

POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government

University of Georgia

Fall 2023

Instructor:

Mr. Austin Petrie¹
Office: Baldwin Hall, Rm 303A
Email: austin.petrie@uga.edu

Office meeting times:

Before/after class
Or by appointment

Class meetings:

Classroom: Baldwin Hall, Rm 102
Days/Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 8:00-9:15am

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 perspective, reflecting on the development of personal views, and communicating those views effectively.

Course texts:

Recommended but not required:

American Politics Today, Bianco and Cannon (6th, 7th, or 8th Eds. are preferred; older editions are acceptable)

¹ Dates and assignments are subject to change by the professor.

Referenced but not required:

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

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

Assignments and grading:

Online quizzes (6 quizzes, 10% each, lowest grade dropped, 50% total)

There will be 6 quizzes with the lowest quiz grade dropped. The final quiz grade includes 5 quizzes, each counting 10%.

Students will complete the quizzes individually via eLC and outside of class. However, students will take the quiz during our normal class time, anytime between 8:00-9:15am. Once beginning the quiz, students have thirty minutes to complete it. Any material from the eLC modules (i.e., posted readings and references) and lectures 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 the recent material.

There are no make-up quizzes. Only 5 of the 6 quizzes count toward your grade, so if you miss one for any reason, it is dropped.

Semester project (40% total)

As “laboratories of democracy,” states play an integral role in American federalism. For this project, students will explore the structure and political and demographic makeup of a state government of their choosing (NOTE: Students may not choose Georgia and no two students can choose the same state). I provide a guideline of the project on eLC.

Attendance (10% total)

Lively (but respectful) discussion is necessary to understand American government - its foundation, structure, and functions. To achieve this goal, attendance is counted and expected. Students are granted one unexcused absence during the semester. More than one unexcused absence will result in reduction of the students of the student’s attendance grade. Four unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for this portion of the course; after the first unexcused absence, every additional unexcused absence will reduce the student’s attendance grade by 33%. Excused absences will NOT result in point reduction; however, PLEASE inform me of your absence before the class meeting time.

- 1 unexcused absence = no point deduction
- 2 unexcused absences = 33% reduction in student’s attendance grade
- 3 unexcused absences = 66% reduction in student’s attendance grade
- 4 unexcused absences = 100% deduction in student’s attendance grade

Administrative items:

E-Learning

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. Most content will be available via eLC, and most assignments should be submitted via eLC.

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.

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.

Peer tutoring availability

The Division of Academic Enhancement (DAE) offers free peer tutoring in over 200 of UGA's most rigorous courses including writing tutoring. To engage with a Peer Tutor, download the Penji app, available on iOS and Android, and sign in through SSO using your MyID. Need help? Visit our website for more information on how to engage with a Peer Tutor or email us at tutor@uga.edu. In addition to peer tutoring, the DAE also provides Academic Coaching, Student Success Workshops and more. The DAE is committed to the success of all students at the University of Georgia. For more on these and other resources, please visit dae.uga.edu

Tentative course outline:

Week 1. August 14-18

Thursday

- Thursday (August 17): Review course material and syllabus

Week 2. August 21-25

- Tuesday (August 22): The Constitution and the Founding

- Thursday (August 24): The Constitution and the Founding

Week 3. August 28-September 1

- Tuesday (August 29): Federalism
 - Last day for students to choose topic for state government project.
- Thursday (August 31): Federalism

Week 4. September 4-8

- Monday (September 4): Labor Day
- Tuesday (September 5): Quiz 1 via eLC at 8:00am
- Thursday (September 7): Civil Liberties

Week 5. September 11-15

- Tuesday (September 12): Civil Rights
- Thursday (September 14): Congress

Week 6. September 18-22

- Tuesday (September 19): Congress
- Thursday (September 21): Presidency

Week 7. September 25-29

- Tuesday (September 26): Presidency
- Thursday (September 28): Quiz 2 via eLC at 8:00am

Week 8. October 2-6

- Tuesday (October 3): Judiciary
- Thursday (October 5): Judiciary

Week 9. October 9-13

- Tuesday (October 10): Bureaucracy
- Thursday (October 12): Quiz 3 via eLC at 8:00am

Week 10. October 16-20

- Tuesday (October 17): Interest groups
- Thursday (October 19): Media

Week 11. October 23-27

- Tuesday (October 24): Political socialization
- Thursday (October 26): Public Opinion
- Friday (October 27): Fall Break

Week 12. October 30-November 3

- Tuesday (October 31): Quiz 4 via eLC at 8:00am
- Thursday (November 2): Parties

Week 13. November 6-10

- Tuesday (November 7): Campaign and Elections
- Thursday (November 9): Campaigns and Elections

Week 14. November 13-17

- Tuesday (November 14): Domestic Policy
- Thursday (November 16): Foreign Policy

Week 15. November 20-24

- Tuesday (November 21): Quiz 5 via eLC at 8:00am
 - Students must submit their semester project via the dropbox on eLC. by 12:00am.
- Thursday (November 23): Thanksgiving Break

Week 16. November 27-December 1

- Tuesday (November 28): Georgia government
- Thursday (November 30): Quiz 6 via eLC at 8:00am

Week 17. December 4-8

- Tuesday (December 5): Classes End
- Wednesday (December 6): Reading Day
- Thursday (December 7): Wednesday (December 13): Final Exams