

Course: Political Science 1101: American Government, CRN 81718

Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 AM-12:15 PM; 2:00 PM-3:15 PM

Location Correll 108 AND 202

Fall Semester, 2018

Course Format Face to Face meetings, twice weekly at location and times above

Professor Tim Ryles, Ph.D., Part Time

Regular Occupation. I work with law firms as expert witness and consultant in insurance and consumer protection litigation, nationwide. My wife and I reside in Brunswick.

Office Location. Part time instructor, no office space is provided. If you need to speak with me, please arrange an appointment either before or after class on Tuesday or Thursday, most likely in hall way. No office phone is provided, but I can be reached at 404-375-2729 between the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday through Friday or by email at tryles@ccga.edu. My response time will be within a half day unless I am in deposition or trial, in which case I will respond to your message in the evening or the following day.

Text and Reading Material. The text book is James A. Morone and Rogan Kersh, **By the People**, 3d. Edition, available in the book store or on line.

Class attendance is a requirement of this course. Please sign the class attendance form that will be circulated at beginning of each class session.

Grades will follow the college standard: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 00-59.

The syllabus contains material that is not in your text and new material may be suggested as events unfold between now and semester's end. I reserve the right to alter, amend, or revise the syllabus at my discretion. You will receive timely notice of any changes.

Method of Teaching. I will vary between lecture and lecture/discussion mode depending on the subject matter. Some lectures will not be based upon textbook materials. You may ask questions at any time by raising a hand.

Evaluations. You will be asked to evaluate the course before the final exam.

Examinations. My usual practice is to give at least four exams. I ask your patience on this point since I need to acquaint myself with college protocol and technologies. Make-up exams will need to be scheduled within a week after your return to school following your absence.

Content and Learning Objectives. This course provides three semester hours of credit and has no prerequisites. According to the course description, this is an introductory course in American government covering the organization, functions, and processes of federal, state, and local governments with emphasis on the federal. This course satisfies the Georgia requirement for proficiency in studies of the United States and Georgia Constitutions.

I have taught at three universities and have concluded that in courses such as this, unlearning for many students is more difficult than learning the material we will cover. With that in mind, I want us to work toward the following objectives.

1. Improve our understanding of the structure and functions of our governments.
 2. Recognize that the processes we discuss must be evaluated not only by fairness of the particular process, but also by the consequences following from the processes.
 3. How decisions are made by public officials, keeping in mind that there is no such thing as a non-decision.
 4. Develop an awareness of the many sources of authority (power) governing our conduct, government being only one among several authorities.
 5. Democracy may appear in different forms, but it has some differentiating features.
 6. Scholars generally agree that there are certain requisites for a democratic regime to develop and flourish.
 7. Rational behavior for individuals is not always in the best interest of the greater society or polity.
 8. An introduction to some of the ethical principles undergirding public decision making.
 9. How, whether and even if the public should have its way on some public matters.
 10. the role of government in a society is different from any other institutions that may be competing with it for power.
 11. Domestic policy is difficult to unravel from foreign policy and vice versa.
 12. Some ways in which you may better exercise your citizenship skills.
 13. I would like to say that developing skills of critical thinking is an objective and I state it in two ways. First, it is critical that you think about omnipresent government. If we satisfy that goal, I will be pleased. The course alone, however, is unlikely to develop skills of critical thinking. You have to do that on your own by integrating and evaluating everything else you learn within a political framework.
 14. When you go home for Christmas, I hope you can tell everyone you took this course and it was, at least, okay. Even if it made you feel uncomfortable at times.
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Course Outline Pol Sci 1101 Tim Ryles, Ph.D

Session	Topic	Readings
01.	Overview of Course, Introductions and Expectations	
02.	O' brave new world that hath such features in it: The Colonies as commercial ventures * The First World War 1756-1763 (to us, the French-Indian War) ends benign neglect * Treaty of Paris 1763 ended the war * Treaty set western boundary limiting settler access to frontier * The Crown needs financial support * Soldiers are quartered in colonial homes	1-79
03.	As the twig is bent: Early customs and practices of exercising authority in the Colonial Period. * The Great Chain of Being begins to give way to government by consent * Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England * Authority by Contract: Mayflower Compact, State Constitutions, charters * Liberty/Freedom maximized. Frontier was hazardous, but always out there. * Freedom as "Free Domain" fostered a sense of entitlement? * Freedom as personal autonomy * Freedom as flourishing * Consent of the governed * Limited government, limited participants in government * Building or not building a wall: Master John Cotton v. Roger Williams on religious liberty * Virginia Statute for religious freedom (1786)	
04.	Come the Revolution: Philosophical Roots of the American Political System * Social Contract of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau with some deference to Plato * Natural Law and the Declaration of Independence * Montesquieu and separation of powers * Isaac Newton: Laws of motion and inertia	

05. The Constitution as Counter-Revolution: Review & Critique of the Seven Articles

- * Separating or scattering government authority
- * Winners and losers in Philadelphia
- * The Constitution is agreed to: Could it happen today?
- * “We the people.” Really?

06. Foxes v. Hedgehogs: Federalists and Anti-Federalists battle over ratification

- * Mr. Madison’s Design for an emerging nation: Federalist #10
- * Property rights v. human rights: But wait! Humans are property
- * Is the new machine self-correcting? Institutional design v. character development as guarantors of republicanism

07-08. What is a democracy anyway? And What goes along with it?

- * Democracy or a Republic? Wrongly framing the framers
- * Plato’s picture of “Democratic Man” Book VIII, The Republic
- * Consumerism: Friend or foe of democracy?
- * The evolution of the American Dream
- * Would Willie Loman have a better chance of realizing the American Dream today?
- * “Ism-ology” unveiled: Conservatism, Liberalism, Libertarianism, Socialism, Nihilism, Anarchism, Authoritarianism, Communism
- * Social Requisites of democratic regimes

09. Federalism: Laboratories of Democracy or rusting rudders on the ship of state?

80 – 105

- * Federalism and Nationalism
- * Unitary, “Confederal” and federal forms of government
- * Georgia as a unitary government
- * Reserved Powers and state sovereignty
- * To everything there is a season: Changing federal-state relations

10-11. Civil Liberties

106-140

- * The “Bill of Rights” terminology developed in the Civil War era
- * John Stuart Mill’s Essay on Liberty
- * John Snow (Game of Thrones) on Truth and Lies

- * Your Rights in Georgia’s Constitution
 - * Key Supreme Court Decisions protecting individual rights against governments
 - * The Surveillance State and a Free Society
- 12-13. Civil Rights 142-183
- * Framing the Issue: Struggle for equality or full citizenship?
 - * Slavery, Jim Crow and other means of Resistance
 - * Amendment XIV and the New Constitution
 - * Un-Abridging the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States
 - * Suffragettes, slavery and Amendment XIV
 - * “Ain’t I a Woman?” Speech by Sojourner Truth to Women’s Convention, 05/29/1851
 - * Civil Disobedience: Henry David Thoreau, Dr. King and others: When does conscience trump the law?
- 14-15. Public Opinion and Political Participation 184-219
- * How we learn politics
 - * Measuring public opinion: Do the numbers have a message?
 - * Leaping over the obstacles to participation
 - * What politicians tell us about ourselves
 - * Information input overload and dumbing down the electorate
 - * Tribal warfare: a new phenomenon or just something do-gooders can’t stand?
 - * Neuroscience as challenge to the rational voter paradigm
 - * The Daddy Party is red faced, will Mama get the blues?
16. Messing with the Media 220-249
- * What is News?
 - * Balanced reporting leads to imbalanced results?
 - * “But I have friends in the media!” syndrome
 - * What is the “free press”?
- 17-18. Campaigns, Parties, Elections, Special Interests and VERY special Interests 250-323
- * Too many elections and too few electors? Non-voting as voting
 - * The electoral college: Triumph of land over people? Cure or disease for America?

- * Demographic and psychographic factors in voting behavior
- * Party distinguished from interest group
- * Why two parties?
- * Wanna make some real money? Lobbying for a livelihood
- * Citizen's United: democracy overrun with money?

19. Congress 324-359

- * Bi-Cameral legislative arrangement
- * What do you expect from a representative? Styles of lawmaking
- * Congress passes laws and passes on hard to agree upon matters to ___?
- * Difference between House and Senate
- * Multiple powers of Congress
- * Gerrymandering: Corrupting Mr. Madison's grand scheme?
- * How a bill becomes a law: The paper trail
- * Georgia's Legislative System

20-21 The Presidency 360-397

- * Power beyond all expectations?
- * The Imperial Presidency: How and Why
- * Functions of the presidency
- * The Office in perspective: What makes a president powerful? Great?
- * Georgia's Plural Executive

22. The Bureaucracy: 398-427

- * What is a bureaucracy?
- * Growth in the federal bureaucracy
- * Privatization: Another way to pilfer the public treasury and avoid accountability or to show bureaucrats how to do things "better and cheaper"?
- * Is the unelected bureaucracy a better reflection of public opinion than Congress?
- * So, you want to run government like a business and other pipe dreams
- * Ethical Paradigms for government decision making: Dr. Spock as Benevolent Bureaucrat
- * We make the rules, we interpret the rules, we enforce the rules: regulatory agencies

- 23-24. The Judicial Branch 428-465
- * The Federal Court system
 - * Becoming a judge/justice
 - * Marbury v. Madison: Sometimes you wish you hadn't brought that case
 - * The theory of mechanical jurisprudence and other myths about the Courts
 - * Decisions every educated person should know
 - * Georgia's Judicial System
25. The Policy Making Process: Domestic Politics 466-485
- * The Tragedy of the Commons: Self-interest and public destruction (YouTube)
 - * Stages of the policymaking process
 - * Street level bureaucrats and divining the will of Congress
 - * Just what is the public interest anyway?
- 26- 27. Foreign Policy 486-507
- * The policy making actors
 - * Grand Strategies of Yesteryear
 - *The WEIRD Nations and the rest of the world
 - * Ursula Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," Short story, on line
 - * The Waning of Pax Americana
 - * Russia and America: Competing Cultures, Clashing Visions
 - * Will a Clash of Civilizations lead to an Outbreak of Religious Wars?

Wrapping up and Exit Strategies

