

POLS 1101
Introduction to American Government
Spring 2014
Discussion Sections: Dr. Monogan

Teaching Assistant: Steven Walter

Time and Place: Monday, 10:10am-11:00am, Journalism 513
& 11:15am-12:05pm, Journalism 513

Email: swalter7@uga.edu

Office Hours: Monday 12:30-1:30pm; Tuesday 12:30-1:30pm at Baldwin Hall Graduate Lounge & by appointment

***The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced by the instructor may be necessary.**

Purpose of Discussion Sections: Breakout/Discussion sessions are intended to help students develop a familiarity and understanding of the American Political System by applying the material gained during the lectures. The purpose of our weekly discussion sections is to give students the opportunity for more personalized instruction. We expect students to come to class prepared, well-versed on the required readings, and ready to participate. In the Monday discussion sections, students will have the opportunity to seek specific clarification for individual questions and concerns in a small-group setting where their questions and the response can benefit the other students.

Required Readings (Discussion): *Georgia Politics in a State of Change*

Grades: Your discussion section grade counts for 10% of your entire course grade. **Ten percent represents the difference between two letter grades**, and is even more significant when you take into account the University's +/- grading system. The discussion section grade will be based on the following distribution:

Attendance	5%
Participation	5%

Remember, just showing up does not count as participation; participation counts as participation. Please see the main lecture syllabus for a rubric of the participation score.

A further 10% of your overall grade will come from the Concept Map Exercises. There will be 5 throughout the semester, each accounting for 2% of the final grade. Absolutely no late work will be accepted. Again, please see the main syllabus for further information.

Class Format: The sessions can include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Expansion and reiteration of concepts from lecture and readings,
- ❖ Group activities and presentations,
- ❖ Discussion and debate over current events or additional short articles relevant to the course,
- ❖ Presentation of video, Internet, or radio clips relevant to the course,
- ❖ Review for Exams
- ❖ Discussion of Exam Results

Resources: All information on the lecture and break-out section can be found on Dr. Monogan's website: <http://j.mp/introUS>. If you do not find the answer to your question on the website contact your TA first before you approach Dr. Monogan.

Attendance: Attendance in section is mandatory and you must attend the section you signed up for on OASIS. An unexcused absence will count as a zero for that week's Attendance/Participation component of your grade. You are allowed one absence during the semester for any reason. After that one absence you must provide proper documentation addressing the absence. If you plan to miss class and have a valid excuse (sports, medical, academic, etc.), please let your TA know ahead of time and provide appropriate documentation. Also, it is vital that you show up to class **prepared and on time**. Students will be considered absent if they arrive after attendance has been taken at the beginning of class.

Tests/Grading Policy: Only university-approved excuses are reasons to miss exams. Your TA does all the grading in this course. On days where exams are handed back, they will go over the answers. If you wish to discuss a grade with them other than a mathematical error, you must wait until 24 hours after getting the test back. Please carefully read over your answers and the TAs comments. If you still want to talk after that, you can email them or come to their office hours.

HOPE: If you receive the HOPE Scholarship, please keep in mind that you are eligible only on a conditional basis. You must maintain a minimum 3.3 GPA. Keeping HOPE is **your** responsibility. Remember, the TA will not change your grades to help you keep HOPE. Please do not come to them about this.

Academic Honesty: All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>

Disability or Health Related Issues: Students with a disability or a health related issue who need a class accommodation should make arrangements with the Office of Student Disabilities and speak with their TA as soon as possible.

Miscellaneous Requests:

1. Please turn off your cell phone.
2. While class is in session, please refrain from any rude or distracting activities. Such behavior includes sleeping, reading or studying for other classes, text messaging, surfing the Internet or Facebook, reading newspapers, completing the crossword puzzle in the *Red & Black*, etc. Persistent violations may affect your participation grade.
3. Due to the nature of this course, it is imperative that you share your beliefs and opinions, and it is also important for you to respect the opinions of others in your class. The discussion we have in here will be fun, but please keep your rhetoric reasonable, responsible, and respectful.

Scheduled Topics and Readings

Week 1: The Logic of American Politics

- # Explain the components of collective dilemmas.
- # Describe the role of politics and institutions in resolving collective dilemmas.
- # Explain the premise behind several common games: the collective-action problem, the coordination game, the prisoner's dilemma, the free-rider problem, the tragedy of the commons, and the principal-agent problem.

1/6: CANCELLED FOR WEEK 1

Week 2: The Constitution and Historical Context

- # Describe the major provisions of the U.S. Constitution and the Georgia Constitution.
- # Explain how history and geography shaped the development of the federal government and Georgia politics.
- # Explain the purpose behind the institutions the framers crafted.

1/13: The Georgia Constitution

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 4

Week 3: Federalism

- # Explain how a federal system works.
- # Identify causes of increasing nationalization over time.

Differentiate the collective dilemmas that can be solved with more federal power from those that call for more state power.

Describe the role of the national, state, and local governments in Georgia politics.

1/20: NO CLASS, UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY

Weeks 4-5: Civil Rights and Liberties

Distinguish civil rights from civil liberties.

Identify major civil rights policies the president, the courts, & Congress adopted.

Identify the civil liberties protected explicitly & implicitly by the Bill of Rights.

Explain the process of incorporation.

Describe how voting rights have evolved in the state of Georgia.

1/27: Local Government

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 8

2/2: Chapter 4 concept map exercise due at midnight

<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/american-politicalsystem/ch/04/exercises.aspx>

2/3: Voting rights in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 9

2/6: FIRST EXAM

Week 6: Congress

Debate how members of Congress and the General Assembly can best represent constituents.

Identify voting rules and organizational structure of Congress and the General Assembly.

Explain the basic process of turning a bill into law.

2/9: Chapter 5 concept map exercise due at midnight

<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/american-politicalsystem/ch/05/exercises.aspx>

2/10: The Georgia General Assembly

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 5

Week 7: The Presidency

Outline the major duties of the president and the governor.

Demonstrate why gridlock may occur between an executive and a legislature.

2/17: The executive branch in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 6

Week 8: The Bureaucracy

Explain how historical events in professionalism.

Describe the principal-agent problem and apply it to understanding bureaucratic governance.

Explain mechanisms elected officials use to control the bureaucracy.

Describe how Georgia's education policy has developed over time and how elected officials exert control over policy administration.

2/24: Education policy in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 14

Week 9: The Judiciary

Describe the structure of the federal judiciary and the Georgia state judiciary, as well as the selection process for each.

Describe the state and federal appeals processes, including the U.S. Supreme Court's process of hearing an appeal.

Argue whether the U.S. Supreme Court should rule by ideology or precedent.

3/2: Chapter 8 concept map exercise due at midnight

<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/american-politicalsystem/ch/08/exercises.aspx>

3/3: The judicial system in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 7

3/10-3/14: NO CLASS, UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY

Weeks 10-11: Public Opinion

- # Evaluate opinion poll presentations for trustworthiness and content.
- # Explain the sources of considerations that shape individuals' attitudes.
- # Interpret shifts and differences in the content of public opinion on issues and politicians.
- # Explain the role of group politics in redistricting.

3/17: Georgian manders

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 10

3/23: Chapter 9 concept map exercise due at midnight

<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/american-politicalsystem/ch/09/exercises.aspx>

3/24: Exam review and concept map exercise

3/27: SECOND EXAM

Week 12: Political Participation

- # Identify the factors shaping political participation, including voter turnout.
- # Explain the paradox of voting.
- # Identify policies that have removed voting barriers or made it easier to vote.
- # Describe voting procedures, participation, and campaigning in Georgia.

3/31: The electoral process in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 13

Week 13: Organized Interests and Social Movements

Distinguish between interest groups and social movements.

Explain the role of collective action problems in group politics.

Describe the strategies interest groups use to try to in and state level.

Identify major laws regulating lobbying behavior.

4/6: Chapter 11 concept map exercise due at midnight

<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/american-politicalsystem/ch/11/exercises.aspx>

4/7: Interest groups in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 12

Week 14: Political Parties

Describe the role of party in government, party organization, and party in the electorate at the federal and state level.

Explain how historical events influenced party institutions.

Explain why there are only two major parties.

4/14: Political parties in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Chapter 11

Week 15: Elections and Campaigns

Explain the competing forces politicians consider when choosing whether to take moderate or an extreme positions.

Identify the effective and ineffective components of campaigns.

Identify the causes of vote choice.

4/21: Campaigns and elections in Georgia

Reading: Bullock & Gaddie, Interlude: votefordanae.com

4/28: Exam review

5/6: FINAL EXAM

12:00-3:00, Instr. Plaza S306