

POLS 7770: Graduate Student Teaching Seminar

Fall 2026

Wednesdays, 7:00 PM- 9:50 PM

Baldwin Hall, Room 104

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Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to becoming a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) and Instructor of Record (IoR) in political science at the University of Georgia. It is the discipline-specific equivalent to the GRSC 7770 course required for all new GTAs by the University. Students will explore formal policies and procedures while developing practical teaching skills through hands-on activities, peer collaboration, and reflective practice. The course covers essential topics including classroom management, pedagogical methods, assessment design, technology integration, and strategies for teaching politics in today's complex environment. Through workshop attendance, micro-teaching experiences, and ongoing reflections, students will build confidence and competence as emerging GTAs and IORs in political science while learning to create intentional and engaging learning environments for undergraduate students.

Learning Objectives

UGA's TA Policy is to complete GRSC 7770 prior to or concurrent with the start of your assistantship. By the end of this course, UGA wants you to be able to:

1. Describe the different duties that may be assigned to you in your role as a TA, and comply with relevant Federal, State, and UGA policies and procedures
2. Identify campus resources to support both your instructional duties and your students' learning.
3. Use evidence-based strategies to effectively and efficiently complete instructional tasks (including skills related to planning and presenting lessons, developing assessments or rubrics, grading and giving feedback, and using eLC in your role as TA).
4. Explain how your role is critical to building an inclusive learning environment for all students.
5. Intentionally reflect on your teaching practices and strategies.

Department specific goals that complement UGA's TA policy learning objectives:

1. Learn how to implement USG requirements for American Government
2. Gain skills to moderate tough conversations in the current political environment
3. Where to find teaching resources and support for the discipline

Course Materials

All course material will be provided on eLC (UGA's learning management system). However, to be successful in this class, you should have access to internet, to your GSuite (UGA login), and OneDrive (UGA login).

If you find that you want to expand your teaching pedagogy and knowledge, here are some teaching centered resources and opportunities (both for general teaching and for political science).

- The Center for Teaching and Learning (UGA)
- Interdisciplinary University Teaching Certificate (UGA)
- GradTeach Certificate (UGA, non-academic program)
- Future Faculty Fellowship Program (UGA)
- APSA Educate Program
- APSA Teaching and Learning Conference

Grading

This is a pass/fail course. If you receive the equivalent of 60% as a final calculated grade, you will pass the course. This course will be based on a point system. The total number of possible points for this class is 1,000, and to pass you will need 600 points. All materials should be submitted on eLC under the assignment tab.

Teaching Workshop Reflection (100 points each, 200 points total)

Over the semester, you will be required to attend two (2) teaching related workshops, talks, or programs. The ones you select are completely up to you! I want you to attend workshops that are interesting, engaging, or topical to your studies. If you are unsure if a workshop would qualify, please reach out to me for confirmation. Please refer to rubric and instructions posted on eLC for specific expectations of your reflections.

There are numerous workshops and talks available throughout the semester provided by the university, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and around Athens. I will have a running list of workshops posted on ELC. Here are some consistent workshop opportunities that you may want to familiarize yourself with: [GradTeach Workshops](#)

Teaching Technology Presentation (200 points)

What is a piece of technology that you think enhances the educational experiences of both students and instructors? Create a brief video demonstration, presentation, or handout showcasing an educational technology tool that could enhance undergraduate instruction. Your presentation should introduce the technology's interface, demonstrate its key features and functionality, and explain practical applications for classroom use. This resource will be posted on eLC for peer review and feedback allowing the cohort to build a shared repository of teaching tools. Focus on technologies that address specific pedagogical needs or challenges in undergraduate education. You will all have to respond to three (3) of your colleagues. Please refer to the instructions and rubric posted on eLC for more details.

MiniTeaching Lesson (400 points total)

Lesson Plan (100 points)

Must include student learning outcomes (SLO), aligned activities, and assessment. Examples will be provided on eLC.

Micro-Lecture (200 points)

Microteaching allows you to the opportunity to practice in a low stakes and supportive environment with feedback from your peers. You will have 10 minutes and “lectures” must include learning an active learning strategy. You can create your own interest specific lesson/discussion or use a provided topic that is common in POLS 1101. Please refer to the instructions and rubric posted on eLC for more details.

Peer Feedback (100 points)

After each micro-lecture, you will submit a brief feedback form for your peers.

End of Course Reflection (100 points)

In this course, we will be doing a lot of work with identifying teaching styles, priorities, educational theories and praxis. This assignment is meant to have you critically reflect on how different aspects of the course has affected your understanding of being a TA/IoR, and how this may affect your teaching praxis to come. For specific requirements, please refer to the instructions and rubric on eLC.

Participation and Engagement with Materials (100 points)

Engaging with the materials and class discussion is going to be pivotal for your growth and effectiveness of the class. Our class will operate in a collaborative space— i.e., group discussions, group activities, demonstrations. Not doing your share of the collaboration can negatively impact the flow of class and inconvenience your colleagues.

Attendance

A key part of your TA duties is just showing up (it makes the getting-things-done part easier), and it's the same for POLS 7770. Showing up for this class means that you have done your part to prepare for class and you're actively drawing connections between the material, your classroom experience, and your goals. This said, sometimes life happens, and you can't show up. You are asked given **two (2)** unexcused absences and I will not ask any questions (I

may if its two in a row). However, on absence three 3 we will arrange a time to chat and see if we can get you back on track. **If you have a fourth absence, you cannot reasonably pass the course.** Attendance in this course is a university wide requirement. All course lecture materials will be posted on eLC for your reference. It is your responsibility to get notes from your peers from in class discussions and activities.

Late Work

This class requires a high degree of participation and engagement. Meeting deadlines means that we can get the most out of our discussions, you get better feedback, and you are keeping on track with the progression of work assignments that build off each other. That being said, I'm happy to be flexible with prior communication. Please contact me as soon as you realize that an assignment will be late, and I will be happy to work with you on an extension. For late work with an unagreed upon extension, please expect to have 10 points deducted per day (24 hours) late starting immediately after the submission deadline.

Extra Credit

As of now, there is no extra credit built into the course—and I don't anticipate adding any. However, I reserve the right to offer extra credit throughout the semester. All potential extra credit will be presented in class and via email. I will not offer individual extra credit

Academic Honesty & Generative Artificial Intelligence

The University of Georgia has an academic honesty policy. Academic integrity is required for a positive learning environment. All students enrolled in university courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a failing grade in the course. Additionally, I will forward your name to the University. You can read the policies in their entirety here: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>

I feel that it's important to teach and model ethical usage of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) tool. These tools can help you brainstorm ideas, polish your writing, and much more. However, as educators in training, it's important to critically evaluate when and how you use these tools responsibly. If you use GAI for any part of an assignment, please acknowledge it clearly in your work. There are several GAI tools on the market that have conflated successful learning and efficiency. However, learning takes work! It can be slow and frustrating. While you can use GAI for brainstorming, ideation, etc., don't let GAI replace your thinking and critical reflection. GAI tools are not infallible. Always cross-check for accuracy, relevance, and appropriateness. If you don't critically evaluate GAI's output, you will be held responsible for its errors. Furthermore, I believe it is important to talk about the environmental impact that GAI tools have. GAI requires massive energy consumption, and this leads to an increase in carbon emission and water usage. Additionally, to continue to produce GAI hardware and machinery, there is an increase in mining of limited earth minerals—which can cause pollution and habitat destruction. If you are unsure if your use of GAI is appropriate for this course, I am happy to chat with you about academically ethical methods.

Accessibility, Accommodations, & Preferences

The purpose of disability accommodation is to provide equal access to the academic material and equal access to demonstrate mastery of the material. Disability accommodations work best starting at the beginning of the semester but can be approved and started at any point in the semester. Accommodations start at the time the accommodation letter is presented to faculty within reasonable timelines; accommodations are not given retroactively. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Accessibility and Testing Center. If you need accommodations but are unable to register formally with the ATC, please reach out to me and we will discuss reasonable accommodations that you may need.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to a collaborative and supportive learning environment. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name registered with the university. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronouns. Please let me know your preferences at the beginning of the course or via email before the first day of class so that I may adjust my roster.

Class Recordings

I require that you seek my permission if you want to make audio and/or video recordings of any portion of our class (including of my lectures and discussion sections). If you do not have this permission (or an accommodation from ACT), do not take photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings of any person in this class without their express permission. Further, do not take or share audio or video recordings of course lectures or discussions. Violation of this policy will result in you receiving 0% for class participation, and, depending on the severity of the violation, may result in you receiving a grade of “F” in the class.

Well-Being Resources

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports 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](https://embark.uga.edu) 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. Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

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

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. Specifically, it affords students the right to:

- Inspect and review their education records
- Request the amendment of inaccurate or misleading records
- Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in their education record
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures of the institution to comply with this law

Student Input on Class Materials

See something that you think would be great to add to the course schedule? Send me an email!

Date	Content and Materials
Week 1 August 19 th	Course Introduction, Syllabus Overview, Class Expectations, and Norm setting
Week 2 August 26 ^h	UGA Policies, Campus Resources, Navigating ELC, POLS 1101
Week 3 September 2 nd	Classroom Management, Time Management, Office Hours
Week 4 September 9 ^h	Discover Your Teaching Methods and Goals
Week 5 September 16 th	Creating and Measuring Student Learning Objectives
Week 6 September 23 rd	Backwards Design, Scaffolding, Universal Design for Learning
Week 7 September 30 th	Teaching Technology
Week 8 October 7 th	Creating Assessments and Rubrics, Grading
Week 9 October 14 th	BOPPPS & Active Learning Strategies
Week 10 October 21 st	Building Community and Teaching Politics in Today's World
Week 11 October 28 th	AI in the Classroom
Week 12 November 4 th	TA/IoR Panel
Week 13 November 11 th	Micro-Teaching Lessons
Week 14 November 18 th	Micro-Teaching Lessons and Semester Wrap-Up
Week 15 November 25 th	Thanksgiving Break