

University of West Georgia

Ms. Carmen J. Lawrence, e-mail: clawrenc@westga.edu

Fall Semester 2009

POLS 1101-18: American Government

Dept. of Political Science and Planning

Pafford 112, T & Th 5:30-6:45

Course Description:

This introductory course is designed to allow students explore the various components of the American political system. Students will be provided a broad overview of the structure, political linkages, institutions and functions of the American Government. In addition, this course will also serve as a foundation for comprehending future American Government courses and the Political Science discipline in general.

Course Outcomes

By the conclusion of the course, students will have gained a general knowledge of:

- The basic values of American civic and political culture.
- The constitutional and institutional framework, political, and legal processes of the U.S. and Georgia.
- The interrelationship between American Governmental institutions.
- The basic terminology of political science & U.S. politics.
- American culture, values, and political institutions as compare with those of other types of government.

Required Text:

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, and Margaret Weir. *We The People: An Introduction to American Politics*. Georgia 7th Edition: W.W. Norton and Company, 2009.

Office Hours:

Office hours will be held before and/or after each class. You may contact the instructor via e-mail at clawrenc@westga.edu.

Class Attendance and Participation

In order to enhance the classroom experience, students are **strongly** encouraged to share their knowledge and opinions of the lectures, required readings, and any related information.

Outstanding classroom participation will result in 5 extra points added to the student's final grade. However, in order to engage in proper classroom discussions, **attendance is a must!**

Students will be expected to attend and be on time for each class session. Perfect attendance will result in 5 extra points added to the student's final grade. Conversely, five absences will result in a deduction of 10 points; six absences, 20 points; seven absences, 30 points; and eight or more absences and the instructor has the right to withdraw the student from the class.

Examination and Make-ups

There will be three exams and a final exam given throughout the semester. Exams will be in the form of multiple choices questions, true/false and short answer. Each exam is limited to the material discussed in class and the information presented in the text. The final exam **will not** be comprehensive. **THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS!!!**

Assessment:

<u>Grade Calculations</u>		<u>Grading System</u>
Exam One	25%	90 - 100 = A
Exam Two	25%	80 - 89 = B
Exam Three	25%	70 - 79 = C
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>25%</u>	60 - 69 = D
Total	100%	Below 60 = F

Academic Dishonesty

Simply put, do not plagiarize; I will fail you! This is an extreme violation of the University Honor code. Each party involved in this act will fully be prosecuted, including the individual furnishing the material. It is the student's responsibility not to share their work or collaborate during examinations. Plagiarism may result in expulsion from the university. Please see the Student Handbook for further details.

Housekeeping Notes

Respect towards your classmates and the instructor includes the following:

- No iPods, Mp3 players or other listening devices.
- Switch off (**not vibrate**) on all cellular phones.
- No computer usage during class except for the purposes of the class.
- No working on other assignments during this class period.
- No sideshows or co-signers; one speaker at a time please.
- No packing before the official ending of the class period; you will be notified of that time.

Course Outline

Week One

August 13th: Introduction of Syllabus
Overview of Course

Week Two

August 18th: American Political Culture, Read Ch.1
August 20th: The Founding and the Constitution, Read Ch. 2

Week Three

August 25th: The Founding and the Constitution, Read Ch. 2
August 27th: Federalism, Read Ch.3

Week Four

September 1st: Civil Liberties, Read Ch. 4
September 3rd: Civil Rights, Read Ch. 5

Week Five

September 8th: *Exam I (Ch. 1-5)*
September 10th: Public Opinion, Read Ch. 6

Week Six

September 15th: Groups and Interest, Read Ch. 11
September 17th: Groups and Interest, Read Ch. 11

Week Seven

September 22nd: The Media, Ch. 7
September 24th: The Media, Ch. 7

Week Eight

September 29th: *Exam II (Ch. 6, 11, 7)*
October 1st: Political Parties, Read Ch. 9

Week Nine

October 6th: Political Parties, Read Ch. 9
October 8th: Campaigns and Elections, Read Ch. 10

Week Ten

October 13th: Campaigns and Elections, Read Ch. 10
October 15th: Fall Break

Week Eleven:

October 20th: Political Participation and Voting, Read Ch. 8
October 22nd: Political Participation and Voting, Read Ch. 8

Week Twelve

October 27th: *Exam III (Ch. 9, 10, 8)*

October 29th: Congress, Read Ch. 12

Week Thirteen

November 3rd: Congress, Read Ch. 12

November 5th: The Presidency, Read Ch. 13

Week Fourteen

November 10th: The Presidency, Read Ch. 13

November 12th: Bureaucracy in Democracy, Read Ch. 14

Week Fifteen

November 17th: Bureaucracy in Democracy, Read Ch. 14

November 19th: The Federal Courts, Read Ch. 15

Week Sixteen

November 24th: The Federal Courts, Read Ch. 15

November 26th: Thanksgiving Break

Week Seventeen

December 1st: Final Exam Review

December 3rd: Last Day of Class

FINAL EXAM: TBA

I reserve the right to offer up **surprise bonus points** at any given time during instruction.
(Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments and changes on syllabi and dates as seen fit.)