



## **POLS 1101-12: American National Government**

**CRN: 80742**

Fall 2017

Instructor: David Peña

Office: Clayton Hall T103E

Office Hours: M/W: 10:30am-12:30pm; 3:30pm-4:30pm

Phone: 678-466-4604

Room: F006

Class Meeting Time: MW 8:55am – 10:10am

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Text: American Government and Politics Today – Clayton State University 19<sup>th</sup> {2<sup>nd</sup> CSU} Edition

Bardes, Schmidt, Shelley. (2017).

**Course Description and Objectives:** The aim of this course is to give students a thorough understanding of American political life: the main governmental institutions, the channels for elite and non-elite participation, and the context of social and economic power that shapes political and cultural activity.

The fundamental goal is to help you understand why American government and, to a lesser extent, Georgia state government operates the way they do. Some of the questions we will address in this course include: Why did the Framers of the Constitution create three separate branches of government? What rights does the Constitution bestow on American citizens? What role does the media play in determining what we, as citizens, think about politics and the government? Why are special interests so prominent in American politics? Why do Congress and the president always seem mired in legislative gridlock? In answering these and other questions, we will use current events to illustrate the general principles of politics and government.

Upon successful completion of the course you will be a better consumer of politics. You will be able to better understand news stories about politics and government. You will be able to cast a more educated vote in succeeding elections and have a working knowledge of both the United States and Georgia's Constitutions. In short, it is my hope that you will be a better federal and local citizen.

### **Assessments Methods/Types of Evidence**

- POLS 2101 Pre-and Post-Assessment Test
- POLS 2401 Political Geography Test
- POLS 3000-4000 Term Papers
- POLS 4490 Internship Coordinator and Site Supervisor Evaluation
- POLS 4500 Senior Capstone Research Paper

## Course Expectations:

**Expectation 1:** The major form of communication between the instructor and the students outside of the “classroom” will be by CSU email. Go to: <http://thehub.clayton.edu> and click "service" for information on configuring your laptop computer to comply with IT requirements. It is necessary for you have your computer configured to access CSU email. Please have your computer configured and set up for CSU email as soon as possible. You can also contact the HUB at 678-466-4357.

**Expectation 2:** Email me directly at [davidpena@clayton.edu](mailto:davidpena@clayton.edu). DO NOT email me using D2L if you wish to receive a reply. DO NOT respond to listserv messages that I send to the whole class and DO NOT send messages to the class listserv instead of emailing me directly. Doing so will cause the entire class to become privy to the issue you wish to bring to my attention. Use your CSU email address when contacting me. Professionalism in communication is important. Therefore, I **require** all emails to include a **subject, a proper greeting/salutation, and professional writing in both style and content**. You must also include your class identifier **POLS 1101-12** as I teach multiple classes and do not always remember which class a student is in. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in delayed response. Furthermore, I tend to ignore non-CSU emails in my inbox since I use the CSU email purely for CSU business. If you use a non-CSU email address you run the risk of not receiving a reply. I do not discuss anything to do with grades on an email other than a CSU email.

**Expectation 3: Due Date:** All assignments must be completed by **their assigned due date (listed on the following pages of the syllabus)**. Any missed worked due to unforeseen circumstances or due to Official University Business may be made up without penalty if accompanied by appropriate documentation. This includes any trips on the University’s behalf, a visit to the doctor, or a family emergency (death, sickness, wedding). Finally, you can access **D2L** to view grades for tests and papers, the syllabus, and other supplemental information.

**Grading:** Final grades will be determined based on the following points...

**Assessment 1: Major Exams:** (400 possible course points)

There will be four examinations. They are comprised of multiple-choice style questions covering assigned materials from the textbook, current events, and class lectures. Each exam is 50 questions long. You will have 60 minutes for each exam. They are worth 100 points each.

**Assessment 2: Chapter Quizzes:** (55 possible course points)

After each chapter, you must take a quiz before you can move on to the next chapter. Each quiz will be worth 5 points.

**Assessment 3: Discussions:** (30 possible course points)

To encourage interaction amongst students there will be discussion forums on each chapter (except for Chapter 1), only **6** of which are mandatory for you to participate in. Each post is worth 5 points for a possible 30 points.

You may also use this forum to ask questions and to seek clarification on certain points made in the chapters. I will also comment from time to time on the forums and reply to posts.

**Assessment 4: Georgia Constitution & Government:** (10 points)

The Georgia Constitution is at the back of the textbook and sample questions and answers are provided at the end of this syllabus. **There will be 48 questions covering the Georgia Constitution and government. They will be drawn from the sample questions below.**

**Assessment 5: Civic Engagement Project** (25 points)

Attend one of the following during the semester: a city council meeting, a school board meeting, a political event, a meeting of any political party or interest group, a court proceeding (as an observer, not a participant unless there in an official capacity), or other politically based event. Provide proof that you were there (**a photograph of yourself at the meeting**). **Provide proof as if you were presenting evidence for a case in court: prove to me without a doubt that you were there.** Hand in at least 3 pages of double-spaced text summarizing what went on at the event and what you learned. Papers are worth up to 20 points and the proof is worth 5 points.

**\*If you cannot complete the civic engagement component, you may write a 5-page, double-spaced paper on a topic of your choosing regarding the 2016 US Presidential Election, complete with sources.**

**Assessment 6: Extra Credit:** (10 points)

Students will have the opportunity to complete **one** extra credit assignment this semester. For this assignment, you may select a scholarly article from a peer-reviewed American Political Science journal that pertains to one of the topics covered in class. You will read the article and then write a 2-3 double spaced page paper summarizing the research, including the purpose of the research, the design used, and the researchers' findings. This assignment may be completed any time during the semester, but **papers are due to me by 9pm on Monday December 4th, 2017.** If you choose to complete this assignment, you will receive a guaranteed 3 points and up to 10 points added to your overall score.

**Grading:** Grades are based on total points earned, which means that the points earned equal the letter grade below. I will not give anyone "just one point" or more simply because you ask. The grade you receive is the grade **YOU HAVE EARNED.**

**520 Total points.**

468 – 520 = A

416 – 467 = B

364 – 415 = C

312 – 363 = D

0 – 311 = F

## Course Schedule:

| Week  | Topic  | Readings & Assignments  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Module I: The Republic, The Constitution, and Federalism</b> |  |   |
| 1: Aug. 14 - 20   | Introduction review syllabus, course expectations, and The Democratic Republic | 1.) Introduction/Syllabus<br>2.) Chapter 1  |
| 2: Aug. 21 - 27   | The Constitution   | 1.) Chapter 2<br>2.) Quiz Chapter 2 – I Due by 11:59PM 8/27<br>3.) Discussion Chapter 2 – Due by 11:59PM 8/27   |
| 3: Aug. 28 - Sept. 3  | Federalism   | 1.) Chapter 3<br>2.) Quiz Chapter 3 – Due by 11:59PM 9/3<br>3.) Discussion Chapter 2 – Due by 11:59PM 9/3<br>4.) Exam I – Due by 11:59PM 9/3            |
| <b>Module II: Rights, Liberties, and the People</b>             |  |   |
| 4: Sept. 4 - 10   | Civil Liberties  | 1.) <b>Labor Day – Sept. 4; NO CLASS</b><br>2.) Chapter 4<br>3.) Quiz Chapter 4 – Due by 11:59PM 9/17<br>4.) Discussion Chapter 4 – Due by 11:59PM 9/17 |
| 5: Sep. 11 - 17   | Civil Liberties  | 1.) Chapter 4<br>2.) Quiz Chapter 4 – Due by 11:59PM 9/17<br>3.) Discussion Chapter 4 – Due by 11:59PM 9/17   |
| 6: Sep. 18 – 24   | Civil Rights   | 1.) Chapter 5.<br>2.) Quiz Chapter 5 – Due by 11:59PM 10/1<br>3.) Discussion Chapter 5 – Due by 11:59PM 10/1  |
| 7: Sep. 25 - Oct. 1   | Civil Rights   | 1.) Chapter 5<br>2.) Quiz Chapter 5 – Due by 11:59PM 10/1<br>3.) Discussion Chapter 5 – Due by 11:59PM 10/1   |
| 8: Oct. 2 - 8   | Public Opinion and Political Socialization                                     | 1.) Chapter 6<br>2.) Quiz Chapter 6 – Due by 11:59PM 10/8<br>3.) Discussion Chapter 6 – Due by 11:59PM 10/8<br>4.) Exam II – Due by 11:59PM 10/8        |

**Module III: Interest Groups, Political Parties, and Campaigns**

|                  |                         |   |
|------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 9: Oct. 9 - 15   | Interest Groups         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) <b>Fall Break 10/9; NO CLASS</b></li> <li>2.) Chapter 7</li> <li>3.) Quiz Chapter 7 – Due by 11:59PM 10/15</li> <li>4.) Discussion Chapter 7 – Due by 11:59PM 10/15</li> </ol> |
| 10: Oct. 16 - 22 | Political Parties       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Chapter 8</li> <li>2.) Quiz Chapter 8 – Due by 11:59PM 10/22</li> <li>3.) Discussion Chapter 8 – Due by 11:59PM 10/22</li> </ol>   |
| 11: Oct. 23 - 29 | Campaigns and Elections | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Chapter 9</li> <li>2.) Quiz Chapter 9 – Due by 11:59PM 10/29</li> <li>3.) Discussion Chapter 9 – Due by 11:59PM 10/29</li> <li>4.) Exam III – Due by 11:59PM 10/29</li> </ol>  |

**Module IV: The Three Branches**

|                      |                  |  |
|----------------------|------------------|--|
| 12: Oct. 30 – Nov. 5 | The Congress     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Chapter 10</li> <li>2.) Quiz Chapter 10 – Due by 11:59PM 11/5</li> <li>3.) Discussion Chapter 10 – Due by 11:59PM 11/5</li> </ol>   |
| 13: Nov. 6 -12       | The President    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Chapter 11</li> <li>2.) Quiz Chapter 11 – Due by 11:59PM 11/12</li> <li>3.) Discussion Chapter 11 – Due by 11:59PM 11/12</li> </ol>   |
| 14: Nov. 13 - 19     | The Courts       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Chapter 12</li> <li>2.) Quiz Chapter 12 – Due by 11:59PM 11/19</li> <li>3.) Discussion Chapter 12 – Due by 11:59PM 11/19</li> <li>4.) Exam IV – Due by 11:59PM 11/19</li> </ol> |
| 15: Nov. 20 – 26     | <b>HOLIDAY</b>   | <b>THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS</b>   |
| 16: Nov. 27 – Dec. 3 | Overflow Week    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Overflow Week – Used for Adjustments</li> <li>2.) Georgia Politics Exam Opens 11/27</li> </ol>  |
| 17: Dec. 4           | Make-Up Exam Day | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Make-Up Exam In-Class During Class Time.</li> <li>2.) Georgia Politics Exam Due 12/4 @ 11:59PM</li> </ol>   |