



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

School of Public and International Affairs
Department of Political Science

POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government Spring 2023

MWF 8:00 – 8:50am

Room: Baldwin 301

Instructor: Dr. John Newton

Contact: jmnewton@uga.edu

Office Hour: After Class and by appointment

Course Description and Objective

This course will cover the fundamental elements of government. This includes elements of history, philosophy, and structure of the United States government and the government of Georgia. The objective is that you will leave the class with a better understanding of our system of government along with the ability to think critically about how it functions.

Text

American Politics: A Field Guide by Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox. This book has not been published yet and is still under development. You will have online access to the book at no charge using the link below. In exchange for having access to the book and online resources for free, you are asked to provide feedback on your experience with the book.

To access the book, please go to <https://digital.wwnorton.com/amerpolfieldguide>. You will need to use this code to access the book and skills questions: WTL-RNF-AKP.

Grading Breakdown by Percentage:

Exam: 15%

Exam: 15%

Exam: 15%

Chapter Questions: 15%

Project: 15%

Final: 25%

Class Participation: +/-

Students who text, use Facebook, or otherwise disrupt the class will receive a reduction in their overall grade. If a student is disrupting the class through the use of electronics, the student will be asked to leave and may be withdrawn from the class. No electronic devices may be used when we have a guest speaker.

Grading Scale:

A = 94-100

A - = 90-93

B+ = 86-89

B = 83-85

B- = 80-82

C+ = 76-79

C = 73-75

C- = 70-72

D+ = 66-69

D = 63-65

D- = 60-62

F = 0-59

Important Class Dates

First Day of Class: Monday, January 9, 2023

Drop and Add Deadline:

MLK Day: January 16, 2023 – No Class

First Exam: Feb 3
Second Exam: March 3
Third Exam: April 7
Project Due: April 21
Withdrawal Deadline: March 23, 2023
Spring Break: March 6-10, 2023
Last Day of Class: Monday, May 1, 2023
Final Exam: Wednesday, May 3, 2023 – 8am

Syllabus Policy

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary. It can be difficult to project how long sections will take to cover. Other situations may indicate the need for changes in the assignments, so please pay attention in class. If you have questions, please ask.

Honor Code: As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at <https://ovpi.uga.edu>.

Disability Resource Center

If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Disability Resource Center. Additional information can be found here: <http://drc.uga.edu/>

Withdrawal Policy

UGA's withdrawal policy can be found at <http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals>.

Attendance Policy

UGA's attendance policy can be found at <https://provost.uga.edu/policies/academic-affairs-policy-manual/4-06-class-attendance>.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will

not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.

- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Artificial Intelligence Software

Unless explicitly stated, artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, must not be used to generate responses for student assignments. You may not use artificial intelligence resources for your project this semester.

Preferred Name and Pronouns

Please let me know how you would like me to refer to you and/or what to call you. I'm happy to oblige to your preference of name and pronouns. My pronouns are he, him, his. As a student in this class, it is most appropriate to refer to me as Dr. Newton.

Email/Contact Etiquette

I want to help you succeed and achieve greatness. UGA students are enormously capable, and I am constantly impressed with what you all accomplish. However, I don't know you and my impression of you is based on our interactions and how you communicate with me. For that reason, it is a good idea to be respectful in our communications. Here are my suggestions:

- Please email me from your UGA email address. This helps me know who you are and connect you with this class.
- Please do not email me through ELC. I have missed those emails in the past and I am afraid I might not see your email. It is best to email me from your UGA email account.
- Please understand that I may post your email and my response on ELC. I started this practice because many students have similar questions. I don't post every email on ELC, because the email may not pertain to class questions. If you email me questions about tests, what we are supposed to be reading, about concepts or anything we are learning – I may post your question and my reply to benefit others in the class.
- It is best to be respectful of everyone. You never know when that may come in handy for a recommendation, a suggestion, or something else. Talk to other people in the class (and in all your classes). Take a moment to say something nice to someone and be supportive of each other. We are stronger together.

UGA Well-Being and Involvement

UGA has a number of resources to assist you. I encourage you to take a moment to visit <https://well-being.uga.edu> to familiarize yourself with what is available. A few to highlight:

- Student Care and Outreach – you have questions and they have answers. They are the hub to connect you to the resources you need. SCO@uga.edu or 706-542-7774.

- UGA Health Center – <https://healthcenter.uga.edu> - physical and mental health. They even have healthy cooking classes.
- Rec Sports – <https://recsports.uga.edu> - stay healthy and have fun. I encourage you to maintain a fitness routine as this is great for physical and mental health. Also – if you go on an outdoor trip, I would love to hear about it so I can live vicariously through you.
- Georgia Museum of Art – not part of the well-being initiative, but you should visit. Take a break and walk around. It is free, on campus, and a great place to spend some time. <https://georgiamuseum.org>.
- UGA Involvement Network – <https://uga.campuslabs.com/engage>

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency in class we will take the following actions. If there is a tornado warning we will proceed to the lowest floor in the building for shelter. If there is a fire we will quickly exit the building. The class will reconvene in the cemetery next to Baldwin Hall in an attempt to make sure everyone exited the building. If there is a medical emergency, I will ask students to flag down the emergency vehicles outside the building and lead them to our room. Students are encouraged to make sure their information in UGA Alert is accurate.

Exam/Assignment make-ups

Exams will not be offered unless previously scheduled because of extenuating circumstances or in the event of a verifiable emergency. Similarly, the due dates for assignments such as papers are not negotiable unless a true emergency warrants further consideration. Turning in a late paper will significantly reduce the grade.

Class Project:

You will be required to complete a project this semester. Please ask if you have questions. The project will be to choose a topic from the topics provided and produce some type of work (see the types of work) that persuades an audience to favor one side over the other. In other words you are creating a persuasive work based on the topic and side of the topic you choose.

All of the topics are legal cases because that is one side versus another. It also makes it easy to do your research because you can use the briefs filed in the cases or the decisions written in the cases. You just have to read and understand the argument, choose a side, and then present the arguments you find the most persuasive. Your argument doesn't have to be legal in nature. It can be legal, but be sure you are explaining the legal issues if you do. Your argument can be more normative in nature explaining which side is right based on moral, ethical, or practical reasons. I want you to get practice understanding a topic, picking a side, and explaining your thoughts to someone in a mature, reasonable way.

Type of work:

Narrated PowerPoint (narrated by you in your voice)

- This is probably what I would do because I am a very linear thinker. You are basically recording yourself doing a presentation.

Podcast in your voice (limit of 7 minutes)

- This can be you alone or you can work with classmates.

Video with you in it (limit of 7 minutes)

- This could be you alone or a debate with classmates.

Art work with a written explanation

- Think of something like Francisco Goya's *The Third of May, 1808* or something by Jacques-Louis David.

Song with a written explanation

- Protest songs are numerous. Almost all songs have some sort of meaning or purpose. If there are enough people in the class to form a band this could count for the entire group that performs the song.

Photo or series of photos with a written explanation

- There are so many famous photos that caused change. This could be photos of people not able to vote, photos of weddings, photos of religious events, etc.
- Other than I did not think of with approval.

Be creative in your type of work. You cannot write an essay or research paper. Choose a form of expression and make an argument for the side you want.

Topics:

303 Creative v.. Elenis

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/2022/21-476>

<https://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/303-creative-llc-v-elenis/>

More v. Harper

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/2022/21-1271>

<https://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/moore-v-harper-2/>

Coker v. Georgia

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/1976/75-5444>

McCleskey v. Kemp

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/1986/84-6811>

Twitter v. Taamneh

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/2022/21-1496>

<https://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/twitter-inc-v-taamneh/>

Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/2022/20-1199>

<https://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/students-for-fair-admissions-inc-v-president-fellows-of-harvard-college/>

Course Schedule ** Expect Changes**

Week 1 (starting January 9)

Topic: Introduction to the Class. Creating the Government.

Readings: Lawless and Fox: Section 1, Chapters 1-3. pp. 12-46.

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 2 (starting January 16) ** No Class on January 16 **

Topic: Creating the Government (cont)

Readings: Lawless and Fox. Section 1, Chapters 4-8. pp. 47-97.

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 3 (starting January 23)

Topic: Liberties and Rights

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section II, Chapters 9-12, pp. 98-142.

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 4 (starting January 30)

Topic: Liberties and Rights

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section II, Chapters 13-16, pp. 143-191

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 5 (starting February 6)

Topic: Political Engagement

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section III, chapters 17-19, pp. 192-231

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 6 (starting February 13)

Topic: Political Engagement

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section III, chapters 20-21, pp. 232-253

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 7 (starting February 20)

Topic: Political Information, Knowledge, and News

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section IV, chapters 22-24, pp. 256-292

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 8 (starting February 27)

Topic: Political Information, Knowledge, and News

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section IV, chapters 25-26, pp. 293-317

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 10 (starting March 13)

Topic: Campaigns and Elections

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section V, chapters 27-30, pp. 318-366

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 11 (starting March 20)

Topic: Participation, Campaigns, and Elections

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section V, chapters 31-33, pp. 367-405

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Georgia Specific Material: Review the link about the Georgia Constitution (you don't have to read every version of the Georgia Constitution) and read the differences between the Georgia Constitution and the US Constitution found in ELC under Georgia Content

Week 12 (starting March 27)

Topic: Political Institutions

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section VI, chapters 34-36, pp. 406-446

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Georgia Specific Material: Watch the video on the Georgia Executive Branch and read the link about the Georgia Executive Branch from the New Georgia Encyclopedia. This can be found in the Georgia Content section on ELC.

Week 13 (starting April 3)

Topic: Political Institutions

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section VI, chapters 37-39, pp. 447-481

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Georgia Specific Material: Watch the Georgia Legislative Process Video and read the articles from the New Georgia Encyclopedia linked in the Georgia Legislature section. This can be found in the Georgia Content section on ELC.

Week 14 (starting April 10)

Topic: Political Institutions

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section VI, chapters 40-42, pp. 482-521

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Georgia Specific Material: Read the articles from the New Georgia Encyclopedia that are linked in the Georgia Judicial Branch section. This can be found in the Georgia Content section of ELC.

Week 15 (starting April 17)

Topic: Contemporary Public Policy

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section VII, chapters 43-45, pp. 522-560

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 16 (starting April 24)

Topic: Contemporary Public Policy

Readings: Lawless and Fox, Section VII, chapters 46-48, pp. 561-601

Do the questions/skills resources at the end of each chapter

Week 17 (May 1) – Monday Last Day of Class

Final Exam, Wednesday May 3, 2024 – 8:00am to 11:00am