

Course Syllabus

POLS 4710 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW: CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES (5593)

FALL 2026

MEETING DAYS AND TIMES: Monday and Wednesday, 2:55 to 4:15

MEETING PLACE: Sanford Hall Room 112

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dr. Greg Rabidoux, PHD, JD

Email: Greg.Rabidoux@uga.edu

Office Hours: M/W 1:30-2:30 and by Appointment.

Office: RUSK HALL, ROOM 326

Course Meeting Times

Class Meeting Time: 2:55 to 4:15 PM

Class Meeting Location: SANFORD HALL ROOM 112

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Gregorio Rabidoux, PHD. JD (Dr. Gregorio or Dr. Greg)

Email: Greg.Rabidoux@uga.edu

Office Hours: M W 1:30-2:30, RUSK HALL, Room 326

Website: www.valmarfilms.com

Best way to reach me is to contact me either just before or after class, or through my UGA email and during my office hours. If need be, we can also set an appointment.

I aim to respond to student emails same day as sent.

Course Description & Details

Prerequisite: One of the following (POLS 1101, POLS 1101F, H, S)

3 Credit Hours

Course Description (UGA Catalog)

Course examines Individual rights and liberties, with emphasis on the First Amendment, other parts of the Bill of Rights, and the Fourteenth Amendment.

Instructor's Course Description: This course explores what civil rights and liberties are, where they come from, how they are interpreted, applied, enforced, and even denied.

The focus will be within the legal framework of the United States as prescribed by and within the US Constitution, interpreted and applied by the US Supreme Court, executed and enforced by the US Federal and State Governments.

This course is also designed for students to gain an appreciation of the historical foundations and evolution of civil rights and liberties within the US. This includes the conflicts, struggles, and social, political, and legal movements which developed and advocated for change on the behalf of groups, communities, and individuals that believed they were either locked out of the legal framework and judicial protections which others enjoyed or were simply illegally denied what they too, should have been afforded under the US Constitution, Statutory law and related protections.

However, this course shall also closely examine the contemporary context of civil rights and liberties, current issues and controversies, and the social, legal, and political battles which continue in the continuing evolution and shaping of what we refer to as civil rights and liberties. Students will gain a deep appreciation for the dynamic and not static quality of our civil rights and liberties, their power, their vulnerability, their fragility, their dependence on political, social, and legal faith, good will, and devotion to the values and beliefs inherent to the civil rights and liberties within the US political framework and system.

COURSE-LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course students should be able to:

- Learn what civil rights, civil liberties, and human rights are, and how they are defined and applied within the US political and legal system.
- Be able to draw key historical, substantive, and policy distinctions between civil liberties, civil rights, and human rights.
- Be able to identify contemporary civil liberties, civil rights, and human rights and their legal and political sources.
- Be able to analyze contemporary real-life civil liberties and civil rights issues and controversies and make cogent legal, political, and social arguments in defense of and denial of a variety of asserted civil rights and liberties.
- Understand what role the US Supreme Court, federal courts, and state supreme courts play in the interpretation and application of civil rights and liberties as distilled and allocated via adjudication and court holdings.

- Gain an appreciation for the historical development of civil liberties and rights within the USA and the related struggles, conflicts, and controversies associated with such development and denials.
- Develop an appreciation for the dynamic quality of civil rights and liberties and their dependence upon the political and legal system for their expression.

This course also fulfills the following University-wide learning outcomes:

- Critical Thinking
- Analytical Ability
- Critical Thinking
- Problem-Solving
- Collaborative Participation
- Verbal Presentation and Communication

COURSE TOPICS

This course shall cover a variety of related topics, including but not limited to:

- US Constitutional Civil Rights and Liberties
- Bill of Rights
- US Commission on Civil Rights (Titles I, II, III, IV, V, IX)
- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
- ADA Of 1999
- State Laws and Relevant Statutory and US Federal Law
- Relevant International Laws and Treaties

Required Course materials

TEXTBOOK

NO REQUIRED TEXTBOOK TO PURCHASE

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Excerpts from a variety of relevant online materials (books, articles, video clips, etc.) will be posted for student access. These will be in Instructor Weekly Power Points and attached to relevant assignments. These will all be on the Course eLC platform.

These include but are not limited to:

Open Stax Political Science (various chapter selections)

[7.1 Civil Rights and Constitutionalism - Introduction to Political Science | OpenStax](#)

Cornell University Law School (Legal Information Institute)

[Freedom of Assembly and Petition: Overview | U.S. Constitution Annotated | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute](#)

Justia Law Center

[Right of Association :: First Amendment -- Religion and Expression :: U.S. Constitution Annotated :: Justia](#)

American Government 3e (Open Source)

[4.2 Securing Basic Freedoms - American Government 3e | OpenStax](#)

Bill of Rights Institute (Video Clips)

[Civil Rights and Civil Liberties | Government & Politics Video](#)

GovFacts on Civil Rights and Liberties

[Understanding Civil Liberties vs. Civil Rights: Your Freedoms and Protections | GovFacts](#)

Oregon State University (Open Source Case Law Holdings)

Oregon State University (Judicial Holdings on Speech and Expression)

[Civil-Rights-and-Liberties-1776278100 \(1\).pdf](#)

US Commission on Civil Rights

[U.S. Commission on Civil Rights](#)

TECHNOLOGY

You will need to be able to access this course on the eLC online/platform on a regular basis.

Assessment and Grading

GENERAL OVERVIEW: Both the acquisition of content knowledge and skill building identified above shall be attained through the following course activities:

1. In-class lecture and discussion and debate (Weekly Attendance/Participation)
2. In-class student team-work and presentations
3. Out-of-class weekly assignments which involve reading, interpretation, and writing
4. In-class and out-of-class assigned viewing of and analysis of video clips and news articles on current civil rights and liberties

5. Midterm and Final written exams which shall consist of original political and legal scenarios which student read, interpret, analyze, and respond to related instructor prompts.

SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS AND POINTS

Course Assignments & Requirements	Due Date	Maximum Points that Can Be Earned
Weekly Attendance/Participation/Team	10 points per	10 X 30=300
Chapter Review And Writing (CRAW)	30 points per	30 X 10=300
Law DAWG (LD)	25 points per	2 x 25=50
MIDTERM EXAM	100 points	1 x 100=100
FINAL EXAM	100 points	1 x 100=100
Total Possible Earned Points=850 Points earned fall into a letter/grade range		791-850 A/A- 731-790 B+/B/B- 671-730 C+/C/C- 610-670 D+/D/D- <610 F For Ex: 771-790 B+ 751-770 B 731-750 B-

NOTE: All Assignments shall have an attached RUBRIC posted so students can see the criterion for grading used for each specific assignment/exam by Instructor.

MISSED EXAMS, LATE ASSIGNMENTS, & RE-GRADING REQUESTS

Late work and late exams and/or work or assignments not submitted prior to due date/deadline shall not be accepted, reviewed nor scored.

If students have a legitimate emergency recognized by UGA Policy and are able to provide appropriate documentation to instructor may, at the discretion of the instructor, be allowed to submit the work and/or exam for credit and points.

Unless instructor permits first drafts of any work as part of the final assignment it is expected that any and all work submitted by student to be reviewed and scored is the final and only

submission for such review. Consequently, re-grading or second or more attempts at assignments and/or exams shall not be allowed. Again, if some such legitimate and recognized emergency is shown and documented, then student may be allowed to re-submit.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of each student to make sure that what is uploaded and submitted to satisfy that specific assignment/exam is in fact that assignment/exam. Files submitted with only the assignment or exam earn no points, doing the work or exam but forgetting to upload and submit earns no points, and uploading and submitting work or exam from other classes earns no points.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Generally, not available.

FINAL GRADES

(As noted in the Assignment/Exam Chart above)

Each assignment, attendance/participation, and exam earns a maximum amount of possible points. At the end of the class, student total amount of points earned is then placed within the course final letter/grade range corresponding to such points.

Points Earned Range/Final Course Letter Grade

791-850 A/A-

731-790 B+/B/B-

671-730 C+/C/C-

610-670 D+/D/D-

<610 F

Course Statements & Policies

UGA 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.

This Course Expectations:

Students are expected to do their own work and to submit their own work. Plagiarizing work from other students or using other sources and passing them off as your own is not permitted and may result in anything from a "0" for such work or exam and/or up to a final course grade of "F" depending on seriousness and severity of the plagiarizing.

If instructor allows or makes it mandatory for students to refer to and/or use outside sources for their work then proper crediting and disclosure will be expected.

IN-CLASS EXPECTATIONS:

People often have strong and passionate views and opinions about politics and current issues and policy. This is expected and welcome.

However, class etiquette, mutual respect, and keeping an open-mind is also expected.

Offensive, or rude behavior or insulting classmates regardless of topics being discussed is not allowed. Such behavior shall result in a minimum of loss of possible earned points for a week of class, and if behavior continues then it may result in disciplinary action in accordance with UGA policy up to and including failing this course.

SPECIFIC COURSE PROCEDURES

All of my course communication to students as a class will go through your eLC course online platform. Students are responsible for logging in to the course eLC regularly, each week for updates, material access, assignments, and all work shall be submitted online via eLC only.

Classroom Content Recording and Sharing:

Unless students have provided the Instructor with proper documentation from the UGA Disability Resource Center, then they are not allowed to make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course.

Exceptions: Students who do have an Accommodation permission from the UGA DRC must agree in writing that they will only use the records for personal academic use during the specific course. Please understand that faculty members have a legally recognized copyright interest in their class lectures and that they (students) agree not to infringe, violate, exploit, or attempt to commercialize from and profit from Instructor lecture and class interactions in any way.

Any violation of above may result in discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Grade Appeals: If you receive a grade and see that it contains an arithmetic error (i.e., I miscalculated your grade), please inform me of the issue. If you have a question or concern about your performance on any course work, please contact me as soon as possible. All concerns must be stated in writing (email), beginning with a statement that concisely explains why you believe your grade should be altered. All concerns, whether arithmetic or otherwise, must be raised within one week of that assignment/quiz's release to students. This includes attendance concerns. If you do not raise your question within this one week period, you forfeit your ability to appeal your grade.

Academic Integrity:

As a student, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with all relevant departmental, college, and university policies governing your conduct in this course. This includes, but is not limited to, policies relating to plagiarism, academic integrity, and accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The University's procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty can be found at honesty.uga.edu.

According to UGA, “academic dishonesty” means cheating, attempting to cheat, or assisting someone else in cheating, even if unintentional. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: • Plagiarism – using another’s work as your own without correct citations/attribution • Unauthorized assistance – giving or receiving help for assignments without prior approval from your instructor • Lying/tampering – giving false information related to academic work or in connection with a facilitated discussion, continued discussion, meeting with multiple violations review board, or appeal • Theft – stealing any information related to academic work Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. This includes your classmates, using GroupMe to get answers from your classmates, ChatGPT, or any other AI tool. Unless authorized by the instructor, all coursework is expected to be completed without assistance from others unless explicit permission for group or partner work is given. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course.

Students found using GroupMe or ChatGPT for course answers – unless specifically stipulated in assignment(s) – will be subject to academic integrity violations. Absolutely no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Anyone found guilty of cheating, plagiarism, or any other violation of academic integrity will receive an automatic grade of 0 for the assignment.

For more information about academic dishonesty and UGA’s policy regarding them, see UGA’s Academic Honesty Policy. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these policies. Generative AI (GAI): To ensure you develop and master the foundational knowledge and human skills in this course, the use of Generative AI (GAI) is strictly prohibited.

TurnItIn Policy: Consistent with UGA’s efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, all student work shall be reviewed by a tool called TurnItIn to compare your papers with multiple sources. This assists me to best determine if the work is in fact your own, original work or if it is even partially that taken from other sources, either manually or via the use of any AI tool.

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the *Accessibility & Testing*. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <https://accessibility.uga.edu/>.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION POLICY

As noted prior, attendance each class is mandatory. Participation and assigned teamwork in class occurs and is worth points (see chart above)

For any/all such absences to be excused then student must show proper documentation as to why the absence(s) occurred and work with instructor to make-up any work and/or exams missed to earn points.

USE OF AI IN THIS COURSE (REMINDER)

AI use of any kind is NOT PERMITTED.

Students may at the very least lose points if they use AI to complete their work/exams up to and not excluding getting a “0” for any/all work or exams submitted that used AI.

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](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.

- 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
- Accessibility & Testing: accessibility.uga.edu

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

STUDENT SUCCESS RESOURCES

The Office for Student Success and Achievement (OSSA) empowers students to achieve success throughout their academic journey. Through free peer tutoring, academic coaching, UNIV student success courses, Bulldog Basics, and first-generation student support, we promote well-being, student learning, and community building. To connect with OSSA, email ossa@uga.edu, call (706) 542-0163, or visit Milledge Hall (near Reed Hall and Sanford Stadium).

WEEKLY TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: All materials needed to complete assignments will also be posted (links) on your course eLC online platform with your weekly assignment.

These will include but may not be limited to those open source materials listed previously in this syllabus.

Week 1 August 17-23

Topics: What are Civil Rights? Civil Liberties? Human Rights?

Sources of CR&L

Context, Comparison, and Conflict

Express, Implied, and Inherent CR&L

WEEK 1: IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media

Team Activity

NOTE: Students can earn up to 10 points each class (Based on attending/participating/Team Work) We meet 15 weeks, twice per week (10 X 2= 20, 20 X 15=300 points possible)

*Except for weeks we have a Midterm or Final Exam posted, each Week will follow similar format

READ: Understanding your Civil Rights and Liberties

[Understanding Civil Liberties vs. Civil Rights: Your Freedoms and Protections | GovFacts](#)

(Read #1-3 only) @4-5 minute read time

Ch. 3 Introduction to Political Science/OpenStax (Political Ideology)

Read sections 3.1-3.7

[Ch. 3 Introduction - Introduction to Political Science | OpenStax](#)

Ch. 4 Introduction to Political Science/OpenStax (Civil Liberties)

[Ch. 4 Introduction - Introduction to Political Science | OpenStax](#)

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT (out-of-class)

(Based on Lecture/Discussion/weekly chapters and/or articles/links assigned (see above for Week 1)

CRAW #1

(Chapter/Article Review and Writing)

DUE: Sunday, August 23, by 11:00PM

Submit file via eLC only

Work submitted must include questions posed and response

NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED OR SCORED

No "Place Holders" (Work file submitted must have both questions and answers to be scored and earn points)

WEEK 2 August 24-30

TOPICS: US Bill of Rights, First Amendment, Key Landmark Judicial Holdings (Caselaw)

Focus: **Freedom of Religion (No Establishment of Religion)**

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Religion)

Team Activity

READ: (Selected works tba by Instructor)

WEEK 2 ASSIGNMENT:

CRAW#2

DUE: Sunday, August 30, by 11:00PM (eLC online submission only)

NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED

WEEK 3 August 31-September 6

TOPICS: US Bill of Rights, First Amendment, Key Landmark Judicial Holdings (Caselaw), American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978)

Focus: **Freedom of Religion (Free Exercise of Religion)**

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Religion)

Team Activity

NOTE: Students can earn up to 10 points each week (Based on attending/participating/Team Work)

READ: Selected works on Freedom of Religion/Free Exercise of Religion

WEEK 3 ASSIGNMENT:

CRAW#3

DUE: Sunday, September 6, by 11:00PM (eLC online submission only)

NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED

WEEK 4-5 September 7-13, and September 14-20

TOPICS: US Bill of Rights, First Amendment, Key Landmark Judicial Holdings (Caselaw)

Focus: Freedom of Expression/Speech

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Religion)

Team Activity

READ: Selected Open Source Works (Will also be posted on your eLC CRAW)

Oregon State University (Judicial Holdings on Speech and Expression)

[Civil-Rights-and-Liberties-1776278100 \(1\).pdf](#)

Cornell Law School (LII) Freedom of Speech Caselaw

[First Amendment speech rights | Supreme Court Bulletin | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute](#)

Justia Case Law on Free Speech

[Free Speech Supreme Court Cases | Justia U.S. Supreme Court Center](#)

WEEKS 4 + 5 Assignment:

CRAW #4

DUE: Sunday, September 20, by 11:00PM

No Late Work Accepted

WEEKS 6-8 September 21-October 11

TOPICS: US Bill of Rights, First Amendment, Key Landmark Judicial Holdings (Caselaw), Immigration, Legal Status

Focus: Freedom of Assembly, Association, and Movement

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Freedom of Assembly, Association, Movement)

Team Activity

READ: Selected Open Source works to be assigned by Instructor.

WEEK 6 Assignment:

CRAW #5

DUE: Sunday, September 27, by 11:00PM (via eLC only)

No Late Work Accepted

WEEK 7 Assignment:

Law Dawg (LDAWG #1)

DUE: Sunday, October 4, by 11:00PM (via eLC only)

No Late Work Accepted

WEEK 8 Assignment:

MIDTERM EXAM

Exam shall be posted to eLC on or about October 6

DUE: Sunday, October 11, by 11:00PM (via eLC only)

No Late Exams Accepted

WEEKS 9-11 October 12-18, October 19-25, October 26-November 1

TOPICS: US S CT Key Landmark Judicial Holdings (Caselaw), US Civil Rights Commission, US DOJ Civil Rights, Title IX, Civil Rights Act 1964/65 and as Amended, 14th and 15th Amendments, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 1994/95, US-Indian Treaty Law

Spotlight CR Movement Focus: Women's Suffragette Movement

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Freedom of Assembly, Association, Movement)

Team Activity

READ: Selected open source works on the topics shall be assigned by instructor.

WEEKS 9, 10, and 11 Assignments:

CRAW #6

DUE: Sunday, October 18, 2026 by 11:00 PM

CRAW #7

DUE: Sunday, October 25, 2026 by 11:00PM

CRAW #8

DUE: Sunday, November 1, 2026 by 11:00PM

No Late Work Accepted

WEEKS 12-13 November 2-8, and November 9-15

TOPICS: US S CT Key Landmark Judicial Holdings (Caselaw), US Fourth Amendment, Ninth Amendment, Tenth Amendment, Due Process

Focus: Right to Privacy

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Right to Privacy))

Team Activity

READ:

Justia Law-Right to Privacy (Griswold v CT)

[Griswold v. Connecticut | 381 U.S. 479 \(1965\) | Justia U.S. Supreme Court Center](#)

Open Stax Political Science-Right to Privacy Law

[4.4 Interpreting the Bill of Rights - American Government 3e | OpenStax](#)

WEEK 12 Assignment:

CRAW #9

DUE: November 8. Sunday, by 11:00PM

WEEK 13 Assignment:

Law Dawg 2 (LDAWG #2)

DUE: November 15. Sunday, by 11:00PM

No Late Work Accepted

WEEK 14 November 16-22

Sources: YS S CT Case Law, Federal and State Legislation, US Constitution

TOPIC: Voting Rights

Special Focus: Congressional Redistricting

IN-CLASS:

Topics Discussion/Lecture

Instructor Power-Points

Video-Clips (Watch/Review/De-Brief and Discuss)

Current CR&L in the Traditional Media/Social Media (Voting Rights/Redistricting)

Team Activity

READ: Selected Open Source Works (Will also be posted on your eLC CRAW)

WEEK 14 Assignment:

CRAW #10

DUE: November 22, Sunday, by 11:00PM

No Late Work Accepted

WEEK 15 November 23-29

NO CLASS/Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 16 November 30 (Monday)

Wrap-Up/Final Exam Prep

Final Exam Posted Tuesday, December 1

Final Exam DUE: Sunday, December 6, by 11:00PM

NO LATE EXAMS ACCEPTED or SCORED.

DISCLAIMER

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; Instructor reserves the right to make modifications or alterations that he deems reasonable.
