

POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government

University of Georgia
Fall 2023
CRN 55708

Instructor:

Mackenzie Vaughn
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Office meeting times:

Before/after class
By appointment (Zoom or in person)

Class time and location:

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 3:00pm – 3:50pm
Baldwin 301

Course description

This is a college level introduction to American government and politics. It will introduce students to the foundations of U.S. and Georgia government, the organization of power within and between levels of government, and the ways in which The People and particular actors influence the institutions of government over time.

Course objectives

- Understand the socio-political origins of the Constitution and its interpretation over time.
- Understand the development of federalism and government institutions since ratification.
- Analyze how government may reconcile (or not) issues of collective action at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Enhance skills for evaluating current political issues and sources of information.
- Grasp the importance of the public's influence in politics, as well as disconnects between public opinion and realized outcomes in government policy.

Course texts

Required:

Kernell, Samuel, et al. 2022. *The Logic of American Politics* (10th edition).
ISBN: 9781071815977

Referenced, with chapters provided on eLC:

Bullock, Charles and Ronald Gaddie. 2013. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change* (2nd edition).
ISBN: 9780205864676

Supplementary material may be made available to you via eLC throughout the course.

Graded Evaluation

Quizzes (50%)

There are 6 online quizzes on eLC over the course of the semester. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. The remaining 5 quizzes account for 10% of your final grade each, for a total of 50%. Quizzes must be completed individually, but you are permitted to use your notes and readings. That said, there will be a time limit for the quizzes, with penalties associated with exceeding the limit at my discretion, making preparation and familiarity with material important for success. Quizzes are not cumulative, only covering the content since the last quiz (or beginning of class, in the case of quiz 1). On days when there is a quiz, there will be no class. Quizzes will become available in the morning and will close in the evening, for students' convenience. Thus, discussion of the contents of the quiz until the following day is strictly prohibited. Once an attempt is begun, it must be completed in that sitting. Only one attempt is permitted.

Assignments (45%)

There will be 3 short-to-medium length assignments, due on the 30th of September, October, and November, respectively. Each assignment accounts for 15% of your final grade, for a total of 45%. The assignments will become available earlier in the month they are due, after I address the details in class. At that time, assignment details will also be posted to eLC for your reference throughout the month. The window for submission will remain open until the 30th.

Participation (5%)

There will be multiple points throughout the course where discussions are facilitated during class. Your participation in those discussions is important for your learning, and so will account for the remaining portion (5%) of your final grade.

While I will not keep a dedicated attendance record, chronic absences on days with class discussion will be a liability for your participation grade. Therefore, you should attend class, barring cases of extenuating circumstances.

For the sake of helping me keep up with participation, it is a requirement that you upload a picture of yourself to your eLC profile. Otherwise, you will receive a 0 for your participation grade at the end of the course. This should be completed by the 2nd week of class.

Grading Breakdown and Schedule

Quizzes – 50% (drop lowest quiz grade)

- Quiz 1: Wednesday, September 6th
- Quiz 2: Wednesday, September 20th
- Quiz 3: Wednesday, October 4th
- Quiz 4: Wednesday, October 18th
- Quiz 5: Friday, November 10th
- Quiz 6: Monday, December 4th

Protest Assignment – 15%: Saturday, September 30th

Public Meeting Assignment – 15%: Monday, October 30th

Media Literacy Assignment – 15%: Thursday, November 30th

Participation – 5%

Grading Scale

A = 94-100	C+ = 77-79
A- = 90-93	C = 74-76
B+ = 87-89	C- = 70-73
B = 84-86	D = 60-69
B- = 80-83	F = 0-59

Class Policies and Administrative Items

Make-up Policy

Make-up work will only be available to students who deal with extenuating circumstances preventing them from meeting due dates. Whether a circumstance qualifies under this policy, and whether proof will be required for verification, will be up to my discretion. If able, students should notify me ahead of time of possible conflicts or delaying circumstances.

Communication with Me

Please use your UGA email address to email me, rather than contacting me through eLC. Throughout the course, I will be sending emails to the class through eLC for the sake of convenience. Do not reply to these emails if you have a question or concern, but instead send me an email through your UGA email. I typically respond to emails within a day.

ELC

This course relies heavily on eLC, so students should get acquainted with using it, if they are not already (<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>). Quizzes and assignments will both be facilitated on the course eLC page, and it will be the only place where students can keep track of their grades as the course progresses.

Disability Accommodations

Neither physical nor cognitive abled-ness should factor into your success in this course. If you plan to request classroom or assignment/quiz accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, by calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>.

Academic Honesty

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. You are responsible for knowing these policies and what constitutes academic dishonesty. The consequences for cheating, plagiarism, etc. are severe, and I am obligated to report any incidents of violations. Failing the class would be the least of your worries.

AI

Use of artificial intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT) or word mixing software on assignments or quizzes is considered unauthorized assistance (cheating) in this course. Suspected unauthorized assistance, or other violations of UGA's "A Culture of Honesty," will be reported to the Office of

Academic Honesty. *Don't use AI as a crutch.* It does not constitute legitimate learning in this course environment.

Students will be expected to provide timely responses to emails from me requesting explanations for answers or parts of assignments that are suspicious for AI utilization.

Syllabus Policy

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Notice will be provided in advance if changes become necessary.

Drop/Add and Withdrawal Policy

Students can drop the class without penalty anytime during the drop/add period at the start of semester. After that, students may withdraw from class through the withdrawal process prior to the withdrawal deadline. Instructors also can withdraw a student for excessive absences. The full policy for withdrawal can be found at <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/policies/withdrawals/>

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.

Peer Tutoring

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 www.dae.uga.edu.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1: August 13 – 19

Wednesday, August 16th

- Introduction/syllabus

Friday, August 18th

- Why are politics and government necessary? (*Logic* chapter 1)

Week 2: August 20 – 26

Upload a profile picture (a headshot of yourself) to your eLC profile by the end of this week.

Monday, August 21st

- Constitution, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 2)

Wednesday, August 23rd

- Constitution, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 2)

Friday, August 18th

- Constitution, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 2)

Week 3: August 27 – September 2

Monday, August 28th

- Federalism, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 3)
- *Georgia Politics* Chapter 4 – The Georgia Constitution

Wednesday, August 30th

- Federalism, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 3)

Friday, September 1st

- Federalism, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 3)

Week 4: September 3 - 9

Monday, September 4th – Labor Day: **No class**

Wednesday, September 6th

- **Quiz 1** on eLC

Friday, September 8th

- Civil Rights, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 4)
- Protest Assignment introduction

Week 5: September 10 - 16

Monday, September 11th

- Civil Rights, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 4)

Wednesday, September 13th

- Civil Rights, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 4)

Friday, September 15th

- Civil Liberties, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 5)

Week 6: September 17 - 23

Monday, September 18th

- Civil Liberties, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 5)

Wednesday, September 20th

- **Quiz 2** on eLC

Friday, September 22nd

- Congress, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 6)

Week 7: September 24 - 30

Monday, September 25th

- Congress, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 6)

Wednesday, September 27th

- Congress, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 6)
- *Georgia Politics* chapter 5

Friday, September 29th

- The Presidency, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 7)

Saturday, September 30th

- **Protest Assignment Due** on eLC @ 11:59 PM

Week 8: October 1 - 7

Monday, October 2nd

- The Presidency, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 7)
- *Georgia Politics* chapter 6

Wednesday, October 4th

- **Quiz 3** on eLC

Friday, October 6th

- The Bureaucracy, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 8)
- Public Meeting Assignment introduction

Week 9: October 8 - 14

Monday, October 9th

- The Bureaucracy, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 8)

Wednesday, October 11th

- The Judiciary, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 9)

Friday, October 13th

- The Judiciary, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 9)

Week 9: October 15 - 21

Monday, October 16th

- The Judiciary, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 9)
- *Georgia Politics* chapter 7

Wednesday, October 18th

- **Quiz 4** on eLC

Friday, October 20th

- Public Opinion, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 10)

Week 10: October 22 - 28

Monday, October 23rd

- Public Opinion, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 10)
- Withdrawal deadline

Wednesday, October 25th

- Media, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 14)

Friday, October 27th

- **Fall Break – No class**

Week 11: October 29 – November 4

Monday, October 30th

- Media, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 14)
- **Public Meeting Project Due** on eLC @ 11:59pm

Wednesday, November 1st

- Media, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 14)
- Media Literacy Assignment introduction

Friday, November 3rd

- Voting, Campaigns, & Elections, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 11)

Week 12: November 5 – November 11

Monday, November 6th

- Voting, Campaigns, & Elections, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 11)

Wednesday, November 8th

- Voting, Campaigns, & Elections, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 11)

Friday, November 10th

- **Quiz 5** on eLC

Week 13: November 12 – November 18

Monday, November 13th

- Political Parties, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 12)

Wednesday, November 15th

- Political Parties, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 12)

Friday, November 17th

- Political Parties, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 12)

Week 14: November 19 – November 25

Monday, November 20th

- TBD/Media project workday

Wednesday, November 22nd – 24th

- **Thanksgiving Break – No class**

Week 15: November 26 – December 2

Monday, November 27th

- Interest Groups, part 1 (*Logic* chapter 13)

Wednesday, November 29th

- Interest Groups, part 2 (*Logic* chapter 13)

Thursday, November 30th

- **Media Literacy Assignment Due** on eLC @ 11:59pm

Friday, December 1st

- Interest Groups, part 3 (*Logic* chapter 13)
- Class Conclusion

Week 16: December 3 – 9

Monday, December 4th

- **Quiz 6** on eLC

Good luck on finals and have a great Winter break!