25%)

I take attendance every class mostly so I learn students names but also to have a record of absences. It's important to attend class for your own benefit. Additionally, your peers and instructor value your presence as well. You are allowed two unexcused absences, no questions asked. However, after two absences, I begin to deduct points from your attendance and participation grade. If you are not present, you cannot participate. If you have doctor's notes, you can send them my way for excused absences.

Short online quizzes (6 quizzes, 5% each, lowest grade dropped, 25% total)

There will be 6 quizzes with the lowest quiz score dropped. The final quiz grade includes 5 quizzes, each counting 5%. Students will complete the quizzes individually via eLC and outside of class. However, students will take the quiz during our normal class time, beginning at 12:40pm and lasting 20 minutes on the assigned day. Anything from the class material is considered fair game to show up on the quizzes, and students may use their books and notes. Each quiz is non-cumulative, only covering recent material.

Civic engagement work (3 public meeting reports, 10% each, 30% total)

Students have the chance to practice being civically engaged in an intentional way and to document their experiences.

Each student will choose a municipality / county for which to virtually attend three local public meetings (council and / or commission meetings are usually pretty informative, but there are all kinds of public recorded meetings on city / county websites). Students will complete a report for each meeting, detailing what happened in the meeting, providing some analysis, and reflecting on their own engagement.

Civic engagement reflection paper (20%)

Reflection is a critical component of active and engaged-learning. Students will be asked to reflect on their civic engagement work individually, with a final paper assignment.

Administrative Items

ELearning

Students must become acquainted with eLearning Commons for this class (<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>). Sign into eLC using your UGA MyId and password. If registered for the class, the course link should show up on the student's eLC homepage. Significant content will be available via eLC. Students must check in to eLC multiple times a week. Students will submit all assignments via eLC.

Missed deadlines

A student who has a conflict with a due date should let the professor know ASAP. Communication is very important for getting back on track in the course.

Disability resource center

If the student anticipates needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, they 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 have the ability to withdraw a student from the class due to excessive absences. Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here:

<http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals>

UGA culture of honesty policy

The policy is in place to encourage academic honesty among students, faculty and other members of the university community. Students and faculty are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating and much more. It's in the student's best interest to understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F for the course, and their names will be forwarded to the University. Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here:

<https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>

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.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).

If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.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.

Tentative Course Outline

Week 1. August 17 – 26 (Wednesday, August 17 – Friday, August 26)

Wednesday, August 17

- Course syllabus

Friday, August 19

- *Roots & Reform 1* (Introduction)

Monday, August 22

- *Roots & Reform 2* (The Constitution)

Wednesday, August 24

- *Roots & Reform 2* (The Constitution), *Georgia Politics 4*

Friday, August 26

- Civic engagement projects introduction
- Practice quiz

Week 2. August 29 – September 2

Monday, August 29

- *Roots & Reform 12* (Voting & participation)

Wednesday, August 31

- Class discussion & reflection (engagement & knowledge)

Friday, September 2

- Quiz 1 via eLC at 11:30am
- Civic engagement workshop

Week 3. September 6 – 9 (Labor Day, holiday: Monday, September 5)

Wednesday, September 7

- *Roots & Reform 3* (Federalism)

Friday, September 9

- *Roots & Reform 4* (Liberties)

Week 4. September 12 – 16

Monday, September 12

- *Roots & Reform 5* (Civil rights)

Wednesday, September 14

- Class discussion & reflection – Rights & voting

Friday, September 16

- Quiz 2 via eLC at at 11:30am
- Public meeting report 1 due by midnight

Week 5. September 19 – 23

Monday, September 19

- Public meeting class reflection
- *Roots & Reform 6* (Congress)

Wednesday, September 21

- *Roots & Reform 6* (Congress)

Friday, September 23

- *Roots & Reform 6* (Congress), *Georgia Politics 5*

Week 6. September 26 – 30

Monday, September 26

- Class discussion & reflection – Congress & voting

Wednesday, September 28

- *Roots & Reform 7* (Presidency)

Friday, September 30

- *Roots & Reform 7* (Presidency), *Georgia Politics 6*
- Class discussion & reflection – Presidency & voting

Week 7. October 3 – 7

Monday, October 3

- Quiz 3 via eLC at 11:30am

Wednesday, October 5

- Civic engagement workshop
- Public meeting report 2 due by midnight

Friday, October 7

- Political news engagement assignment

Week 8. October 10 – 14 (Middle of the term: October 10)

Monday, October 10

- *Roots & Reform* 8 (Bureaucracy)

Wednesday, October 12

- *Roots & Reform* 9 (Judiciary)

Friday, October 14

- *Roots & Reform* 9 (Judiciary), *Georgia Politics* 7
- Class discussion & reflection – Courts & voting

Week 9. October 17 – 21

Monday, October 17

- Quiz 4 via eLC at 11:30am
- Civic engagement workshop

Wednesday, October 19

- *Roots & Reform* 15 (Interest groups)

Friday, October 21

- *Roots & Reform* 11 (Parties)

Week 10. October 24 – 27 (Withdrawal deadline: October 24; Fall break, holiday: Friday, October 28)

Monday, October 24

- *Roots & Reform* 12 & 13 (Campaigns & elections)

Wednesday, October 26

- *Roots & Reform* 12 & 13 (Campaigns & elections)

Week 11. October 31 – November 4

Monday, October 31

- Class discussion & reflection – Campaigns & elections & voting

Wednesday, November 2

- Quiz 5 via elc at at 11:30am
- Civic engagement workshop

Friday, November 4

- Political news engagement assignment

Week 12. November 7 – 11

Monday, November 7

- *Roots & Reform* 14 (Media)

Wednesday, November 9

- Class discussion & reflection – Media literacy & voting

Friday, November 11

- *Roots & Reform* 10 (Public opinion)

Week 13. November 14 – 18

Monday, November 14

- *Roots & Reform* 10 (Political socialization)

Wednesday, November 16

- Civic engagement workshop
- Public meeting report 3 due by midnight

Friday, November 19

- Political news engagement assignment

Week 14. November 21 - 22 (Thanksgiving break, holiday: November 23 – 25)

Monday, November 21

- Class discussion & reflection – political socialization

Week 15. November 28 – December 2

Monday, November 28

- Quiz 6 via eLC at 11:30am

Wednesday, November 30

- Writing workshop

Friday, December 2

- Civic engagement paper due by midnight

Week 16. December 5 – 6

Monday, December 6 – office hours

List of Important Dates

Quiz 1 – Friday, September 2

Quiz 2 – Friday, September 16

Quiz 3 – Monday, October 3

Quiz 4 – Monday, October 17

Quiz 5 – Wednesday, November 2

Quiz 6 – Monday, November 28

Public meeting report 1 – Friday, September 16

Public meeting report 2 – Wednesday, October 5

Public meeting report 3 – Wednesday, November 16

Civic engagement reflection paper – Friday, December 2