POL'S 1101 Introduction to American Government

Fall 2014

Instructor: Gina Flakes, PhD

Contact Information: ginaflakes@gmail.com; gflakes@gru.edu

Office hours: Mon. & Wed. 10:30-11:30am. Please don’t hesitate to contact me and set up another meeting time if those hours do not work.

Course Description: This course provides a broad overview of the political system in the United States, including national governmental institutions, the US Constitution, GA Constitution, civil liberties, interest groups and the role of the electorate. This course will accomplish this by looking at American politics through the lens of political science. In other words, we will try to develop an understanding of cause-and-effect relationships in politics. This course will also help develop critical thinking and analytical writing skills and will provide you with a foundation for future courses you may take in politics, as well as platform to evaluate events and experiences in daily living.


Supplemental Materials: All course and supplemental materials will be made available on Desire2Learn (D2L)

Course Structure and Content:

This is an in-class lecture/discussion course. Discussions and some communication, however, may also occur via our D2L shell. You will have three section exams, a cumulative final, assignments, participation and a research paper due by the last day of class (12/5).

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

10% ASSIGNMENTS
15% EXAM 1
15% EXAM 2
15% EXAM 3
20% FINAL EXAM
15% PAPER
10% PARTICIPATION

1. EXAMS: There will be three section exams each worth 15% and a cumulative final worth 20% of your total grade.
   - Section I - chapters 1-4 (15%)
   - Section II - chapters 5-8, 11, 14 (15%)
   - Section III - chapters 9, 10, 12, 13 (15%)
   - Final Exam - sections I-III (20%)
2. ASSIGNMENTS: Approximately every other Friday, students will complete an in-class assignment. Please note that the week of “Fall Pause” the in class assignment will be on Wed. Oct. 15. Six out of the seven assignments will be an issue analysis exercise and one will be a quiz over the GA Constitution. You must be present to complete these assignments. If you realize that you have a scheduling conflict for one of those days, you must contact be BEFORE the assignment date to make alternate arrangements. These assignments constitute 10% of your total grade.

3. PAPER: You must turn in a research paper that is at least 1700 words by the final day of the course (Dec. 5). It is worth 15% of your final grade. You are free to choose any topic as long as it in some way pertains to American Government and demonstrates a level of critical analysis and evaluation. This paper should not be an opinion piece or purely descriptive, and it cannot feature Wikipedia as a valid source. I will provide more details and guidance on the paper.

4. PARTICIPATION: Your presence and participation in lecture is worth a sizeable portion of your grade (10%). Though I do not technically take attendance, I do heavily value your attention and input. That is, I take into account meaningful contributions to class. Also most of your assignments will be completed in class, so if you are not present, you will not be able to submit them. Please come to lecture prepared and ready to add to potential discussion topics based on our readings.

**Do not text in class.** I can tell when you are doing it, no matter how stealthy you think you’re being. You will make me very angry if you do.

Extra Credit: You may earn extra credit by writing an analysis of a current event that somehow involves US politics and is at least 200 words long. These points would go toward your assignments’ portion of the total grade.

You may earn 10 extra credit points on your third section exam if you miss two or fewer classes.

GRU Grade Scale:
A 90-100%
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F BELOW 60

Make Up Exams/Late Assignment Make up exams and late assignments will not be provided or accepted. Only under the most exceptional circumstances (eg hospitalization) will any alternative arrangements be made. If you know that there is a conflict, let me know IN ADVANCE and I will consider alternate arrangements.

ADA Compliance Students with any form of physical, emotional and/or learning impairment requiring accommodation should please inform the instructor and contact the Testing and Disability Services at 706-737-1469 or TDD 706-667-4648.
Schedule

**Please come to class having read the week’s assigned chapter(s).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk #, Wk of</th>
<th>Chapter &amp; Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Aug. 18</td>
<td>CHAPTER 1 <em>Introduction</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Aug. 25</td>
<td>CHAPTER 2 <em>The Constitution</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sep. 1</td>
<td>CHAPTER 3 Assn. 1- Fri. sep. 5 <em>Federalism</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Sep. 8</td>
<td>CHAPTERS 4 <strong>Exam I (chapters 1-4) Fri. Sept. 12 Civil Liberties/Rights</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Sep. 15</td>
<td>CHAPTER 5 Assn. 2- Fri. sep. 19 <em>Congress</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Sep. 22</td>
<td>CHAPTER 6 <em>The Presidency</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Sep. 29</td>
<td>CHAPTER 7 Assn. 3- Fri. Oct. 3 <em>The Bureaucracy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Oct. 6</td>
<td>CHAPTER 8 <em>The Judiciary</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Oct. 13</td>
<td>CHAPTER 11 Assn 4 Wed Oct 15 <em>Interest Groups</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Oct. 20</td>
<td>CHAPTER 14 <strong>Exam II chapters 5-8, 11, 14 The Media</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Oct. 27</td>
<td>CHAPTER 9 Assn. 5 Fri Oct 29 <em>Public Opinion</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Nov. 3</td>
<td>CHAPTER 10 <em>Political Participation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov. 10</td>
<td>CHAPTERS 12 Assn. 6 Fr. Nov. 14 <em>Political Parties</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov. 17</td>
<td>CHAPTER 13 <strong>Exam III Fr. Nov 21 Elections and Campaigns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Nov. 24</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING WEEK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Dec. 1</td>
<td>Assn. 7 GA Constitution Quiz Wed. Dec 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Dec 8</td>
<td>Final Exam Week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus.**

**Academic Dishonesty Policy:**

All forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to cheating on tests, plagiarism, collusion, and falsification of information will call for discipline.

1. Cheating on test is defined to include the following:
   a. Copying from another student's test.
   b. Using materials during a test not authorized by the person giving the test.
   c. Collaborating with any other person during a test without permission.
   d. Knowingly obtaining, using, buying, selling, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of an un-administered test.
   e. Bribing any other person to obtain tests or information about tests.
   f. Substituting for another student, or permitting any other person to substitute for oneself.

2. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of any other person's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own work offered for credit: