

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

POLS 1101

Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. Katelyn Stauffer
Office: Baldwin Hall 380D

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Course Time: 1:50-2:40pm MWF

Meeting Space: M/W Baldwin 104; F 120 Art Museum

Office Hours: 2:45-4:00pm M/W and appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Understanding politics is an important part of being an American citizen. As we prepare to elect our next President, understanding politics is particularly important. No matter your future career path, politics will shape your life; indeed, politics have already shaped all of our lives! The goal of this class is to provide students with an introduction to the central topics of American politics. After completing this course students should be able to engage in questions about the government such as: How can citizens interact with political actors? How do we convey our interests to elected officials? Whose interests are represented? Whose are not? How do political institutions function?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Following completion of this course students should be able to do the following:

- Understand the basic structures and features of American political institutions
- Understand how these features have changed overtime
- Synthesize arguments and produce evidence to support (or refute) empirical claims
- Understand the basic features of American public opinion and political behavior
- Understand how institutional features structure the nature of public opinion/behavior

REQUIRED READINGS

The required text for this course is :

Barbour, Christine, and Gerald C. Wright. *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics (Brief): 10th edition*. ISBN: 9781544393896

Additionally, you will be required to read the following texts (hyperlinked below):

1. [The Declaration of Independence](#)
2. [The U.S. Constitution](#)
3. [Federalist Papers 10, 14, 21, 22, and 51](#)
4. [The Emancipation Proclamation](#)
5. [The Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)
6. [The Georgia State Constitution](#)

The course will also draw upon current events related to politics; as such, it is to your benefit to follow the news and to read a newspaper regularly.

GRADING

Class Participation (10%): Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned materials. Students are expected to critically engage with the material and to discuss how the material relates to current events. **There is no official attendance policy for this class.** If you need to miss class for any reason you are not obligated to inform me. However, if you are facing an issue that requires you to miss many classes you should come talk to me so that we can figure how to keep you up to speed in the course. ***Please do not come to class if you are sick!*** While there is no official attendance policy, please note, **it is impossible to receive a high participation grade if you consistently do not attend class and do not discuss with me how to keep yourself up to date.**

Exams (45%): Students will take four exams during the course. Exams will be evenly spaced out over the semester. The first 3 exams will each be worth 10% of your final grade. Exams will consist of 25 multiple choice questions, and 5 written identification questions. These exams will cover the material presented following the previous exam (i.e. these exams are not cumulative). The 4th exam will be worth 15% of student's final grade and **will include a cumulative component.** This exam will follow the normal format, but will include an additional 5 multiple choice and 3 identification questions from any point in the course.

All exams will be administered online on eLC. You will see designated exam days listed on the course schedule. However, exams will be open after the last class prior to the exam until the date the exam is listed in the course schedule. In other words, dates listed on the course schedule represent the deadline for completing the exam and submitting it. Exams should be submitted by 11:59pm on the dates listed in the syllabus. You are free to complete exams during the window it is available; however, exams must be **completed in a single sitting.** There are no time limits and you are free to take as long as you wish, provided you take the exam in one sitting. Students who prefer to complete the exam during our regular course time are free to use our regular classroom to do so. However, you are not required to attend class on these days if you choose to take the exam from home/elsewhere.

Makeup Policy: If you miss an exam, a make-up must be scheduled to take place **before** the next scheduled exam. Makeup exams will contain *only* identification questions. Students are only allowed to make up one exam and advance notice **MUST** be given to the instructor. Students who fail to complete an exam without advance notice will not be given a makeup exam.

Reading Responses (15%): Students will be asked to write three one-page response papers about a textbook chapter during the semester. Responses should be no more than one page and should address the following: key questions/concepts of the chapter, something that you learned from reading the chapter, questions that you have about the chapter. These could be things that are unclear about the chapter's content, or questions that extend on the material presented in the chapter. It is not acceptable to say "I have no questions." You are free to write about any three chapters covered in class. **Please note however, that responses are due no later than 12:00pm (NOON) on the first day that chapter will be covered in class.** In other words, if you choose to write a response about Congress your response is due at 12:00pm on 10/2. Reading responses should be uploaded to eLC; documents should be labeled following the following format: LASTNAME_chapterXX.

Founding Documents and Current Events Paper (10%): As part of this course's required readings, students will read a series of "Founding Documents" (listed under the required readings). As part of this course you will be required to write a 3-4 page paper discussing a current event related to politics. As part of this assignment, you will pick an event and relate it to one of the founding documents in some way. Students are expected to briefly outline the current event, discuss the significance of the event to American politics, and relate the event to one of the required documents. Students should be sure to cite *multiple* news sources and articles in their discussion of the event. Papers will be due by the end of the day on 12/3.

Politics Through Art, Pop-up Exhibit Curation (20%): Politics takes many forms and there are many ways to communicate political ideas. This semester we will be partnering with the Georgia State Museum of Art to create a "Pop-up" exhibit that will be on display at the museum from Nov. 5 to 7. This will be a collaborative assignment that we will work on as a class. This will include identifying pieces in the museum's collection to include in our pop-up, researching those pieces, and writing up (brief) labels describing the piece for visitors. After the exhibit is completed, you will also write a reflection paper (2-3 pages) about the experience, which will comprise $\frac{1}{4}$ of your grade for this assignment. The remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ will be assigned based on the quality of your engagement and participation with this project. In other words, I am not grading you based on the pieces you select or the themes you choose to emphasize (art is subjective!), but I am grading you based on your level of effort. If you put in a good faith effort and do the work you will do well on this assignment. Reflection papers will be due on 11/22.

Fridays will be designated project days. Unless otherwise noted on these days we will be meeting at the Georgia State Museum of Art (90 Carleton Street) in room 120 (The Educational Resource Center). A few key dates and deadlines for you to be aware of are below:

- **8/16:** First class meeting at museum. Meeting with Callan Steinman, Head of Education & Curator of Academic and Public Programs. During this session we'll learn more about the museum and the process of how an exhibition comes together. This is also a time for you to ask questions about things you'd like to consider or think through as we put together our pop-up. brainstorm themes we might want to emphasize in our pop-up. This will help the museum staff identify pieces that we might be interested.
- **8/23:** Brainstorm themes we might want to emphasize in our pop-up. This will help the museum staff identify pieces that we might be interested in.
- **9/13:** Initial selection of 15 – 20 items for museum staff to pull for in person viewing. Note this is partially an opportunity for us to view interesting pieces in person. You are NOT obligated to include any of these pieces in the final pop-up; this is merely an opportunity for us to see pieces we might consider or see how different pieces might fit together in person.
- **10/11:** Deadline to have final pieces selected and reported to museum staff.
- **11/1:** Deadline for final labels to be sent to museum staff for printing and display
- **11/5 – 11/7:** Our pop-up display will be available for viewing during the Art Museum's regular hours.
- **11/6:** In place of our regular class session we will visit the art museum to see our pop-up

COURSE POLICIES

Grading Scale: The following scale will be used to determine final grades in the course.

- A 93 and above
- A- 90 – 92.9
- B+ 87 – 89.9
- B 83 – 86.9
- B- 80 – 82.9
- C+ 77 – 79.9
- C 73 – 76.9
- C- 70 – 72.9
- D+ 67 – 69.9
- D 63 – 66.9
- D- 60 – 62.9
- F 59.9 and below

Please note that at the end of the semester grades will not be rounded. However, there will be several opportunities for extra credit for students looking for opportunities to boost grades.

Emails: When emailing the instructor please include POLS 1101 in the subject line. Due to the high volume of emails I receive, this helps me to keep track of course related emails. **Emails that fail to include POLS 1101 in the subject line may not receive a response.**

Electronic Devices: Prior to class, please ensure that all electronic devices (phones, tablets, MP3 players, etc.) are turned off or silenced. Students are permitted to use laptops in class, however the instructor reserves the right to change this policy if computers become a distraction/become disruptive. Please remember that using a laptop for purposes other than note taking not only prevents you from fully engaging in the course, but may also distract those around you. Also note that it is difficult to receive a high participation grade if you are browsing the internet rather than engaging with the material.

Tardiness: Please arrive to class on time. Failure to do so is disruptive to your fellow classmates. Consistent tardiness could result in a poor participation grade.

Grade Disputes: If you disagree with a grade you received on an assignment (or have questions about why you received the grade that you did), please see me during office hours. I will not have an extended discussion regarding grades via email. Students wishing to dispute a grade must write a half page response explaining why they believe they deserve a different grade. This response should be emailed to the instructor prior to meeting, and students should also bring a hard copy to the meeting. Please note however, **that I reserve the right to adjust students grades up OR down** upon review.

Class Discussion: Student discussion should be respectful at all times. Since this is a class about politics, there will be many topics on which not everyone in the class will agree. It is important that we engage with each other constructively and that we are open to hearing each other's opinions. Disrespectful behavior (interrupting speakers, personal attacks, aggressive language, etc.) will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Office Hours: I will hold office hours Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:45pm to 4:00pm. If you have questions about the class you should come see me during these times. If you are unable to make office hours, please email me and we can arrange an alternate time. I am also available on email and am happy to answer any questions electronically. I will make every effort to respond to emails before the beginning of the next class period. Please note that discussions about grades must be held in person.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will NOT be accepted. Students who do not submit assignments on time will receive an automatic score of 0. In extenuating circumstances (death in the family, hospitalization, etc.) students may receive a short extension. In order to receive an extension, students must email the instructor **in advance**.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Georgia defines plagiarism as: “Using another’s work as your own without correct citations.” Examples include, but are not limited to:

- I. Directly quoting another’s written or spoken words without quotation marks.
- II. Paraphrasing without attribution.
- III. Presenting someone else’s original idea or theory as your own original work without attribution.
- IV. Using statistics, images, or data without recognizing who compiled them.
- V. Turning in work that another wrote as your own work.
- VI. Self-Plagiarism: Submitting an assignment for credit that has already been submitted, unless the current instructor authorizes its use prior to submission.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and any work that is plagiarized will receive an automatic 0. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism or how to cite a particular source please contact me prior to turning in the assignment.

Cheating on exams will not be tolerated. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, looking at notes during the exam, copying or paraphrasing the answer of a fellow classmate, or relying on any materials/readings during the exam period. If students are caught cheating during any exam they will automatically receive a 0 for that exam.

You are also responsible for being aware of the other obligations/restriction outlined by the University of Georgia’s Academic Honesty Policy. Additional information about the policy can be found here: https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Prohibited_Conduct/.

STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to establish eligibility through the Disability Resource Center. A memo of verification should be obtained from DRC. More information can be found here: <https://drc.uga.edu/>

If you have a disability that requires special arrangements please **register with DRC and inform me within the first week of class**.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

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- 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.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Aug. 14 – Intro to the Course

- Syllabus

Aug. 16 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

- Meeting with Callan Steinmann, Head of Education and Curator of Academic and Public Programs

Aug. 19 – Politics: Who Gets What, and How?

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 1

Aug. 21 – American Citizens and Political Culture

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 1

Aug. 23 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

- Brainstorm themes we might like to explore in our pop-up. These themes will help museum staff narrow down some pieces in the collection for us to review

Aug. 26 – The Politics of the American Founding

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 2
- Declaration of Independence

Aug. 28 – The Politics of the American Founding

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 2
- The Constitution
- Skim the Georgia Constitution

Aug. 30 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Sept. 2 – NO CLASS, LABOR DAY

Sept. 4 – Federalism

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 3

Sept. 6 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Sept. 9 -- Federalism

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 3

Sept. 11 – Catch-up/Review for Exam 1

Sept. 13 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

- Select a preliminary 15 – 20 pieces that we would like to review in person

Sept. 16 – Exam 1

- Exam 1 will be available on eLC beginning on 9/13 and should be completed by 11:59pm on 9/16. You are welcome to use our regular classroom to complete the exam during our regular class time; however, you are not obligated to be in attendance on this day and can take the exam wherever/whenever you like

Sept. 18 – Civil Liberties

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 4

Sept. 20 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Sept. 23 – Civil Liberties

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 4

Sept. 25 – Civil Rights

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 5

Sept. 27 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Sept. 30 – Civil Rights

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 5

Oct. 2 – Congress

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 6

Oct. 4 – Politics Through Art Day, NOTE WE WILL MEET IN OUR USUAL CLASSROOM

Oct. 7 – Congress

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 6

Oct. 9 – The Presidency

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 7

Oct. 11 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

- Deadline for final selection for exhibit

Oct. 14 – Catch-up and Review for Exam 2

Oct. 16 – Exam 2

- Exam 2 will be available on eLC beginning on 10/14 and should be completed by 11:59pm on 10/16. You are welcome to use our regular classroom to complete the exam during our regular class time; however, you are not obligated to be in attendance on this day and can take the exam wherever/whenever you like

Oct. 18 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Oct. 21 – The Bureaucracy

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 8

Oct. 23 – The Bureaucracy/The Courts

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 8
- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 9

Oct. 25 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Oct. 28 – The Courts

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 9

Oct. 30 – Public Opinion

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 10
- **Please make sure labels for pop-up exhibit are submitted to me *prior* to fall break!**

Nov. 1 – NO CLASS, FALL BREAK

Nov. 4 – Public Opinion

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 10

Nov. 6 – Visit Class Pop-Up

- Meet at Art Museum

Nov. 8 – Catch-up and Review for Exam 3

- Since we are visiting the art museum Wednesday to see our pop-up we will conduct our review on Friday during our normal “Politics Through Art” session. We will still meet at the museum.

Nov. 11 – Exam 3

- Exam 3 will be available on eLC beginning on 11/8 and should be completed by 11:59pm on 11/11. You are welcome to use our regular classroom to complete the exam during our regular class time; however, you are not obligated to be in attendance on this day and can take the exam wherever/whenever you like

Nov. 13 – Political Parties

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 11

Nov. 15 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

Nov. 18 – Political Parties

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 11

Nov. 20 – Interest Groups

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 11

Nov. 22 – Politics Through Art Day, Meet at Art Museum

- Pop-up Exhibit Reflections Due

Nov. 25 – NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

Nov. 27 – NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

Nov. 29 – NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

Dec. 2 – The Media

- Barbour and Wright, Chapter 12

Dec. 3 – Wrap up and Review for Exam 4

- Founding Document Reflection Due

Dec. 6 12:00-3:00pm – Exam 4

- Exam 4 will be on eLC and available beginning on 12/3. The time listed here represents our designated exam slot. Unlike other exams please note, submissions must be received by 3:00pm.