

# **POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government**

Spring 2023

Lecture: Tuesday and Thursday, 8 AM- 9:15 AM

Baldwin Hall, Room 101D

**Professor:** Karlee L. Taylor

**Office:** Baldwin Hall, Room 303A

**Email:** [karlee.taylor@uga.edu](mailto:karlee.taylor@uga.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9:30 AM-11 AM, or by appointment

## **Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce students to the institutions, processes, and behavior 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. In addition, we will focus on many basics of U.S. government that are not well known or understood.

## **Course Materials**

Janda, Kenneth, Jeffrey M. Berry, Jerry Goldman, and Deborah Schildkraut. 2018. *The Challenge of Democracy: American Government in Global Politics* 14<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston.. ISBN 9781305954922

You may also purchase the online copy of the book through Cengage for \$44.99, ISBN 9781337658713. Other editions of the book will meet the requirement for the course, but class lectures and exams will be based on the 14<sup>th</sup> edition. Additional course materials and readings will be available through ELC.

## **Office Hours and Help**

I will hold office hours every Tuesday, immediately after class, from 9:30 AM- 11:00 AM and by appointment. I will be available to meet in my office (303A) or via zoom. It is important to me that this course is comprehensible for all, and I will strive to make sure that you do not feel lost or overwhelmed. Office hours can be used to talk about lectures, assignments, grades, etc. If you feel like a question can be resolved via email please allow me 24 hours to respond and until the next business day if over the weekend, though I will often be able to respond before then. If I happen to not respond, please feel free to follow up—I will be grateful.

## Grading

### Exams (40% of grade)

This class will have three exams—February 14<sup>th</sup>, April 4<sup>th</sup>, and May 4<sup>th</sup>. These exams split the class into approximately 3 distinct sections. The exams will **not** be cumulative and will be taken in class on ELC. If you do not have access to a laptop, or would prefer not to take the exam online, please let me know and I will provide you with a paper copy.

### Assessment Quizzes (20% of grade)

Most weeks you will have a *very* short online quiz that you will access through ELC. These quizzes are meant to prep you for your exams, and give me a gauge on how well the class is comprehending the material. Assessment quizzes will be due by the end of the week (Saturday by 11:59 PM).

### Writing Assignments (20% of grade)

You are required to complete **two** writing assignments during the semester. Prompts will be given in class. Papers must be 3-4 pages, double spaced, use 1-inch margins, and come with properly formatted citations. Your first paper must be turned in by March 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM and your second paper must be turned in by April 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 PM.

### Participation (20% of grade)

This class does not have breakout sessions so in class participation and attendance in class is crucial. I expect you to show up to class on time and ready to engage in the lectures.

## Grades and Course Policies

Grades directly pertain to your achievement in the course. University policy defines the meaning of grades and to what level of achievement grades reported on your transcript pertain. There is no rounding policy and rounding grades may be made on a case-by-case basis. I use the following grading scale:

### Attendance

Attendance is required for the course and instrumental in your understanding of the material. Students will be given 2 automatically excused absences. If you must miss, please communicate with me as soon as you're able to, and if applicable, with the proper documentation. Excessive absences will result in penalty of your participation grade.

Grade	Percent
A	94-100
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	<60

### Extra Credit

As of now, there is no extra credit built into the course. However, I reserve the right to offer extra credit throughout the semester. All potential extra credit will be presented in class and/or via email. I will not offer individual extra credit.

### Late Work & Make-up Exams

Make up exams will only be given in cases of an extended excused absence in accordance with the university's policy on excused absences. Some examples of excused absences are jury duty, military duty, religious observances, illness, illness of a dependent, and bereavement for an immediate family member. If this is the case, you must inform me as soon as possible and I will endeavor to reschedule the exam with you.

For assignments, I understand issues arise that may interfere with your work. If this occurs, please contact me at least 48 hours in advance (or what is reasonably possible) and I will work with you to turn in your late assignment. For traditionally late assignments, expect to have 10% of the final grade deducted per day that it is late.

### Academic Honesty

The University of Georgia has an academic honesty policy. Academic integrity is required for a positive learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F in the course. Additionally, I will forward your name to the University. You can read the policies in their entirety here: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>

### 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/>

### Class Recordings

I require that you seek my permission if you want to make audio and/or video recordings of any portion of our class (including of my lectures and discussion sections). If you do not have this 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.

### 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>

### 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. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronouns. Please let me know your preferences at the beginning of the course or via email before the first day of class so that I may adjust my roster.

### 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://caps.uga.edu/well-being-prevention-programs-mental-health/>) or crisis support (<https://healthcenter.uga.edu/emergencies/>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://caps.uga.edu/well-being-prevention-programs-mental-health/>) 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.

### **Class Schedule**

This is a tentative outline for our course. I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus and the schedule as I see fit. All adjustments will be reviewed in class and via email.

<p>Week 1: Introduction, Political Values  January 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>  <i>Add/Drop Deadline 13<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p>Introduction to course  Syllabus overview  10<sup>th</sup>- Janda, Political Values section  12<sup>th</sup>- Gather major points from Janda, Chapter 1 + 2  <a href="#">The 'sore loser effect': rejecting election results can destabilize democracy</a></p>
<p>Week 2: The Constitution  January 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>  <i>No Class, 19<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p>Janda, Chapter 3  <a href="#">The Global Influence of the Constitution</a>  <a href="#">The Declaration of Sentiments</a>  <b>Quiz 1</b></p>
<p>Week 3: Federalism  January 24<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>Janda, Chapter 4  <a href="#">American's view federalism as States taking more power</a>  <a href="#">Why federalism has become risky for American Democracy</a>  <b>Quiz 2</b></p>
<p>Week 4: Public Opinion  January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup></p>	<p>Janda, Chapter 5  <a href="#">Pew Research Political Typology Quiz</a>  Listen to Podcast “The evangelical vote” by Throughline(NPR)  <a href="#">Crime, American Public Opinion, and the Election</a>  <b>Quiz 3</b></p>
<p>Week 5: Media and Political Participation  February 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>7<sup>th</sup> – Janda, Chapter 6  <a href="#">Are social media driving political polarization?</a>  Skim annual review “Media and Political Polarization” by Prior (ELC)  9<sup>th</sup>- Janda, Chapter 7  <a href="#">Key findings about voter engagement in the 2020 election</a>  <a href="#">Turnout in U.S. has soared in recent years by some measures...</a>  <b>Quiz 4</b></p>
<p>Week 6: Political Parties  February 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>  <i>Exam 1 the 14<sup>th</sup></i></p>	<p>14<sup>th</sup>- <b>Exam 1</b>  16<sup>th</sup> – Janda, Chapter 8  <a href="#">Who fled center?</a>  <a href="#">Party Realignment and the New Deal</a>  <b>Quiz 5</b></p>
<p>Week 7: Elections and Interest Groups  February 21<sup>st</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup></p>	<p>21<sup>st</sup> – Janda, Chapter 9  <a href="#">How Biden did so well in Georgia</a>  23<sup>rd</sup>- Janda, Chapter 10  Explore <a href="#">opensecrets.org</a> and look at interest group donations in our most recent election cycle  <b>Quiz 6</b></p>
<p>Week 8: Congress  February 28<sup>th</sup>, March 2<sup>nd</sup></p>	<p>Janda, Chapter 11  <a href="#">Professional politicians vs term limits?</a></p>

	<a href="#">Why political science doesn't like term limits</a> <b>Paper 1 due</b>
Week 9: SPRING BREAK March 7 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
Week 10: The Presidency March 14 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup>	Janda, Chapter 12 <a href="#">From border security to climate change, national emergency declarations raise hard questions about presidential power</a> <a href="#">Republicans now are more open to the idea of expanding presidential power</a> <b>Quiz 7</b>
Week 11: The Bureaucracy March 21 <sup>st</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> <i>Withdrawal Deadline March 23<sup>rd</sup></i>	Janda, Chapter 13 <a href="#">The Hatch Act.. requires gov't employees to work for the public interest</a> <a href="#">The U.S. needs more bureaucracy, not less</a> Skim “The Administrative Presidency and Public Trust in Bureaucracy” by Rogowski (ELC) <b>Quiz 8</b>
Week 12: The Courts March 28 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup>	Janda, Chapter 14 <a href="#">Americans divided on how the Supreme Court should be interpreted</a> <a href="#">Confidence in U.S. Supreme Court sinks to historic low</a> <a href="#">Majority of American think Supreme Court overturning Roe was more about politics than law</a> <b>Quiz 9</b>
Week 13: Georgia Politics April 4 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> <i>Exam 2 the 4<sup>th</sup></i>	4 <sup>th</sup> - <b>Exam 2</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> - <a href="#">Georgia Government Summary</a> <a href="#">A brief history of Georgia's runoff voting- and its racist roots</a> <a href="#">The six political states of Georgia</a> <a href="#">How Georgia, once a Republican stronghold, came to swing</a>
Week 14: Civil Liberties April 11 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> No Class 13 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup> – Janda, Chapter 15 <a href="#">Privacy isn't in the Constitution- but its everywhere in constitutional law</a> 13 <sup>th</sup> - <b>No Class</b> <b>Quiz 10</b>
Week 15: Civil Rights April 18 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup>	Janda, Chapter 16 <a href="#">Segregation policies harmed Blacks for decades</a> <a href="#">American's Attitudes towards civil rights and gov't are more aligned since pandemic</a>

<p>Week 16: Public Policy April 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>Janda Chapter 18 <a href="#">Americans view inflation as the top problem facing the country today</a> Skim “Stability and change in American’s perceptions of freedom” by Patterson et al. (ELC) <b>Paper 2 due</b></p>
<p>Final Exam: Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 8 AM <i>Exam 3</i></p>	<p><b>Exam 3</b></p>