

# POLS 1101E: American Government

University of Georgia, Summer Thru Term 2025

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## Course Description

POLS 1101E: American Government introduces students to American national government. We will explore the origins, development, and functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Whenever possible, we will use historical or current political issues and events to better explain the functions of government. It is organized in a series of numbered modules.

## Technical Requirements

If you are able to access the Internet on a regular basis, you meet the technical requirements for the course. It is important that you have reliable Internet service, particularly as the tests are time sensitive. You also need a reliable laptop or desktop computer. I would not suggest taking tests or quizzes on your phone.

## Instructor Contact

Online office hours via Zoom: Tuesdays during term, 10am - noon EST.  
Email: [bce@uga.edu](mailto:bce@uga.edu).

If you have general questions about course, [Please Post General Questions about Class Here](#) so entire class sees the Q & A.

Please read syllabus, assignment instructions, and FAQ. You'll find answers to most questions.

## Course Learning Objectives:

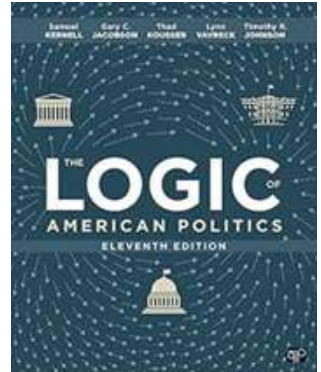
- Understand key terms and concepts related to American government.
- Apply theoretical frameworks to analyze the organization and functioning of American government, its political institutions, and processes.
- Identify historically significant American political events.
- Identify philosophical and constitutional foundations of the U.S. political system and examine primary sources over time.
- Understand key elements of Georgia political history and state government.
- Articulate competing positions on political topics in assignments.
- Critically assess the effects of media and public opinion on political processes.

- Engage in respectful discussion and civil debate on American politics that are associated with multiple points of view.
- Build communication skills and practice professional work habits.

## Required Course Textbook

Samuel Kernell, Gary Jacobson, Thad Kousser, Lynn Vavreck, and Timothy Johnson. *The Logic of American Politics, Eleventh Edition*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, an Imprint of Sage Publications, Inc. 2021). ISBN-13: 978-1071861257, ISBN-10: 1071861255.

**\*\*Make sure you buy the right textbook (see cover image) not similarly titled textbooks for other classes by the same authors or prior editions of this textbook.\*\*** [See on Amazon.](#)



## Primary Sources and Supplemental Readings

In addition to textbook reading assignments, students are required to complete supplemental readings from online sources, watch videos, and read primary sources including: Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Articles of Confederation, Federalist Papers, Gettysburg Address, Emancipation Proclamation, Letter from Birmingham Jail, and the Georgia Constitution.

## Online Learning Environment:

This course is hosted on UGA eLC. If you have any issues at any point, make sure to contact:

- EITS Help Desk: [helpdesk@uga.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uga.edu) or 706.542.3106. Business hours are 8am - 10pm (Mon-Thurs), 8am-6pm (Fri), and 1pm-7pm (Sat-Sun)
- Go the [University System of Georgia Desire2Learn Online Help Center](#). From this site, you can search the Knowledge Base, browse popular articles, or click the link for live support (24x7x365) in the scrolling news area.

## Grading and Assignments

Your grade for this course will be determined by your scores on module quizzes (40% of overall grade), activities and small group discussions (40% of overall grade), and the final exam (20% of overall grade). Your lowest module quiz grade is automatically dropped from your final course grade calculation.

There are no extra credit assignments in this class. Note this now so that you are properly motivated to achieve your grade goal.

You can use your textbook and notes during module quizzes and the final exam. Even though they are open book, given that they are time limited (and they will remain so – only those students with accommodations may seek extended time), you need to be prepared and knowledgeable or you will not be able to complete the test in the time allowed.

| Grade | From % | To % |
|-------|--------|------|
| F     | 00.0   | 59.4 |
| D     | 59.5   | 69.4 |
| C-    | 69.5   | 72.4 |
| C     | 72.5   | 77.4 |
| C+    | 77.5   | 79.4 |
| B-    | 79.5   | 82.4 |
| B     | 82.5   | 87.4 |
| B+    | 87.5   | 89.4 |
| A-    | 89.5   | 92.4 |
| A     | 92.5   | 100  |

## Learning Activities

This course uses a variety of types of content to help you learn the material. In addition to the textbook, you'll have the opportunity to discuss course material with classmates and take practice quizzes. You'll

watch videos and explore some different web sites.

## Course Outline and Assignment Schedule

There are 15 numbered course modules. We will cover two modules per week during this Thru Term.

| Module                               | Opens   | Due     | Textbook Reading |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|------------------|
| 01. The Logic of American Politics   | June 5  | June 8  | Chapter 1        |
| 02. The U.S. Constitution            | June 9  | June 12 | Chapter 2        |
| 03. Federalism                       | June 9  | June 15 | Chapter 3        |
| 04. Civil Rights                     | June 16 | June 19 | Chapter 4        |
| 05. Civil Liberties                  | June 16 | June 22 | Chapter 5        |
| 06. Congress                         | June 23 | June 26 | Chapter 6        |
| 07. Presidency                       | June 23 | June 29 | Chapter 7        |
| 08. Federal Bureaucracy              | June 30 | July 3  | Chapter 8        |
| 09. Federal Judiciary                | June 30 | July 6  | Chapter 9        |
| 10. Public Opinion                   | July 7  | July 10 | Chapter 10       |
| 11. Voting, Campaigns, and Elections | July 7  | July 13 | Chapter 11       |
| 12. Political Parties                | July 14 | July 17 | Chapter 12       |
| 13. Interest Groups                  | July 14 | July 20 | Chapter 13       |
| 14. Media and Politics               | July 21 | July 24 | Chapter 14       |
| 15. Public Policy                    | July 21 | July 27 | Chapter 15       |
| Final Exam Module/Week               | July 28 | July 30 | All Chapters     |

In addition to module quizzes and the final exam, this course features a series of weekly active learning assignments. For these assignments, you complete activities related to course and discuss your experiences with other students in the class. These activities require you to do some things offline, in the real world, like mailing letters, visiting government buildings, and interviewing people.

| Active Learning Assignment             | Opens   | Post Work | Post Replies |
|--|---------|-----------|--------------|
| Letters to Political Representatives   | June 9  | June 13   | June 14      |
| Revisiting the Rosa Parks Story        | June 16 | June 20   | June 21      |
| Visiting Government Buildings          | June 23 | June 27   | June 28      |
| Applying Federal Sentencing Guidelines | June 30 | July 4    | July 5       |
| Interviewing Non-Voters                | July 7  | July 11   | July 12      |
| Interviewing Partisans                 | July 14 | July 18   | July 19      |
| Making Flyers for Student Activism     | July 21 | July 25   | July 26      |

Course assignments are outlined in more detail on the ELC course site. Be sure to check modules for supplemental course material, like streaming videos, assigned in addition to textbook readings.

## Academic Honesty and Student Conduct

This course follows all policies related to [Academic Honesty](#) and [Student Code of Conduct](#) as outlined by the University of Georgia. All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. For related information on University policy, see A Culture of Honesty at the University of Georgia issued by the Office of the Vice President for Instruction.

I encourage you to study course material with other students and learn together. Your discussion posts, module quizzes, and final exam must, however, be your own work. Telling other students answers to quiz or exam questions is cheating. Copying someone else's writing and posting it as if you wrote it is academic dishonesty. If you're not sure if what you're doing is learning or cheating, please ask for clarification.

## Late Work Policy

Late work will be penalized 10% of the assignment value per day late. For example, if you receive a score of 9 out of 10 on a quiz two days after it was due (i.e., you took a quiz due Sunday on Tuesday instead), your score will be reduced by 2 points (20% of 10 points), so you will receive a 7 out of 10 on that quiz. You will receive no credit for work completed ten or more days after its due date.

I will waive lateness deductions if you submit an assignment late due to one of the following reasons:

- The eLC is not available (major server outages)
- Unforeseeable medical (e.g., emergency room), personal, or family emergency
- Active-duty military responsibilities
- Travel for University events (like UGA sports and tournaments)
- Religious observances

I may ask for documentation. I know things don't always go as planned and try to be reasonable and fair to all students.

Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete.

## Disability Statement

The University of Georgia is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must notify the professor at the beginning of the semester regarding needed accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with University student support services.

## Professionalism Policy

Follow university policy and basic rules of etiquette in all your course interactions. When you participate in small group discussions, please refrain from using offensive language or making personal attacks. You are encouraged to make constructive criticisms and present opposing viewpoints in a respectful and professional manner.

## Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal

reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

## **Copyright**

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only.

## **Agreement**

By taking the course online, you also enjoy the opportunity to fit this course into your own schedule and adapt the course to your learning style. However, the freedom of an online class requires more personal responsibility on your part.

By enrolling in this course, you agree to adhere to these policies linked above and to do your best to be a good, productive, and honest student. You also agree to work with Dr. Edwards to make sure that you have a positive learning experience and a rewarding course outcome and that you will not neglect to stay on top of your work. Nor will you interact with your peers to collaborate on any exams, essays or projects unless they are clearly designated as group projects or work.