



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

School of Public and International Affairs
Department of Political Science

POLS 1101: Introduction to American Government Spring 2023

MWF 8:00 – 8:50am

Room: Baldwin 102

Instructor: Dr. John Newton

Contact: jmnewton@uga.edu

Office Hour: After Class and by appointment

Course Description and Objective

This course will cover the fundamental elements of government. This includes elements of history, philosophy, and structure of the United States government and the government of Georgia. The objective is that you will leave the class with a better understanding of our system of government along with the ability to think critically about how it functions.

Text

American Government: Power and Purpose 17th Edition by Lowi, Ginsberg, Shepsle, Ansolabehere, and Han (ISBN: 978-0-393-88888-1). Please be careful to purchase the correct book as there are online assignments that will be part of your grade. You should be able to purchase access to the textbook and the online resources from the link in ELC. If you purchase a hard copy, make sure it has a valid registration code.

Grading Breakdown by Percentage:

Quizzes: 25%

InQuizitive Questions: 25%

Project: 15%

Final: 25%

Letter: 5%

Public Forum: 5%

Timeplot Exercises: Bonus

Class Participation: +/-

Students who text, use Facebook, or otherwise disrupt the class will receive a reduction in their overall grade. If a student is disrupting the class through the use of electronics, the student will be asked to leave and may be withdrawn from the class. No electronic devices may be used when we have a guest speaker.

Grading Scale:

A = 94-100

A - = 90-93

B+ = 86-89

B = 83-85

B- = 80-82

C+ = 76-79

C = 73-75

C- = 70-72

D+ = 66-69

D = 63-65

D- = 60-62

F = 0-59

Important Class Dates

First Day of Class: Monday, January 8, 2024

Drop and Add Deadline: Friday, January 12, 2024

MLK Day: January 15, 2024 – No Class

Withdrawal Deadline: March 21, 2024

Spring Break: March 4-8, 2024

Last Day of Class: Monday, April 29, 2024

Final Exam: Friday, May 3, 2024 – 8am

Syllabus Policy

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary. It can be difficult to project how long sections will take to cover. Other situations may indicate the need for changes in the assignments, so please pay attention in class. If you have questions, please ask.

Late Work

Assignments turned in late will be assigned a ten point per day penalty for each day that an assignment is late (including weekends). Assignments turned in after the deadline but on the day it is due will be given a partial penalty determined by the instructor.

Honor Code

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

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 <https://ovpi.uga.edu>.

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/>

Withdrawal Policy

UGA's withdrawal policy can be found at <http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals>.

Attendance Policy

UGA's attendance policy can be found at <https://provost.uga.edu/policies/academic-affairs-policy-manual/4-06-class-attendance>.

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.

Artificial Intelligence Software

Unless explicitly stated, artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, must not be used to generate responses for student assignments. You may not use artificial intelligence resources for your project this semester.

Preferred Name and Pronouns

Please let me know how you would like me to refer to you and/or what to call you. I'm happy to oblige to your preference of name and pronouns. My pronouns are he, him, his. As a student in this class, it is most appropriate to refer to me as Dr. Newton.

Email/Contact Etiquette

I want to help you succeed and achieve greatness. UGA students are enormously capable, and I am constantly impressed with what you all accomplish. However, I don't know you and my impression of you is based on our interactions and how you communicate with me. For that reason, it is a good idea to be respectful in our communications. Here are my suggestions:

- Please email me from your UGA email address. This helps me know who you are and connect you with this class.
- Please do not email me through ELC. I have missed those emails in the past and I am afraid I might not see your email. It is best to email me from your UGA email account.
- Please understand that I may post your email and my response on ELC. I started this practice because many students have similar questions. I don't post every email on ELC, because the email may not pertain to class questions. If you email me questions about tests, what we are supposed to be reading, about concepts or anything we are learning – I may post your question and my reply to benefit others in the class.
- It is best to be respectful of everyone. You never know when that may come in handy for a recommendation, a suggestion, or something else. Talk to other people in the class (and in all your classes). Take a moment to say something nice to someone and be supportive of each other. We are stronger together.

UGA Well-Being and Involvement

UGA has a number of resources to assist you. I encourage you to take a moment to visit <https://well-being.uga.edu> to familiarize yourself with what is available. A few to highlight:

- Student Care and Outreach – you have questions and they have answers. They are the hub to connect you to the resources you need. Sco@uga.edu or 706-542-7774.
- UGA Health Center – <https://healthcenter.uga.edu> - physical and mental health. They even have healthy cooking classes.
- Rec Sports – <https://recsports.uga.edu> - stay healthy and have fun. I encourage you to maintain a fitness routine as this is great for physical and mental health. Also – if you go on an outdoor trip, I would love to hear about it so I can live vicariously through you.
- Georgia Museum of Art – not part of the well-being initiative, but you should visit. Take a break and walk around. It is free, on campus, and a great place to spend some time. <https://georgiamuseum.org>.
- UGA Involvement Network – <https://uga.campuslabs.com/engage>

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency in class we will take the following actions. If there is a tornado warning we will proceed to the lowest floor in the building for shelter. If there is a fire we will quickly exit the building. The class will reconvene in the walkway behind the cemetery next to Baldwin Hall in an attempt to make sure everyone exited the building. If there is a medical emergency, I will ask students to flag down the emergency vehicles outside the building and lead them to our room. As needed, I may ask a student to get the nearest AED which is outside room 101D. Students are encouraged to make sure their information in UGA Alert is accurate and to download the UGA Safe app.

Exam/Assignment make-ups

Makeup exams will not be offered unless previously scheduled because of extenuating circumstances or in the event of a verifiable emergency. Similarly, the due dates for assignments such as papers are not

negotiable unless a true emergency warrants further consideration. Turning in a late paper will significantly reduce the grade.

Class Project:

You will be required to complete a project this semester. Please ask if you have questions.

The project will be to choose a topic from the topics provided and produce some type of work (see the types of work) that could persuade an audience to favor one side over the other. In other words you are creating a persuasive work based on the topic and side of the topic you choose.

This should be your original work. Downloading a presentation by someone else, photos by someone else, artwork by someone else, etc does not count. If you are unsure, please ask! Submit your project in the assignments section on ELC.

Type of work:

Narrated PowerPoint (narrated by you in your voice). Limit of 7 minutes.

- This is probably what I would do because I am a very linear thinker. You are basically recording yourself doing a presentation. Microsoft has support articles on how to do this and Microsoft Office 365 is free for you as a UGA student.

Podcast in your voice (limit of 7 minutes)

- This can be by you alone or you can work with classmates.

Video with you in it (limit of 7 minutes)

- This could be you alone or a debate with classmates.

Art work with a written explanation

- Think of something like Francisco Goya's *The Third of May, 1808* or something by Jacques-Louis David. You must provide me with a written explanation.

Song with a written explanation

- Protest songs are numerous. Almost all songs have some sort of meaning or purpose. If there are enough people in the class to form a band this could count for the entire group that performs the song.

Photo or series of photos with a written explanation

- There are so many famous photos that caused change. This could be photos of people not able to vote, photos of weddings, photos of religious events, etc. This should be photos that you take not photos that you collect off of the internet.

Something else that I did not think of with approval.

Be creative in your type of work. You cannot write an essay or research paper. Choose a form of expression and make an argument for the side you want.

Topics:

A wedding photographer should be able to refuse service for same sex and/or interracial couples based on religious beliefs.

The Georgia state government should reinstate literacy as a requirement for voting. Voters must pass a literacy test before being able to vote.

The death penalty should be abolished because it is unfairly used against minority groups.

Companies like Facebook, Google, X, YouTube, TikTok and others should not be able to discriminate or limit users content based on political views, hate speech, or obscenity. These are public forums and limiting speech violates our value of free speech.

The University of Georgia should offer automatic admission to any Georgia student that finishes in the top three percent of his/her graduating high school class.

The University of Georgia should eliminate the Office of Institutional Diversity.

The state of Georgia should use an independent committees to determine the boundaries of voting districts to avoid gerrymandering similar to what is used in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Montana, New York, and Washington.

Georgia should repeal SB 202 known as the Election Integrity act of 2021. This bill removed 24/7 voting drop boxes, eliminated mobile voting units, and decreased the availability of absentee ballots. [You can argue for any changes to Georgia voting laws – increase the available voting hours, increase or decrease voter ID laws, increase voter security, etc]. For criticism of Georgia see <https://dpo.org/party/resolutions/2021-resolutions/resolution-2021-06-regarding-georgias-voter-suppression-law/>.

UGA students should be allowed to carry guns of any type in the dorms, at sporting events, and any places on campus where students are legally allowed to be.

Political Science 1101, Introduction to American Government, should not be a mandatory class at UGA.

Businesses in Georgia must limit the pay of their highest paid employees to no more than 100 times the pay of the lowest full-time employee of that company.

The federal government should adopt a flat tax. [You can advocate for any taxation change you might want].

Georgia should adopt a minimum wage of \$15/hour. This minimum wage should be adjusted for inflation each year.

The federal government should eliminate the Department of Education. This is primarily a state government function. This would decrease the size of government and save tax payer money.

The Electoral College should be eliminated. The President of the United States should be elected based on popular vote.

The most pressing issue facing the federal government is the national deficit. Entitlement programs such as social security, Medicare and Medicaid should be limited and greatly reduced in order to decrease the deficit.

Public Forum

Students are required to attend a public forum either in person or virtually. The purpose of this is for the students to experience civic engagement.

Each student will choose a public forum to attend. This should be a local or state government forum. Examples of this are local commission meetings, local planning meetings, police oversight meetings, local budget meetings, etc. Students can chose to attend any local or state forum in any jurisdiction. All commission meetings for Athens-Clarke County are streamed live. For more information go to <https://www.accgov.com/176/Mayor-Commission-Meetings>.

To get credit for attending a meeting, students will answer questions using the a form link posted on ELC. The form will ask questions such as the date/time/location of the forum, a significant issue discussed at the forum, the different sides of the issue, etc. To get full credit for this assignment, students need to be able to explain an issue discussed during the forum and explain the different sides of the issue demonstrating an understanding of the issue.

To get credit you must fill out the survey prior to 5:00pm on 4/19/2024. To fill out the survey, go to <https://forms.office.com/r/KD1v6kH9je>. The link is also on ELC.

Write Your Public Official

You must write a letter to a member of the Georgia Legislature. You do not have to send the letter. You may write about any issue. In the letter you should advocate for your public official to take a position on some issue that is within their authority and related to their elected position. The public official must be a member of the Georgia Legislature. The public official must to be someone for whom you are a constituent. Letter should be submitted on ELC.

You can find your legislator at <https://pluralpolicy.com/find-your-legislator/> and <https://georgia.gov/who-represents-you>.

Quizzes and Final Exam

There will be a short quiz available on ELC after every third chapter. This will be a multiple choice quiz that you take on ELC. For these quizzes you can use any resource other than another human. I will open the quiz after we finish covering the material and provide you at least two days to complete the quiz.

The final exam will be a multiple choice exam on ELC and you can use any resource other than a human for the final exam. I'll make the final available for several days including the May 3 which is our scheduled day for the final exam.

InQuizative Questions

These are provided by your textbook. A link to them is on ELC. Complete the InQuizative questions for each chapter. Note the due for all InQuizative questions is April 29, 2024.

Question Submissions for Extra Credit

You may submit one question on ELC for each chapter in the book and one for material coverening Georgia. Please see ELC for the specifics. This is extra credit and not required. Questions should be submitted in the discussion section on ELC under the appropriate chapter/section.

Timeplot Exercises for Extra Credit

These are also provided by the textbook. These questions involve interpreting data from a provided graph or similar item. These are for extra credit and are not required. Please note, that to get the extra credit, you much do all of the Timeplot exercises and then give me feedback on what you thought of them. You will not receive any credit if you do not complete all of the timeplot exercise AND fill out the survey. You can find the Survey at <https://forms.office.com/r/AivWF2ruip>. The exercises and survey must be completed before April 30, 2024.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (starting January 8)

Topic: Five Principles of Politics

Readings: Chapter 1

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 1

Week 2 (starting January 15) ** No Class on January 15 **

Topic: Constructing a Government: The Founding and the Constitution

Readings: Chapter 2, The Georgia Constitution section on ELC

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 2

Week 3 (starting January 22)

Topic: Federalism and the Separation of Powers

Readings: Chapter 3

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 3

Week 4 (starting January 29)

Topic: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Readings: Chapters 4 and 5

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapters 4 and 5

Week 5 (starting February 5)

Topic: Congress: The First Branch

Readings: Chapter 6, The Georgia Legislature on ELC

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 6

Week 6 (starting February 12)

Topic: The Presidency and The Executive Branch

Readings: Chapters 7 and 8, The Georgia Executive Branch on ELC

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapters 7 and 8

Week 7 (starting February 19)

Topic: The Federal Courts

Readings: Chapter 9, The Georgia Judicial Branch on ELC

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 9

Week 8 (starting February 26)

Topic: Public Opinion

Readings: Chapter 10

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 10

Week 10 (starting March 11)

Topic: Elections

Readings: Chapter 11

Do the InQuizitive questions for chapter 11

Week 11 (starting March 18)

Topic: Political Parties

Readings: Chapter 12

Do the InQuizative questions for chapter 12

Week 12 (starting March 25)

Topic: Groups and Organized Interest

Readings: Chapter 13

Do the InQuizative questions for chapter 13

Week 13 (starting April 1)

Topic: The Media

Readings: Chapter 14

Do the InQuizative questions for chapter 14

Week 14 (starting April 8)

Topic: Economic Policy

Readings: Chapter 15

Do the InQuizative questions for chapter 15

Week 15 (starting April 15)

Topic: Social Policy

Readings: Chapter 16

Do the InQuizative questions for chapter 16

Week 16 (starting April 22)

Topic: Foreign Policy

Readings: Chapter 17

Do the InQuizative questions for chapter 17

Week 17 (April 29) – Monday Last Day of Class

Final Exam, Wednesday May 3, 2024 – 8:00am to 11:00am