

POLS 1101H: American Government, Honors Spring 2024

Instructor

Dr. Michael S. Lynch
Office: Baldwin Hall 416
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Office Hours: Mondays
1:30 PM-3:00 PM and by appointment

Class Schedule

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
9:10 AM-10:00 AM
Baldwin Hall 104

Course Description

This course is an introduction to American politics and government. We will explore the origins, development, and functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. An introduction to Georgia politics will also be provided. Whenever possible, we will use historical or current political issues and events to better explain the functions of government. Using a combination in-person lectures, in-person breakout sessions, and adaptive learning software, the course seeks to give students a better understanding and appreciation of the American political process.

Required Book

The following books are required and should be available at the campus bookstore:

Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. 2022. *American Politics Today*, 8th Essentials Edition, W.W. Norton and Company.

An Ebook version of this text is available at: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/amerpoltoday8ess>. Links to the Ebook and supporting materials are also available on the course's eLC page: <https://uga.view.usg.edu/d2l/home/3069614>.

We will also make use of *American Politics Today's* InQuizitive software as a graded part of the course. InQuizitive is an adaptive quizzing tool that will help students work through the concepts presented in each chapter of the textbook. You will need access to InQuizitive. You can purchase an Ebook from the publisher that includes access to InQuizitive. New copies of the textbook will be available from the campus bookstore and new copies will include an access code that allows students to access InQuizitive. If you purchase a used textbook, you will need to purchase access to InQuizitive separately.

In addition to the book and InQuizitive software, reading the news on a daily basis will be important for this course. The [New York Times](#) and the [Washington Post](#) are two excellent sources of news on politics and government. There are many other great sources of political news.

There will be additional readings assigned for the some of the weeks of the course. Some of these appear on the course syllabus now, and some will be assigned as the semester progresses. All of these readings will be provided to students via eLC.

Course Grading

Your grade in this class will be assigned according to the following:

1. **Class attendance and participation** (15% of final grade): I expect you to attend class daily (i.e. excessive absences, regardless of your performance on exams, will result in a lowering of your final grade). If you know for sure that you will be missing class, I ask that you please email me in advance and notify me. Class periods will be part lecture and part discussion. You should be prepared to discuss the reading for the day with your classmates. Additional short readings or articles may be assigned.
2. **Quizzes** (15% of final grade): Students are required to complete online quizzes as part of their course grade. There will be a quiz to complete for each of the assigned textbook chapters using the InQuizitive system. These quizzes are adaptive and should help students both understand the course materials and prepare for exams. Additional information about InQuizitive can be found on the course's eLC page, which can be accessed at <https://uga.view.usg.edu/d2l/home/3069614>.
3. **Writing and Special Assignments** (30% of final grade): There are four assignments scheduled for this class. Assignments will require you to write short (two to four pages) papers about a specific example of a topic discussed in class. Assignments turned in late will be penalized 10% for each day they are late.
4. **Mid-Semester Exam** (20% of final grade): Please take note of the date for the exam and mark it on your calendar now.
5. **Final Exam** (20% of final grade): Please take note of the date for the final exam and mark it on your calendar now.

Missed exams will only be excused in the most extraordinary circumstances (death in the family, documented illnesses, acts of God, etc.) If you are excused from an exam, I reserve the right to alter the format and substance of the makeup exam (e.g. you may not get the same exam as everyone else).

Course grades will be assigned as follows: 93–100% = A, 90–93% = A-, 87–90% = B+, 83–87% = B, 80–83% = B-, 77–80% = C+, 73–77% = C, 70–73% = C-, 60–70% = D, 0–60% = F.

Other Issues (in no particular order)

1. **Disabilities:** Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to tell me at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made. If

you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>.

2. **Instructor Availability:** I am available to meet with students by appointment if anyone cannot attend my posted office hours. Please email me to schedule a meeting.
3. **Classroom Behavior:** Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Disruptive behavior in discussion sections will not be tolerated. Laptops and other electronic may be used to take notes in class, but not in a way that is disruptive to other students.

UGA is committed to creating a dynamic, diverse, and welcoming learning environment for all students and has a [non-discrimination policy](#) that reflects this philosophy. Our class will respect all students regardless of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.

4. **Cheating and Plagiarism:** All course work must meet the standards put forth in the University of Georgia's [Student Honor Code](#). See the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) for details on what is expected of you.
5. **FERPA Notice:** The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar's explanation at <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/>.
6. **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](#) 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.

7. **Artificial Intelligence-Based Software:** Artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, must not be used to generate responses for course assignments.

Tentative Schedule

INTRODUCTION / COURSE OVERVIEW

JANUARY 8

WHY GOVERNMENT?

JANUARY 10, 17, AND 19

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 1.

Axelrod, Robert M. 1984. *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Chapters 1 and 4.

Hardin, Garrett. 1968. [“The Tragedy of the Commons.”](#) *Science*. 162: 1243-1248.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE FOUNDING

JANUARY 22, 24, AND 26

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 2.

U.S. Constitution

Dougherty, Keith L. and Jac C. Heckelman. 2006. [“A Pivotal Voter from a Pivotal State: Roger Sherman at the Constitutional Convention.”](#) *American Political Science Review* 100(2): 297-302.

FEDERALISM

JANUARY 29, FEBRUARY 2, AND 5

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 3.

Congressional Research Service 2022. [“The Evolution of Marijuana as a Controlled Substance and the Federal-State Policy Gap.”](#) *Congressional Research Service*.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

FEBRUARY 7, 9, 12, AND 14

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapters 4 and 5.

Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapters 6 and 8.

[Gratz v. Bollinger](#), 539 U.S. 244 (2003).

Frederick, Susan. 2023. [“Supreme Court to Decide a Variety of Gun Cases This Term”](#) *National Conference of State Legislatures*. Nov. 16.

Hartocollis, Anemona. 2023. [“After the Affirmative Action Ruling, Asian Americans Ask What Happens Next.”](#) *New York Times*. July 8.

Assignment #1 Due.

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE MEDIA

FEBRUARY 16 AND 19

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 6.

Gallup, George. 2008. “Polling the Public.”

Groseclose, Tim and Jeffery Milyo. 2005. [“A Measure of Media Bias.”](#) *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

POLITICAL PARTIES

FEBRUARY 21 AND 23

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 7.

Gelman, Andrew. 2010. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*, Chapter 8.

Assignment #2 Due

ELECTIONS AND REVIEW

FEBRUARY 26

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 8.

MIDTERM EXAM

FEBRUARY 28

SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS

MARCH 4–8

FEDERAL AND STATE ELECTIONS

MARCH 11, 13, 15, AND 18

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 8.

Abramowitz, Alan I. 2008. “[Forecasting the 2008 Presidential Election with the Time-for-Change Model](#).” *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 41(4):691-695

Abramowitz, Alan I. 2016. “[Will Time for Change Mean Time for Trump](#)” *Ps:Political Science and Politics* 49(4):659-660.

Achen, Christopher H. and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*, Chapter .5

INTEREST GROUPS

MARCH 18 AND 20

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 9.

Burstein, Paul. 2009. “Is Congress Really for Sale.”

Assignment #3 Due

U.S. CONGRESS AND GEORGIA LEGISLATURE

MARCH 22, 25, AND 27

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 10.

Strom, Gerald. *The Logic of Lawmaking*, excerpts.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chapters 1 and 2.

U.S. PRESIDENT AND GEORGIA GOVERNOR

MARCH 29, APRIL 1, AND 3

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 11.

Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*, Chapters 3.

Assignment #4 Due

GEORGIA GOVERNMENT MODULE

APRIL 5

FEDERAL AND STATE BUREAUCRACIES

APRIL 8, 10, AND 12

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 12.

Lewis, Michael. 2018 *The Fifth Risk*. Chapter 1.

FEDERAL AND STATE COURTS

APRIL 15, 17 AND 19

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 13.

Scalia, Antonin. 2009. "Common-Law Courts in a Civil-Law System: The Role of United States Federal Courts in Interpreting the Constitution and Laws."

Breyer, Stephen. 2009. "Our Democratic Constitution."

PUBLIC POLICY

APRIL 22, 24, AND 26

American Politics Today, 8th ed., Chapter 16 and 17.

Budget Balancing Exercise

CATCHUP AND REVIEW

APRIL 29

FINAL EXAM

MAY 6 (8:00–11:00 AM)