

**Course:** POLS 1101H  
**Title:** Introduction to American Government  
**In-person Class Meetings:** MWF, 12:40pm - 1:30pm  
**Location:** Baldwin Hall 302  
**Term:** Spring 2025  
**Professor:** David Cottrell  
**Email:** [david.cottrell@uga.edu](mailto:david.cottrell@uga.edu)  
**Office Hours:** Friday 1:30 – 2:30pm @ Baldwin Hall 380D.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course introduces students to the study of American government. The course will cover a wide range of topics exploring the history and processes that define the American political system. Students will learn about the government's constitutional foundation, its protection of civil rights and liberties, its federal structure, its three branches of government, its political parties, its electoral system and more. Moreover, we will engage with these topics as they apply to Georgia government and the state's constitution. The ultimate goal is for students to gain a useful analytical framework for making sense of the complex world of U.S. politics.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

**TEXTBOOK:** Lowi T, Ginsberg B, Shepsle KA, Ansolabehere S. *American Government: Power and Purpose, Seventeenth Core Edition*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company; 2021.

To purchase online access to the textbook for 180 days, click on the following [link](#). It is \$59.95.

### **ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE:**

The course is organized by weekly modules covering a single topic each week. In the typical week students will do the following:

1. Read the assigned chapter in the textbook and answer the questions within the text before class on Monday.
2. Attend class for lecture and discussion Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
3. Complete the InQuisitive quiz for the assigned chapter before class on Friday.
4. Read the assigned supplementary reading and answer an online response question regarding that reading before class on Friday.

### **EVALUATION:**

**(10%) Weekly Reading Questions** – Each week, we will cover a different chapter in the textbook (see Course Agenda below). Please read the entire chapter prior to the start of the week. As you read, you will encounter a series of “Check Your Understanding” questions embedded within the text of the chapter. You must complete those questions – along with the reading – before noon on the first day of class that begins each week's module. (This is a Monday for every week except the week of 1/20, when it is a

Wednesday.)

- (10%) Weekly InQuizitive Quizzes.** InQuizitive is an interactive quiz tool that assesses reading comprehension using a continuous stream of questions that adapt to your performance. For each question, you will wager some number of points based on the confidence you have in your answer. You gain the wagered points if your answer is correct and lose the wagered points if your answer is incorrect. You must answer at least 20 questions to complete the assignment and get a grade. You can begin the InQuizitive quiz at any time by clicking the link to this assignment on ELC. **You must access the quiz through the ELC link for your grade to show up in the ELC gradebook.** You can refer to the textbook to answer the questions. InQuizitive assignments will be due before the last class of each week's module.
- (20%) Weekly Response Questions** – Every week you will be given supplementary reading material (or a podcast, or a documentary) and asked to answer a critical response question related to the material in ELC. The question will prompt you to think critically about the concepts covered in the supplementary readings. Responses should be multiple paragraphs – about 300 words – and should display a solid grasp of the material covered in the text.
- (10%) Attendance/Participation** – You are expected to attend every class having read the assigned readings and to participate in classroom discussions. Your participation is not only beneficial to you individually, but it also improves the classroom learning environment. Your participation will be graded based on the frequency and quality of your contributions.
- (25%) Midterm (Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>)** – The midterm will be given in class on Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. It will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions on material covered in weeks 1-6. Although it will be an in-person exam, you will have to access the exam online. So you must bring your computer to class.
- (25%) Final (April 30<sup>th</sup>)** – The final will be given during the finals period on Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. The final will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions on the material covered in the weeks after the midterm. Although it will be an in-person exam, you will have to access the exam online. So you must bring your computer to class.

Grade scale:

A	94.0000 and above
A-	93.9999 to 90.0000
B+	87.0000 to 89.9999
B	86.9999 to 83.0000
B-	82.9999 to 80.0000
C+	77.0000 to 79.9999
C	76.9999 to 70.0000
D	65.0000 to 69.9999
F	64.9999 and below

**COURSE AGENDA:**

WK	DAY	DATE	READINGS/PODCASTS
0	M W F	01/06 01/08 (NO CLASS) 01/10 (NO CLASS)	Syllabus
1	M W F	01/13 01/15 01/17	Read CH 1: Five Principles of Politics Radiolab, <a href="#">Tit-For-Tat</a> Hardin, “Tragedy of the Commons.”
2	M W F	01/20 (NO CLASS) 01/22 01/24	CH 2: The Founding and the Constitution <a href="#">The U.S. Constitution</a> Dahl, “How Democratic Is the American Constitution?”
3	M W F	01/27 01/29 01/31	CH 3: Federalism and Separations of Powers Darrell West “ <a href="#">Why Federalism has Become Risky for American Democracy</a> ” Madison, “The Federalist, No. 39”
4	M W F	02/03 02/05 02/07	CH 4: Civil Liberties More Perfect, Viability <a href="#">Part 1</a> and <a href="#">Part 2</a> <i>Roe v. Wade, Dobbs v. Jackson</i>
5	M W F	02/10 02/12 02/14	CH 5: Civil Rights More Perfect, <a href="#">The Imperfect Plaintiffs</a> <i>Lawrence v. Texas, Obergefell v. Hodges</i>
6	M W F	02/17 02/19 02/21	CH 6: Congress <i>Cox and McCubbins, “Setting the Agenda.”</i>
7	M W F	02/24 02/26 02/28	Review Review Midterm
	M W F	03/03 03/05 03/07	SPRING BREAK SPRING BREAK SPRING BREAK
8	M W F	03/10 03/12 03/14	CH 7: The presidency Frontline, <a href="#">Cheney’s Law</a> Cameron, “Bargaining and Presidential Power.”
9	M W F	03/17 03/19 03/21	CH 8: The Executive Branch Bazion & Wines, “ <a href="#">How the Census Bureau Stood Up to Donald Trump’s Meddling.</a> ”

10	M W F	03/24 03/26 03/28	CH 9: Federal Courts Frontline, <a href="#">McConnell, the GOP &amp; the Court</a> Radiolab, <a href="#">The Political Thicket</a>
11	M W F	03/31 04/02 04/04	CH 10: Public Opinion This American Life, " <a href="#">The Elephant in the Room.</a> " Lupia and McCubbins, "The Democratic Dilemma."
12	M W F	04/07 04/09 04/11	CH 11: Elections Frontline, " <a href="#">Democracy on Trial</a> "
13	M W F	04/14 04/16 04/18	CH 12: Political Parties Aldrich. "Why Parties?"
14	M W F	04/21 04/23 04/25	GA Constitution Political Rewind, " <a href="#">The right to be 'let alone': Could Georgia's privacy law be used vs. abortion ban?</a> "
15	M W	04/28 04/30	Review Final (at noon)

### **UGA STUDENT HONOR CODE:**

Please adhere to the university's standards for academic honesty and integrity. Procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at [www.uga.edu/ovpi](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi).

### **PREFERRED NAMES/PRONOUNS**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

### **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.

### **CARE IN USING THIRD-PARTY GRADING SOFTWARE**

Care should be exercised using electronic platforms for grading student assignments, exams, etc. Student information is FERPA-protected. If you are planning to use third-party software/web-based platforms for grading, please consult with EITS Computer Equipment, Software and Services at 706-542-6033 (2-6033 if using a campus landline) to ensure FERPA-protected protocols are followed.

### **CHATGPT**

ChatGPT is a large language model chatbot that uses machine learning algorithms to generate content in response to user prompts. For some instructors, ChatGPT poses challenges for classroom assignments and tests. Under the right conditions, it can also be harnessed as a learning tool. Please see these tips (<https://ctl.uga.edu/resources/documents/ChatGPT-Guidance-for-Instructorsc.pdf>) from the UGA CTL for navigating ChatGPT and other chatbots.