

SYLLABUS
Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School of Public Policy
Georgia Institute of Technology

POL 1101
Government of the U.S.

Dr. G. A. Persons
Fall 2026

Course Overview

This course is about politics, government, public policy and the individuals who occupy that critical space which we refer to as “the political arena.” Those who occupy the political arena are many, and include elected officials and aspirants to elective office; political parties and interest groups who seek to determine who gets elected and what elected officials do once in office; and civil servants and appointed officials who staff the governmental bureaucracy and who take care that policies are executed and laws and regulations are duly enforced. “We the people,” voters and non-voters—taxpayers all, also play varied roles in the **dramatis personae** who populate and sustain American democracy.

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Citizenship area.

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

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I prepare for my responsibilities as an engaged citizen?

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

- Students will demonstrate a broad overview knowledge of the history of the United States, with emphasis on the organization, provisions and principles of the United States Constitution and how it is operationalized in everyday governance and citizenship. Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:
 - Critical Thinking
 - Intercultural Competence

- Persuasion
- Citizenship and its Responsibilities

Honor Code:

Students will be expected to comply with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. The Text of the Honor Code can be found at: policylibrary.gatech.edu. Academic Honor Code

Requirements for the Course Include:**Four (4) Exams, inclusive of the Final Exam**

Students are expected to keep abreast of current events relevant to the course coverage and are expected to be able to participate in class discussions in a civil and respectful manner.

Scheduling of Exams and Make-up Policy

Dates for Exams are not set in advance. Instead, exams will be announced at least 2 class periods in advance; and exams will be preceded by a brief review. Some Chapters MAY be covered only in designated parts. As indicated on the Syllabus Outline, Exams will be set to cover designated Chapters!

Students may make-up a single, missed exam. The Make-Up Exam will be a cumulative examination and will be offered only one time: at the end of the semester, at the scheduled time of the Final Exam.

The Make-Up Exam cannot be applied to improve a low performance on a regular exam.

Disability Accommodations –

Students needing Disability Accommodations for Exams should inform the Professor and we will make necessary and appropriate arrangements!

Grading Policy

Each Exam will carry a designated number of points. The value of the exams may vary somewhat due to the substance and content of the materials covered by each exam.

Individual grades will be calculated as a percentage of the total points obtainable for all exams.

Required Text-Book:

Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy, (2024 Presidential Election Edition) George Edwards III, Martin Wattenberg, and William Howell. 2025. Pearson Publishers.

Course Outline**Part I. Foundations**

Chapter 1. Introducing Government in America

Chapter 3. Federalism

Chapter 5. Civil Rights and Public Policy

Exam I**Part II. People and Politics**

Chapter 6. Public Opinion and Political Action

Chapter 8. Political Parties

Chapter 9. Campaigns and Voting Behavior

Chapter 10. Interest Groups

Exam II**Part III. The Policymakers**

Chapter 11. Congress

Chapter 12. The Presidency

Chapter 14. The Federal Bureaucracy

Chapter 15. The Federal Courts

Exam III

Part IV. Policies

Chapter 16. Economic and Social Welfare Policymaking

Chapter 17. Policymaking for Health Care, The Environment, and Energy

Chapter 18. Foreign Policymaking

Final Exam

The Final Exam for this class will be scheduled in accordance with the **Final Exam Matrix as provided by the Registrar's Office**. Additionally, the Final Exam Matrix will be shared in class.