**POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government**

University of Georgia

Spring 2024

Instructor: Office meeting times:

Dr. Brittany Bramlett[[1]](#footnote-1) Before/after class

bbram@uga.edu Or by appointment

Teaching assistant (TA):

Karson Pennington

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Class meets:

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00am to 9:15am, Jackson St Bldg 0125

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

Course texts

Recommended by not required:

*American Government: Roots and Reform* (2022 Midterm, 14th Edition), Karen O’Connor & Larry J. Sabato (**older versions are fine!)**

Referenced but not required:

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

Other assigned readings will be made available to you via E-Learning Commons (<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>)

Assignments and grading

**Short online quizzes (6 quizzes, 12% each, lowest grade dropped, 60% total)**

There will be 6 quizzes with the lowest quiz score 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 8:00am and 9:15am. Once beginning the quiz, students will have 30 minutes to complete it. Anything from the eLC modules 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 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.

**Civic engagement work (2 public meeting reports, 15% each, 30% total)**

Students have the chance to practice being civically engaged in an intentional way and to document their experiences.

Each student will choose a municipality/county for which to virtually attend two local public meetings (council and/or commission meetings are usually pretty informative, but there are all kinds of public recorded meetings on city/county websites). Students will complete a report for each meeting, detailing what happened in the meeting, providing some analysis, and reflecting on their own engagement.

**Civic engagement reflection paper (10%)**

Reflection is a critical component of active and engaged-learning. Students will be asked to reflect on their civic engagement work individually, with a final paper assignment.

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](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*](https://proxy.qualtrics.com/proxy/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fdae.uga.edu%2Fservices%2Ftutoring%2F&token=xDlOlpHDRBA5S7WIR1h3J2wZDFpc4Oj5oReZHWxCoUc%3D) 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.**

Tuesday, January 9

* Welcome!

Thursday, January 11

* *Roots & Reform* 1 (Introduction)
* Class discussion (engagement & knowledge)

**Week 2.**

Tuesday, January 16

* *Roots & Reform* 2 (The Constitution), *Georgia Politics* 4

Thursday, January 18

* *Roots & Reform* 2 (The Constitution), *Georgia Politics* 4
* Civic engagement projects introduction
* Practice quiz

**Week 3.**

Tuesday, January 23

* *Roots & Reform* 12 (Voting & participation)
* Class discussion (voting)

Thursday, January 25

* Quiz 1 via eLC at 8am
* Public meeting workshop

**Week 4.**

Tuesday, January 30

* *Roots & Reform* 3 (Federalism)
* Class discussion (federalism & voting)

Thursday, February 1

* *Roots & Reform* 4 (Civil liberties & civil rights)

**Week 5.**

Tuesday, February 6

* *Roots & Reform* 4 (Civil liberties & civil rights)
* Class discussion (rights & voting)

Thursday, February 8

* Quiz 2 via eLC at 8am
* Public meeting report 1 due by midnight

**Week 6.**

Tuesday, February 13

* *Roots & Reform* 6 (Congress)
* Class discussion (public meeting reflection)

Thursday, February 15

* *Roots & Reform* 6 (Congress), *Georgia Politics* 5
* Class discussion (Congress & voting)

**Week 7.**

Tuesday, February 20

* *Roots & Reform* 7 (Presidency)

Thursday, February 22

* *Roots & Reform* 7 (Presidency), *Georgia Politics* 6
* Class discussion (presidency & voting)

**Week 8.**

Tuesday, February 27

* Quiz 3 via eLC at 8am
* Public meeting workshop

Thursday, February 29 (middle of the term)

* Public meeting report 2 due by midnight

**Spring break (March 4 – 8)**

**Week 9.**

Tuesday, March 12

* *Roots & Reform* 8 (Bureaucracy)
* Class discussion (Bureaucracy & voting)

Thursday, March 14

* *Roots & Reform* 9 (Judiciary)

**Week 10.**

Tuesday, March 19

* *Roots & Reform* 9 (Judiciary), *Georgia Politics* 7
* Class discussion (Courts & voting)

Thursday, March 21 **(Withdrawal deadline: March 21)**

* Quiz 4 via eLC at 8am
* Public meeting workshop

**Week 11.**

Tuesday, March 26

* *Roots & Reform* 11 (Parties)
* Class discussion (parties & voting)

Thursday, March 28

* *Roots & Reform* 15 (Interest groups)

**Week 12.**

Tuesday, April 2

* *Roots & Reform* 14 (Media)
* Class discussion (Media literacy & voting)

Thursday, April 4

* Quiz 5 via elc at 8am
* Public meeting report 3 due by midnight

**Week 13.**

Tuesday, April 9

* *Roots & Reform* 10 (Public opinion)
* Class discussion (public opinion & voting)

Thursday, April 11

* *Roots & Reform* 12 & 13 (Campaigns & elections)

**Week 14.**

Tuesday, April 16

* *Roots & Reform* 12 & 13 (Campaigns & elections)
* Class discussion (Campaigns & elections & voting)

Thursday, April 18

* *Roots & Reform* 10 (Political socialization)
* Class discussion (political socialization)

**Week 15.**

Tuesday, April 23

* Quiz 6 via eLC at 8am

Thursday, April 25

* Complete course evaluation
* Submit civic engagement reflection paper
* Class wrap up

**Finals week (May 1 – 7)**

**List of Due Dates**

Quiz 1 – Thursday, January 25

Quiz 2 – Thursday, February 8

Quiz 3 – Tuesday, February 27

Quiz 4 – Thursday, March 21

Quiz 5 – Thursday, April 4

Quiz 6 – Tuesday, April 23

Public meeting report 1 – Thursday, February 8

Public meeting report 2 – Thursday, February 29

Public meeting report 3 – Thursday, April 4

Civic engagement reflection paper – Thursday, April 25

1. Dates and assignments are subject to change by the professor. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)