

Political Science 1101

American Government

Spring 2023

Professor: Stephen Nicholson
E-mail: snicholson@uga.edu

Office Hours: Thursday 3:30-5:30
Office: 309D Baldwin

Lead Teaching Assistant: Tabitha Lamberth
Email: tabitha.lamberth25@uga.edu

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the institutions and processes of American national government. Over the course of the semester, we will examine explanations of how our political system operates and how well it meets its democratic aspirations. The purpose of the course is to promote learning and critical thinking about U.S. politics that goes beyond much of what we hear and read in the news, social media, and everyday conversation. One of my goals then is to have you reevaluate commonly held assumptions and criticisms of the American political system. In some instances, what you learn will run counter to commonly held views about American government (regardless of your political beliefs). In addition, we will focus on many basics of U.S. government that are not well known or understood (e.g., the Electoral College). Throughout the semester, we will also cover the Georgia constitution and political system.

Course Readings:

Janda, Kenneth, Jeffrey M. Berry, Jerry Goldman, and Deborah Schildkraut. 2022. *The Challenge of Democracy: American Government in Global Politics 15th Edition*. Boston. Houghton Mifflin.

You must purchase a version of the textbook with access to Infuse. Do Not purchase a version that does not include Infuse.

Course Requirements:

To complete the course successfully, students are required to take weekly quizzes, two exams, a research paper, and regularly participate in discussion section. The purpose of the quizzes and exams is to assess student factual understanding of the structure and operation of the American political system and demonstrate knowledge of the central theories, approaches, and findings to understanding American politics. The purpose of the research paper is to assess whether students can conduct basic but rigorous social science research on a topic in American politics.

Students should attend class regularly and, ideally, have read the material before class. Given the large amount of material we will cover, it is important to not get behind or miss class. If you anticipate missing more than a few classes or are unable to keep up with the reading, *please drop the class*.

Students are also expected be courteous. Please do not eat, sleep, read, arrive late to, or leave during, class time (if you must leave early, please sit in the back row and exit discretely). Do not text, surf the web, or otherwise do anything on your phone, tablet, or computer that is not class related.

Discussion Sections:

You are expected to attend a breakout session in addition to lectures. Attendance is mandatory and part of your grade. All breakout sessions are on Monday.

Section	Time	Place	Instructor	Email
61322	9:10-10:00	LeConte 135	Kuznetcov	aleksandrkouz@uga.edu
61324	10:20-11:10	Journalism 502	Kuznetcov	aleksandrkouz@uga.edu
61327	11:30-12:20	LeConte 341	Dragna	gld59586@uga.edu
61331	12:40-1:30	Sanford 112	Dragna	gld59586@uga.edu
61333	1:50-2:40	LeConte 230	Lamberth	tabitha.lamberth25@uga.edu
61336	9:10-10:00	LeConte 230	Rodas-Gaiter	alejandra.rodas@uga.edu
61338	1:50-2:40	LeConte 341	Garcia	kg96436@uga.edu
61342	11:30-12:20	LeConte 135	Hoffman	mallory.hoffman@uga.edu
61343	10:20-11:10	LeConte 321	Hoffman	mallory.hoffman@uga.edu
61344	12:40-1:30	LeConte 230	Garcia	kg96436@uga.edu
61346	8:00-8:50	Baldwin G41	Rodas-Gaiter	alejandra.rodas@uga.edu

Class Website:

The class will be administered through the eLC website and you will use it to submit assignments and to receive class announcements. My primary means of communication with you will be through announcements posted in eLC so make sure to check *frequently* (at least daily). To ensure you receive eLC updates for our class automatically via email you will need to do the following: eLC > Click on your profile > Notifications > Instant Notifications. Please note that you cannot reply to an email I send out via eLC (ending in @uga.view.usg.edu emails) so contact me at snicholson@uga.edu instead.

Grading:

There are four parts to your final grade: weekly chapter quizzes (open book/note), two exams (a midterm and a final), a short research paper, and discussion section. The weekly chapter quizzes are worth 20%, the midterm is worth 25%, and the final is worth 30%. The research paper is worth 20% (the paper assignment will be uploaded in the first two weeks of class) and participation in discussion section are worth 5%.

Weekly quizzes need to be completed no later than midnight on Sunday, the night before discussion section.

I will assign grades according to the following scale:

A = 94 and above

A- = 90-93

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 74-76

C- = 70-73

D+ = 67-69

D = 64-66

D- = 60-63

F < Below 60

Questions regarding grades should be directed to your teaching assistant. If you are unable to resolve a grade dispute with your TA, you may appeal a grade to me. If you do so, you are required to write up a short (roughly 1 paragraph) justification for your appeal. If I regrade an assignment or test, your grade may go up or down. Any grade appeals must be made at least 48 hours after I hand back the assignment or test.

Late Work and Makeups

Make up exams will only be given in cases of an excused absence in accordance with university policies. Examples of excused absences include jury duty, military duty, religious observances, illness, and bereavement for an immediate family member. Excuses should be coordinated with your teaching assistant and should be provided **prior** to the date of the exam or assignment. If you turn in work late and do not have an excused absence, your final score will be deducted 10% for each day it is late. Unless contacted in advance (apart from emergencies), make-ups will not be granted.

Academic Honesty:

You are expected to adhere to the 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 www.uga.edu/ovpi. Unless explicitly stated, artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, must not be used to generate responses for student assignments. If you are unclear what constitutes plagiarism, please consult Professor Nicholson or your teaching assistant.

Prohibition on Recording Classes:

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 including lectures and discussion sections. I require that you seek my permission if you want to make audio and/or video recordings of any portion of class. If you do not have permission (or an accommodation from DRC), do not take photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings of any person in this class without their express permission. Further, do not take or share audio or video recordings of course lectures or discussions. Violation of this policy will result in you receiving 0% for class participation, and, depending on the severity of the violation, may result in you receiving a grade of "F" in the class.

Preferred Names and Pronouns:

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. We are eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me and your TA of this preference early in the semester so that we can make appropriate changes to records.

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.

Semester Schedule:

- 1/9 Discussion section introductions
- 1/10 Introduction
- 1/12 Political Values
Janda, Chapter 1
Ideology quiz at <http://www.idealogy.org> (Choose *self-test*). The quiz is not graded.
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 1
[Does college turn people into liberals?](#)
- 1/16 MLK holiday—no class
- 1/17 & Models of Democracy
- 1/19 Janda, Chapter 2
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 2
[-The 'sore loser effect': Rejecting election results can destabilize democracy and drive terrorism](#)
[-What those mourning the fragility of American democracy get wrong](#)
- 1/23 Discussion section
- 1/24 & Constitutional Foundations
- 26 Janda, Chapter 3 & Appendix A1-A16
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 3
[The Georgia Constitution](#)
[-A revolutionary ruling – and not just for abortion': A Supreme Court scholar explains the impact of Dobbs](#)
- 1/30 Discussion section
- 1/31 & Federalism and Georgia politics
- 2/2 Janda, Chapter 4
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 4
[-A brief history of Georgia's runoff voting – and its racist roots](#)
- 2/6 Discussion section
- 2/7 & Congress
- 2/9 Janda, Chapter 11
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 11
[-Masket, Why Political Science Doesn't Like Term Limits](#)
[-Mayor of Crazytown](#)
- 2/13 Discussion section
- 2/14 & Presidency
- 16 Janda, Chapter 12
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 12
[-From border Security to climate change, national emergency declarations raise hard questions about presidential power](#)
- 2/20 Discussion section

- 2/21 & 23 Bureaucracy
Janda, Chapter 13
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 13
[-The Hatch Act...requires gov employees to work for the public interest, not partisan campaigns](#)
- 2/27 Discussion section on the bureaucracy and midterm review
- 2/28 Courts
Janda, Chapter 14
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 14
[-After Roe's overturning, Americans are demanding Supreme Court term limits](#)
[-Does Oral Argument Matter?](#)
- 3/2 **Midterm Exam**
- 3/6-10 Spring Break—no classes
- 3/13 Discussion section
- 3/14 & 16 Political Parties & Interest Groups
Janda, Chapters 8 & 10
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 10
[-Who Fled the Center?](#)
[-What are political parties' platforms – and do they matter?](#)
- 3/20 Discussion section
- 3/21 & 23 Mass Media
Janda, Chapter 6
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 6
[-Don't be too quick to blame social media for America's polarization—cable news has a bigger effect, study finds](#)
[-Claims of ideological bias among the media may be overblown](#)
- 3/27 Discussion section
- 3/28 & 30 Public Opinion
Janda, Chapter 5
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 5
[-Explainer: How abortion became a divisive issue in U.S. politics](#)
[-Congress is considering making same-sex marriage federal law-a political scientist explains how this issue became less polarized over time](#)
- 4/3 Discussion section
- 4/4 & 6 Participation & Voting
Janda, Chapter 7
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 7
[-Did shark attacks eat into Woodrow Wilson's votes in 1916?](#)
- 4/10 Discussion section
- 4/11 & 13 Campaigns & Elections
Janda, Chapter 9
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 9
[-Will This Be An Asterisk Election?](#)
[-How Joe Biden did so well in Georgia](#)
- 4/17 Discussion Section
*****Paper Due*****

- 4/18 & 20 Civil Rights
Janda, Chapter 16
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 16
[-Segregation policies in federal government in early 20th century harmed Blacks for decades](#)
- 4/24 Discussion section
- 4/25 & 27 Civil Liberties
Janda, Chapter 15
Weekly Online Assignment: Ch. 15
[-Supreme Court overturns constitutional right to abortion](#)
[-Privacy isn't in the Constitution – but it's everywhere in constitutional law](#)
- 5/1 Discussion section on Civil Liberties and exam review
- 5/4 Final Exam 3:30-6:30**

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course, deviations may be necessary.