

Government of the U.S.

Last Updated: Sat, 01/03/2026

Course prefix: POL

Course number: 1101

Section: MP

CRN (you may add up to five):
82337

Instructor First Name: Michael

Instructor Last Name: Polak

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

Each student will gain a solid understanding, both from a historical and current perspective, federal, state and local governments in the United States.

Course learning outcomes:

To achieve learning outcomes, the course is divided into six components. The components are the U.S. Constitution, the Georgia Constitution, the U.S. Supreme Court, State/Local Government, and historical and current events leading to social and political change in the U.S. The sixth component is student policy engagement. The learning outcome of this section, through group projects, is to teach students the importance and how to directly engage in the policy making process to enact change.

Learning outcomes will include the following primary sources: Articles of Confederation, Federalist Papers, Gettysburg Address, Emancipation Proclamation, Letters from Birmingham Jail, and Georgia Constitution and Bill of Rights

Required course materials:

Textbook

American Government 3e, Kratz, Waskiewicz

On-Line or download a PDF: (free)

[American Government 3e - OpenStax](#)Links to an external site.

Purchase or Rent Hardback or Paperback - **Optional:** (\$20.30 - \$52.25)

[Amazon.com: American Government 3e by OpenStax \(Official Print Version, paperback](#)

Grading policy:

Final grades are on the standard A (90%), B (80%), C (70%), D (60% and F (less than 60% scale), There will be no exceptions (ie 89.99% will be a B), unless approved by the Professor due to a personal issue or illness.

- Test 1 (20%)
- Test 2 (20%)
- Test 3 (20%)
- Assignments (10%)
- Class Participation: Policy/Political News of the Day/Class Discussions/Speaker/Group Attendance (10%)
- Group Project - Multiple Sections (20%)
- There will be several extra credit assignments to improve a student's grade

*** Above are close approximations. They may be modified at the discretion of the Professor.*

Attendance policy:

Attendance is strongly encouraged and essential in improving test scores, as most of the questions on the test will come from the lectures. Also, multiple classes have in-class assignments. Attendance is required for classes with guest speakers, tests and group projects/activities.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

One serious kind of academic misconduct is plagiarism, which occurs when a writer, speaker, or designer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, images, or other original material or code without fully acknowledging its source by quotation marks as appropriate, in footnotes or endnotes, in works cited, and in other ways as appropriate (modified from WPA Statement on "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism"). If you engage in plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, you will fail the assignment in which you have engaged in academic misconduct and be referred to the Office of Student Integrity, as required by Georgia Tech policy. We strongly urge you to be familiar with these Georgia Tech sites:

[Home | The Office of Student Integrity](#)
<http://www.osi.gatech.edu/index.php/>

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- *How do I understand human experiences and connections?*

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- *Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.*

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- *Intercultural Competence*
- *Perspective-Taking*
- *Persuasion*