

# POLS 2000: Introduction to Political Science

The University of Georgia

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Office:	305E Baldwin Hall
Class Hours:	Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 10:20 OR 11:35am

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## Welcome!

This course is intended to provide students with a basic understanding of political science. Throughout the semester we will examine different topics of political science research as well as different approaches taken towards understanding those topics. The course involves an in-depth analysis of political actors and institutions. Common modes of scientific analysis in political science will be examined with an emphasis on research design, strategic behavior, rational choice theory and basic statistical techniques. A basic understanding of high school math is assumed.

The primary goals of this course are two-fold. First, students should be provided with a conceptual background and toolset that they can use to critically analyze what is written in the newspaper or said in the news today, tomorrow, and in the more distant future. Second, it is expected that upon completion of this course students will be able to both understand and conduct scholarly research.

## 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 [honesty.uga.edu](http://honesty.uga.edu). In this course, this includes the use of AI for any and all writing assignments.

## UGA Well-being Resources

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit [sco.uga.edu](https://sco.uga.edu). Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: [well-being.uga.edu](https://well-being.uga.edu)
- Student Care and Outreach: [sco.uga.edu](https://sco.uga.edu)
- University Health Center: [healthcenter.uga.edu](https://healthcenter.uga.edu)
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: [caps.uga.edu](https://caps.uga.edu) or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: [healthpromotion.uga.edu](https://healthpromotion.uga.edu)
- Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: [drc.uga.edu](https://drc.uga.edu)

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

## The Student Learning Outcomes

Students will be familiar with leading scholarship in political science, including theories and substantive areas of inquiry.

Students will be able to describe how the scientific method is applied to the study of politics.

Students will have been introduced to the empirical tools of social science through political science research applications.

Students will be prepared for upper division courses in political science.

Students will be able to analyze current political phenomena with tools used by political scientists.

Students will be able to understand and critically evaluate existing scholarly research in the discipline.

## Required Readings

- A Novel Approach to Politics 7th Ed. - Douglas Van Belle
- Further Readings will be available on eLC

## Ground rules

You are responsible for being self-motivated, self-directed, active learners. I expect you to comply with university policy and use common sense. You should complete all of the course assignments and participate fully in all of our activities. Speech in the classroom must be civil and respectful.

## How will you be graded?

Table 1: Assignments

Item	Prop. of grade
Pre-semester Alignment Quiz	5%
End of Semester Alignment Quiz	5%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Research Proposal	25%
Attendance	15%

## Grading Scale

The following is the grade scale I will use in this class. Yes, I do round.

Make-up exams will be given only with a university approved excuse.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 8/11

- Wednesday: Getting to Know You
- Friday: No Class

### Week 2 (8/18)

- Monday: How a Bill Becomes a Law - CRS: Introduction to the Legislative Process
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 1
- Friday: Van Belle Chapter 1 (cont)

Table 2: Grade Scale

Item	Prop. of grade
A	[93,100]
A-	[90,92)
B+	[87,89)
B	[83,86)
B-	[80,82)
C+	[77,79)
C	[73,76)
C-	[70,72)
D+	[67,69)
D	[60,66)
F	[0,59)

**Week 3 (8/25)**

- Monday: Van Belle Chapter 2
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 2 (cont.)
- Friday: Guest Lecture - Rep Spencer Frye

**Week 4 (9/1)**

- Monday: No Class - Labor Day
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 3
- Friday: Van Belle Chapter 3 (cont)

**Week 5 (9/8)**

- Monday: Van Belle Chapter 4
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 4 (cont)
- Friday: Van Belle Chapter 5

**Week 6 (9/15)**

- Monday: Guest Lecture - Rep. Houston Gaines
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 5 (cont)
- Friday: Van Belle Chapter 6

**Week 7 (9/22)**

- Monday: Van Belle Chapter 6 (cont)
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 7
- Friday: Van Belle Chapter 7 (cont)

**Week 8 (9/29)**

- Monday: Van Belle Chapter 8
- Wednesday: Van Belle Chapter 8 (cont)
- Friday: Van Belle Chapter 9

**Week 9 (10/6)**

- Monday: Van Belle Chapter 9 (cont)
- Wednesday: Midterm Review
- Friday: Midterm

**Week 10 (10/13)**

- Monday: How to write a research proposal
- Wednesday: Research Theory - No Reading
- Friday: Research Theory - No Reading

**Week 11 (10/20)**

- Monday: Rational Choice Theory - No Reading
- Wednesday: Ideological Scaling - No Reading
- Friday: Building a Measure Activity

**Week 12 (10/27)**

- Monday: Introduction to Statistics - Agresti and Finlay Ch. 3
- Wednesday: OLS - Agresti and Finlay Ch. 9
- Friday: T-Testing - TBD

**Week 13 (11/3)**

- MWF - No Class - Travel

**Week 14 (11/10)**

- Monday: Guest Lecturer - Preston Thompson
- Wednesday: Data Hunting Project - Online
- Friday: Data Hunting Project - Library

**Week 15 (11/17)**

- Monday: Spacial Modeling - Shepsle and Bonchek Ch. 5
- Wednesday: Spacial Modeling - Shepsle and Bonchek Ch. 5
- Friday: Applied Spatial Modeling - Supreme Court Appointments

**Week 16 (11/24)**

- Monday: Open Office Hours for Papers