

POLS 1101H – [Honors] Introduction to American Government
Class Times – T/TR 11:35am – 12:55pm
Classroom – Instructional Plaza N106
Instructor – Jeffrey M. Glas, PhD

Contact Information

Office Hours –

Office Location – Baldwin Hall, Suite 380

Email – jeffrey.glas@uga.edu

Course Prerequisites – None

Note – This course applies to Area V Social Sciences requirements of UGA's General Education Curriculum. It also satisfies the USG graduation requirements for demonstrating knowledge of both the U.S. and Georgia Constitutions.

I. Course Description

Fundamentals of the American government, including the philosophical and constitutional foundations, political institutions and main actors, such as Congress and the presidency, democratic practices such as voting, political participation, and civil rights and liberties. Includes a closer look at the State of Georgia, its constitution, and political system.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will apply theoretical frameworks, such as federalism, separation of powers, and pluralism, to analyze the organization and functioning of American government, its political institutions and processes.
- Students will learn the philosophical and constitutional foundations of the U.S. political system, including the state of Georgia, and examine primary sources over time, including the Declaration of Independence, Federalist Papers, the U.S. and Georgia Constitutions, among others.
- Students will critically assess the effects of media and public opinion on political processes using analytical tools to interpret data related to the American political system, including public opinion surveys, election results, and demographic trends, and communicate their findings in written, verbal, and graphical formats.
- Students will learn to articulate competing positions on political topics in assignments.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in respectful discussion and civil debate on American politics that are associated with multiple points of view.

II. Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

(2.1) Required Texts

There are no required textbook purchases for this class.

We will be reading. Oh yes, we will be reading.

This is a small-ish Honors section and I would like to make our class meetings as discussion oriented as possible. To that end I have curated a collection of readings that, I think, will provide you important background information, satisfy your curiosity, and serve as a basis for in classroom discussion/participation.

(2.2) Attendance

Meaningful attendance is essential in this class. Showing up to fill a seat is not going to cut it. Politics and education are social phenomena...so let's embrace it! Attendance at each class meeting is directly assessed, equally weighted, and collectively accounts for 10% of your final grade in the class.

(2.3) Assignments/Participation

Class participation...do not dread that phrase. On most days, and in-class, we will complete short assignments with the idea of concept application and discussion in mind. These regular assessments allow both you and me to track your progress in the class and they will serve as meaningful segue into class discussions.

Assignments are equally weighted and collectively account for 20% of your final grade in the class.

(2.4) Exams

This is an introductory course, so a fair amount of attention will be given to terminology, fundamental concepts, and causal relationships political scientists have discovered. To assess this knowledge base, we are using three exams. These exams contain multiple choice and short, written response items. Each exam also has an accompanying reflective essay on a long-standing issue in American government/politics. The exams are not cumulative. As you will see in the Course Schedule section of this syllabus, the course is organized into three units; each exam covers its respective unit.

Each exam is worth 20% of your final grade in the class.

(2.5) Exam Schedule and Grade Distribution

Exam 1	20%	February 16 th
Reflective Essay 1		
Exam 2	20%	March 23 rd
Reflective Essay 2		
Exam 3	20%	May 4 th @ 12pm
Reflective Essay 3		
Assignments/Participation	10%	Weekly
Attendance	10%	Daily

(2.6) Grading

All grades (including final grades) will be assigned following the system depicted below:

A	=	94-100	C+	=	77
A-	=	90	C	=	74
B+	=	87	C-	=	70
B	=	84	D	=	60 – 69
B-	=	80	F	≤	59

III. Class Policies

(3.1) 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.

(3.2) Class AI Policy

This is an introductory course. The use of artificial intelligence tools at any stage in your coursework is strictly prohibited.

(3.3) Disability Disclosure Statement

Ableness should not impede your intellectual development. Please get in touch with me (Dr. Glas) about any accommodations you need in the classroom, your breakout sessions, and for exams. We have some amazing resources for you here at UGA. For information about accommodations please contact the Accessibility & Testing (A&T) Office as soon as possible. For more information, please visit the A&T website (<https://accessibility.uga.edu/>). The A&T Office is located at 825 Lumpkin Street (Clark-Howell Hall) and can be contacted by phone (706.542.8719).

(3.4) Student Athletes

Representing our university in athletics places some unusual scheduling obligations on you. Please get in touch with me (Dr. Glas) about your schedule so we can make sure you are able to achieve in the classroom as well as on the field or in the arena.

(3.5) Absences

John Lennon once said, "Life happens while you're busy making other plans." Attending class is critical for your success in this class. Participation is a significant portion of your grade and there is a significant amount of course content that we will cover in our class meetings and breakout sessions. Absences will be excused for legitimate reasons (and I am reasonable).

Please **do not** come to class if you are ill. The UGA Health Center (<https://healthcenter.uga.edu/>) is located at 55 Carlton Street (across the street from Ramsey).

(3.6) Makeup Exams

Make-up exams are only given to students with legitimate, documented excuses.

(3.7) Missed/Late Assignments

Missed assignments are awarded a grade of zero. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of ten (10) points for each calendar day late.

(3.8) Policy on Disruptive Behavior

- 1) Silence notifications on your devices or turn them off entirely.
- 2) Be excellent to each other!

(3.9) Withdraw Policy

Be advised that the last day to withdraw from a course without automatically failing is Wednesday, November 11th. All students who withdraw after this date will receive a “WF”.

IV. 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. 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: <https://well-being.uga.edu>

Student Care and Outreach: <https://sco.uga.edu>

University Health Center: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu/>

Counseling and Psychiatric Services: <https://caps.uga.edu>
or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273

Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: <https://healthpromotion.uga.edu>

Accessibility & Testing Office: <https://accessibility.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>

V. Course Schedule¹

Week 1 – August 18th & 20th – Perspectives on Politics and Government

Reading Assignments:

Syllabus

Josep Colomer's "The Public Good"

Dahl's How Democratic is the American Constitution, Chapter 1 and Appendix A

Drop/Add Period – August 17th – 21st

Week 2 – August 25th & 27th – Early American Government and the U.S. Constitution

Reading Assignments:

The Declaration of Independence

Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union

The Northwest Ordinance

Constitution of the United States

Vincent Parillo's "Diversity in Colonial Times."

Krutz, Chapter 2

Federalist #51

Dahl, Chapter 2

Week 3 – September 1st & 3rd – Federalism

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapters 3 & 14

Chapter 3 of *Georgia's Constitution and Government*

Chapters 1 and 2 of *Georgia's Constitution and Government*

Madison's "Vices of the Political System of the United States"

¹ The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Week 4 – September 8th & 10th – Civil Rights

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 5

Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address”

Dr. King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

Dahl, Chapter 5

Labor Day – No Classes – Monday, September 7th

Week 5 – September 15th & 17th – Civil Liberties

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 4

Dahl, Chapter 6

Chapter 6 of *Georgia’s Constitution and Government*

The Bill of Rights

Week 6 – September 22nd – Exam 1

Bring a Writing Utensil

Reflective Essay #1 Due

Week 7 – September 29th & October 1st – Legislative Politics

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 11

Dahl, Chapter 3

Mayhew’s “Congress: The First Branch”

Fenno’s “U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration”

Week 8 – October 6th & 8th – Executive & Bureaucratic Politics

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapters 12 & 15

Dahl, Chapter 4

The Emancipation Proclamation

Neustadt’s “The Power to Persuade” (Selection from)

Semester Midpoint – Monday, October 5th

Week 9 – October 13th & 15th – Judicial Politics

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 13

Chapter 4 of *Georgia's Constitution and Government*

Federalist #78

Week 10 – October 20th & 22nd – Exam 2

Bring a Writing Utensil

Reflective Essay #2 Due

Week 11 – October 27th & 29th – Public Opinion & American Democracy

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 6

Dahl Chapter 5 and 6

Fall Break – No Classes – Friday, October 30th

Week 12 – November 3rd & 5th – Voting, Elections, and Campaigns

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 7

Dahl, Chapter 7

Chapter 5 of *Georgia's Constitution and Government*

Week 13 – November 10th & 12th – Party Politics and the American S[e]lectorate...

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 9

Dahl, Chapter 8

Madison's "A Candid State of Parties"

...& The Politics of Pressure

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 10 (skim)

Federalist #10

Schlozman et al – Organizations and the Democratic Representation of Interests

Withdrawal Deadline – Wednesday, November 11th

Week 14 – November 17th & 19th – An American Media

Reading Assignments:

Krutz, Chapter 8

Plato's "Republic" (Selection from)

Bennett – Four Media Biases That Matter

Week 15 – Thanksgiving Break

No Classes – November 23rd – 27th

Week 16 – December 1st – No Class (WF & Friday Schedule in Effect)

Reading Day – Wednesday, December 2nd

Week 17 – December 8th @ 12noon – Exam 3

Reflective Essay #3 Due

Bring a Writing Utensil