

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Political Science 1101
Spring 2012
MW 10:10-11:00
Instr. Plaza South 306

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Course Description:

This course is intended to provide students with a broad understanding of American government. Throughout the semester we will examine the origins, development and functions of the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government. In addition to highlighting how these branches operate independently, attention will be given to their interactions with one another. The course will also discuss the role federalism, the media, public opinion, elections and voting play in the American political system.

Course Goals:

The primary goal of this course is to provide students with a conceptual background and a set of analytical tools that they can use to understand and critically analyze what is written in the newspaper or said in the news today, tomorrow, and in the more distant future. The hope is that these skills will give students a better understanding and appreciation of the American political process that they can use to be informed and knowledgeable citizens.

Required Books:

The following books are required and are available at the Campus Bookstore:

Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson and Thad Kousser. 2012. *The Logic of American Politics*, 5th Edition. CQ Press.

Bullock, Charles S. and Ronald K. Gaddie. 2010. *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*. Longman Publishing, UGA edition Custom Edition

Students will not only be expected to have done the reading assignments, but should also be aware of relevant news stories. As such, I recommend reading a daily newspaper – such as the New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com>) and/or the Washington Post (<http://www.washingtonpost.com>) - or at least checking cnn.com. Additional links to political blogs or websites can be found on the instructors' website.

Course Grading:

Your grade in this class will be assigned according to the following:

1. **Discussion Section (10% of final grade):** Students are required to attend a discussion section held every Friday. The instructors for these discussion sections are: Carrie Eaves (cpeaves@uga.edu), Jae Lim (jylim@uga.edu), Jongmin Shon (jmshon@gmail.com), Joshua Massey (jnmassey@uga.edu), David Gelman (dgelman@uga.edu) and Melanie Kolbe (mkolbe@uga.edu). Due to the small size of the discussion section, class attendance and participation will be stressed. More than two absences will result in a lowering of a student's discussion section grade. A student's participation grade may also include several small quizzes or assignments.
2. **Midterm Exams (60% of final grade):** Three midterm examinations (worth 20% each) will be given throughout the course. The dates are listed on the syllabus as **February 13, March 26** and **April 18**. These exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The midterm examinations will be non-cumulative. If a student is unable to take one of the exams on the scheduled date, they should contact their TA or the course instructor beforehand. Missed exams will only be excused for a documented illness (documentation must be provided by a physician) or a death in the family. If you are excused from an exam, your final exam will be weighted accordingly.
3. **Final Exam (30% of final grade):** The final exam is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 2**, from 8:00 to 11:00 am. Like the midterms, it will feature a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative, covering all materials from readings and lectures.

Final course grades will be assigned as follows: 100-93 = A, 90-92 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-, 60-69 = D, and 60-0. Extra credit assignments will not be given in this course.

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to notify the instructor and the Office for Disability Services at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Instructor Availability:

Students seeking to contact the instructor are encouraged to stop by during scheduled office hours. Students who are unable to attend office hours should e-mail ahead of time to ensure instructor availability.

Classroom Behavior:

Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Due to the large size of the course, disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes cell phone usage, excessive talking and derogatory or offensive comments made during discussion. Lecture attendance is not mandatory, but students will be held responsible for all material discussed or assigned.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will have their names forwarded to the University. It is each student's responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. Further information regarding academic honesty can be found at <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/>.

Tentative Course Outline/Readings Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment*</u>
Jan 9	Introduction/Course Overview	--
Jan 11	The Logic of Collective Action	KJK 1
Jan 13	<i>Section Introduction/Overview</i>	--
Jan 16	MLK Day -- No Class	--
Jan 18	The Logic of Collective Action (cont)	KJK 1
Jan 20	<i>The Federalist Papers</i>	<i>Federalist 10</i> <i>Federalist 51</i>
Jan 23	The Constitution	KJK 2 Articles of the Confederation U.S. Constitution
Jan 25	The Constitution (cont)	KJK 2 Articles of the Confederation U.S. Constitution
Jan 27	<i>The Georgia Constitution</i>	<i>BG 1 & BG 4</i>
Jan 30	John Adams, Episode 2	--
Feb 1	John Adams, Episode 2 (cont)	--
Feb 3	<i>Georgia Political History</i>	<i>BG 2 & BG 3</i>
Feb 6	Federalism	KJK 3
Feb 8	Federalism (cont)	KJK 3
Feb 10	<i>Review</i>	--
Feb 13	Midterm Exam #1	--
Feb 15	U.S. Congress	KJK 6
Feb 17	<i>The General Assembly</i>	<i>BG 5</i>
Feb 20	U.S. Congress (cont)	KJK 6
Feb 22	The Presidency	KJK 7
Feb 24	<i>The Executive Branch</i>	<i>BG 6</i>

Feb	27	The Presidency (cont)	KJK 7
Feb	29	The Judiciary	KJK 9
<i>Mar</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>The Judicial System</i>	<i>BG 7</i>
Mar	5	The Judiciary (cont)	KJK 9
Mar	7	I.O.U.S.A. - Video	--
<i>Mar</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Local Government</i>	<i>BG 8</i>
Mar	12	Spring Break -- No Class	--
Mar	14	Spring Break -- No Class	--
Mar	16	Spring Break -- No Class	--
Mar	19	The Judiciary	KJK 9
Mar	21	The Judiciary (cont)	KJK 9
<i>Mar</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Review</i>	--
Mar	26	Midterm Exam #2	--
Mar	28	Campaigns and Elections	KJK 11
<i>Mar</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>Georgia Voting</i>	<i>BG 9 & BG 13</i>
Apr	2	Campaigns and Elections (cont)	KJK 11
Apr	4	Public Opinion	KJK 10
<i>Apr</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Political Parties</i>	<i>BG 11</i>
Apr	9	Public Opinion (cont)	KJK 10
Apr	11	Political Parties	KJK 12
<i>Apr</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>Review</i>	--
Apr	16	Political Parties (cont)	KJK 12
Apr	18	Midterm Exam #3	--
<i>Apr</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Georgiamanders</i>	<i>BG 10</i>
Apr	23	The Media	KJK 14
Apr	25	The Media (cont)	KJK 14
<i>Apr</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>Review</i>	--
Apr	30	Review	--
May	2**	Final Exam	--

*Readings from Kernell, Jacobson and Kousser are designated "KJK." Readings put in *italics* indicate discussion sections. Those readings will be from the Bullock and Gaddie book and are denoted "BG."

** The Final Exam is currently scheduled from 8:00 to 11:00 am. It is located in Instr. Plaza South 306.