



POLS
1101
OLA
Summer 2026

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT (CRN: 4084)

Time: ONLINE; **Location:** ONLINE; **Credit:** 3 hours
Professor: Carl Cavalli; **Office:** 338 Hansford; **E-mail:** carl.cavalli@ung.edu
Office Hours: Virtual – by email or by appointment every week

[Y]ou must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.
-James Madison

Course Description:

Prerequisite to all POLS 3000/4000-level courses.
This course is an intensive examination of the Constitution and the three governmental divisions. It includes a study of the national government in its relation to the states. Examples from the government of Georgia are included.

Required Readings:

Text: ISBN- 978-1-959203-11-7
NOTE: You **MUST** use the **FIFTH** edition. **Earlier editions are NOT the same.**
FREE online: <https://ung.edu/university-press/books/index.php>
Print version at UNG bookstores, Amazon and B&N
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Carl D. Cavalli (ed). 2025.
The Basics of American Government, Fifth Edition

Web Site:



<https://news.google.com/news/section?&q=Politics>

Google News/Politics

ONLINE: Home – <http://faculty.ung.edu/ccavalli/1101.htm>, D2L (“eLearning”) – <https://ung.view.usg.edu>, Turnitin – <http://turnitin.com>

Course Objectives and Format:

Core IMPACTS course: Citizenship and Social Sciences areas. 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:

- Citizenship: How do I prepare for my responsibilities as an engaged citizen?
- Social Sciences: How do I understand human experiences and connections?

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

- (Citizenship) ...demonstrate knowledge of the history of the United States and Georgia, and the provisions and principles their constitutions.
- (Social Sciences) ...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:

- Citizenship: Critical Thinking; Intercultural Competence; Persuasion
- Social Sciences: Intercultural Competence; Perspective-Taking; Persuasion

This course will utilize *D2L* online (also known as *eLearning*), but I like to keep things simple. We will not use any “modules”, etc. Instead, all course activity and communication take place via the announcement and discussion sections. We will engage in as much online **discussion** possible. To that end, *you need to read the assignments before their due date*. Be able to *discuss* and answer *questions* about them. The text lays out the basics (Though not required, you may take advantage of the text’s web site at <http://go.ung.edu/bag>). We will start one or more new topics (usually each class) with the appropriate text chapter. We will also debate class topics and follow related current events in **Google News** (<https://news.google.com/news/section?&q=Politics>) articles. *You* will lead these activities online. In *groups*, **all of you** will present and discuss one or more (depending on class size) articles or debate topics¹. The articles will be posted in the appropriate D2L discussion topics. Of course, you **all** are responsible for **all** class readings. There will also be audio, video and other materials (linked in D2L discussions)—they do not require prior preparation, but you *are* responsible for them. Most weeks, a written assignment will end the topic.

If you have test-taking anxiety, this is the course for you! No exams! Instead, you will be graded on the online **discussions** and **presentations** mentioned above, and **written exercises** scheduled for most weeks. Each assigned discussion and paper worth is 5% (5 points) of your final grade. *Do not turn in late papers!* If I accept late papers (and I may not!), you will lose 1 point of your paper grade for each day late. *Additional work (written work or presentations)* may be offered (see FAQs, below) *or required*. Your **presentation** or **debate** is 10% (10 points) of your grade. Use the table below to keep track of your grades and calculate your course grade:

Presentation	Point / %	Your Grade	D2L Discuss	Point / %	Your Grade	Written exercises	Point / %	Your Grade	Grading
1. Founders	10 Points For each presenter	NOTE: If you are in more than the required number of presentations, your grade will be the average of all plus one point for each extra.	BAG 1, 2, 3	5	_____	1. Ideology Survey	5	_____	
2. Lib./Cons.			BAG 4	5	_____	2. Media	5	_____	
3. Interest Gps			BAG 5	5	_____	3. Interest Groups	5	_____	
4. Parties/Elec.			BAG 6	5	_____	4. Political Parties	5	_____	
5. Congress			BAG 7,	5	_____	5. Congress	5	_____	
6. Presidency			BAG 8, 9	5	_____	6. Pres./Bur.	5	_____	90+ = A
7. Moot Court			BAG 10	5	_____	7. Judiciary	5	_____	80 to 89 = B
8. Affirm. Action			BAG 11	5	_____	8. Civil Lib / Civil Rts	5	_____	70 to 79 = C
9. Public Policy			BAG 12	5	_____	9. Public Policy	5	_____	60 to 69 = D
10. Foreign Pol.			BAG 14	5	_____	10. Foreign Policy	5	_____	
Total:	10	_____	Total (one drop):	45	_____	Total (one drop):	45	_____	Your Total:

I do not **grade** on a curve (You earn what you earn...I *hope* you all earn “A”s!). A typical class average is about a mid- to upper- “C” (“C” is *average* — not below average...“B” is *above* average). Just completing the requirements most likely earns a “C” (70-79). “B” (80-89) requires effort *beyond* just requirements. “A” (90-100) requires *extraordinary* performance.

¹ These are video presentations. **Every group member must be visually present in videos.** You will post video links to appropriate D2L discussion topic.

Notes on “attendance”:

1. The **UNG attendance policy** (see the latest *UNG Student Handbook*, or *Bulletin*) applies to this course. I consider your online participation in discussions as attendance; 2. Any **D2L announcements** are considered sufficient notice. So, please check D2L often.

Online help: IT Help Desk at: helpdesk@ung.edu / 706-864-1922 / walk-in locations: <https://ung.edu/information-technology/contact.php>

Course Schedule:

Legend: **BAG #** = Cavalli (ed.), *Basics of American Government, 5th Edition* chapters (see Required Readings). Following the chapter numbers are **chapter titles/topics**. **Present** = student debates/article presentations (see updates on presentation web page). **Paper** = Written exercises (see D2L).

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: Read Chapter; D2L chapter discussions		Wednesday: Presentations Post to D2L by 5pm		Thursday: D2L discussion close by 8pm		Friday: Papers due to Turnitin.com by 8pm	
18 May	Introduction: Hello! D2L Announcements	19 May	BAG 1—Democracy/Gov. BAG 2,3—Const., Federalism	20 May	BAG 4—Socialization/Media	21 May	Present 1: Founders Present 2: Lib./Cons.
25 May	Memorial Day Holiday	26 May	BAG 5—Interest Groups BAG 6—Parties/Elections	27 May	BAG 6—Parties/Elections	28 May	Present 3: Int. Groups Present 4: Elections
1 Jun	BAG 7—Congress	2 Jun	BAG 8—Presidency	3 Jun	BAG 9—Bureaucracy	4 Jun	Present 5: Congress Present 6: Presidency
8 Jun	BAG 10—Judiciary	9 Jun	BAG 11—Civil Liberties	10 Jun	BAG 11—Civil Rights	11 Jun	Present 7: Moot Court Present 8: Affirm. Act.
15 Jun	BAG 12—Public Policy	16 Jun	BAG 14—Foreign Policy	17 Jun	Present 9: Welfare by 8pm Present 10: For. Pol. by 8pm	18 Jun	Paper 9: Public Policy Paper 10: For. Policy
							<<< NOTE: Paper due 8pm THUR

Drop/Add ends May 19th

Required Primary Documents (links in related D2L topics): Declaration of Independence, US & Georgia Constitutions, Bill of Rights, Gettysburg Address, Emancipation Proclamation, Letter from a Birmingham Jail

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A blue banner with a yellow speech bubble on the left that says "Scan to Follow Us!". To the right of the speech bubble are five QR codes, each with a social media icon above it: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube.

CHEAT = FAIL. Cheating or plagiarizing will result in an automatic zero for the exam or assignment, a zero for participation and attendance, AND forfeiture of all extra credit. At my discretion, it may ALSO result in academic integrity charges and an “F” for the course.

UNG Integrity Code: “I will not lie, cheat, steal, plagiarize, evade the truth or tolerate those that do.”

All students in this class are bound by the above Integrity Code. For information on Academic Integrity as defined by UNG, see the *UNG Undergraduate Catalog* (http://catalog.ung.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=252#Academic_Integrity_Policy). See also <http://www.plagiarism.org/>.

Plagiarism in any form is a violation of UNG Academic Integrity policies and will not be tolerated:

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) is prohibited by the student code of conduct. This includes ChatGPT, Grammarly, Microsoft Copilot, and all other A.I., and applies to all written/online work.

UNG Early Intervention required statement:

As part of UNG’s Early Intervention commitment to your academic success, I may refer you to university services designed to help you succeed. Please understand that such referrals are not a form of punishment – they are intended to help you. In turn, I expect you to take advantage of the offer.

For additional policies, see: <http://ung.edu/academic-affairs/policies-and-guidelines/supplemental-syllabus.php>

Accessibility Statement: If you need this document in another format, please email me (carl.cavalli@ung.edu) or call 706-864-1872.

Find more information here: <https://ung.edu/web-communications/web-accessibility/accessible-documents.php>.



Accommodations for disabilities: <https://ung.edu/student-accessibility-services/>

The University of North Georgia is committed to equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an accommodation, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and the Office of Student Accessibility Services. In this case, contact Student Accessibility Services, in the Stewart Student Success Center, Room 233 (706-867-2782, accessibility-dah@ung.edu).