



# Introduction to American Government

POLS 1101-006 (CRN 53978)  
Summer 2021: 3-Week Session  
(Maymester 2021)



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**Office Location:** Langdale 1015

**Virtual Office Hours:** Virtual / by appointment

## Syllabus

**Prerequisites:** None, this is an introductory, required course for all Georgia State students.

***PLEASE NOTE:*** You are responsible for being aware of all policies, information, and assignments listed on this syllabus. You are also responsible for all materials covered in class, regardless of your attendance, including assignment handouts provided throughout the semester. By remaining in this class, you are accepting this responsibility and agreeing to follow the course guidelines. Read each section carefully and contact me immediately with any questions you may have.

## **Learning Objectives:**

This is a required course to complete your undergraduate degree at Georgia State University. Over the course of the semester, you will be learning the following.

1. The distinctive characteristics of the American system of government and politics and how it compares to other countries' systems.
2. The benefits enjoyed by citizens of democratic governments.
3. The principles and structure of the U.S. Constitution & how it has developed over time.
4. How and why the relative power of the different levels of government have changed over time.
5. The history and present status of American civil liberties and civil rights.
6. The nature and determinants of public opinion, and its impact on government and politics.
7. Why and how citizens participate (or refrain from participating) in politics.
8. American political parties, their origin, and their functions.
9. How the Congress, President and Judiciary operate and interact to enact, implement and define laws and public policies.
10. How to effectively use this knowledge as thoughtful citizens participating in American Democracy.

## **What to Expect**

This is a Maymester course, meaning that an entire 15-week course is fit into 3 weeks. This means that this course is extremely fast paced. You will need to spend around 3 hours each day on the coursework to do well. It is almost impossible to ‘catch up’ if you fall behind, so staying on top of the coursework is essential. The best way to go about this is to set and stick to a schedule – for example, working on this course between 9am to 12pm each weekday.

This course is fully online. Everything, including exams, will be administered virtually. The class will also be fully asynchronous, meaning no aspect of the course will require us to meet or work virtually at the same time. You will read 1-2 chapters per day in a digital adaptive learning textbook. Adaptive learning means that as you read, you will be frequently asked questions about the most important parts of the chapter. If the system detects you have not adequately mastered an important learning objective, it will adapt your learning experience until you master it. This, in turn, will help you better prepare for the three exams you will take this semester.

You will take three exams, designed to assess how well you remember and understand the most important information and ideas from the textbook. A study guide will be provided for each exam to help you narrow the focus of your preparation.

You will also be completing three activities that are designed to broaden your understanding of American politics and/or help you develop vital civic skills. Two of these activities will be available for only one week and will take about 90-minutes each to complete. The third activity can be completed throughout the course and will take two hours to complete.

Your basic weekly schedule will be as follows: read and complete textbook chapters from Monday to Thursday, prepare for the exam on Friday, and take the exam from Friday to Sunday. Do this three times, and the course is completed!

## **Announcements and Communications:**

When I need to make announcements to the class as a whole, I will do so by posting an announcement on the class iCollege page. If I need to contact you individually, I will do so through your GSU email. You should be in the habit of checking your email *daily*, throughout the course of your tenure at Georgia State University. You can download the Outlook app on your phone or computer and connect with your GSU email. If you need to contact me, please use my email address: [rluke2@gsu.edu](mailto:rluke2@gsu.edu). The iCollege email system is unwieldy, *thus the only way to get in contact with me is through email.*

If you have questions or issues *while purchasing an access key* from the Kendall Hunt Publishing website (this is explained below), please contact Kendall Hunt support at [HelpDesk@kendallhunt.com](mailto:HelpDesk@kendallhunt.com). If you *have any other technical questions* related to the adaptive learning system (discussed below), including *activating* your access key, please contact technical support at [HelpDesk@kendallhunt.com](mailto:HelpDesk@kendallhunt.com).

**Please note:** Since iCollege is essential for accessing course materials and receiving announcements, please contact me immediately if you lose iCollege access (due, for example, to being dropped for nonpayment) so that I can add you manually back into iCollege right away.

### **Electronic Devices:**

As this is an online course, a computer, with internet connectivity, **and webcam**, are required. Due to the ongoing health crisis, the library is both closed and unable to loan computers. During the exam periods, communication with other students in the course is not allowed (including but not limited to texting, email, and WhatsApp). Students that are caught communicating with one another, regarding the exam, during the exam period will receive a zero for the exam and may be referred to the Dean's Office for academic dishonesty.

### **Required Textbook and Online Adaptive Learning Courseware:**

The primary content for this course is a required digital textbook called Understanding the American Way of Government and Politics, delivered by Kendall Hunt Publishing through the Area9 Rhapsode adaptive learning platform (hereafter, I will refer to it as "Area9"). You will access this fully digital adaptive learning textbook through iCollege by clicking on chapter links under the modules labeled Day 1, Day 2, etc. under the Content tab. When you click on a chapter link, it launches Area9 in a new window. You will see a chapter module link in that new window. Click on that to access the chapter.

#### **To purchase an access key and activate it, you should follow the instructions below:**

The first time you follow a link in iCollege that takes you to an Area9 chapter, you will be asked to enter an Access Code. Instructions for purchasing a code are provided below, but before purchasing, **you can get started right away by using this free temporary code:**

**PE3JUB5KUY35**. This code expires on Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. If you use the temporary code, you will need to purchase a new one in order to continue accessing Area9 after it expires on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

You have two options for purchasing an Access Code: (1) purchase directly from the publisher online (recommended) or (2) purchase through the GSU Bookstore (NOT recommended). The first option is the fastest, easiest, and cheapest option, so you are discouraged from choosing the second option unless the bookstore is the only way you can use your financial aid (e.g., you have an athletic scholarship).

#### **Option 1 (RECOMMENDED): Purchase Directly from Kendall Hunt - \$50 / instant email delivery**

- (1) Follow this link: [https://he.kendallhunt.com/american\\_way](https://he.kendallhunt.com/american_way)
- (2) Click on "Add to Cart" (making sure the quantity is set to 1). This should send you to a new screen showing this publication in your cart.
- (3) Click on "Checkout." This should take you to a login screen.
- (4) Click on "Checkout without an account." This will take you to a new screen, at the top of which it reads, "Kendall Hunt Store Checkout / STEP-1: PLEASE ENTER YOUR BILLING SHIPPING INFORMATION."
- (5) On that screen, enter all the required information. For "Institution," choose Georgia State University. Then click on "Continue to Next Step." This will take you to a new screen, at the top of which it reads, "Kendall Hunt Store Checkout / STEP-2: REVIEW ORDER AND PAYMENT."
- (6) On that screen, you should review your order (verifying the quantity and information are correct) and enter your credit or debit card information. After that, click on "proceed with

purchase.” This will take you to a screen verifying purchase and providing you with an Access Code. You should also receive a confirmation email with the Access Code. Make sure to keep your Access Code.

If you experience difficulties purchasing an Access Code from the Kendall Hunt website, please contact Kendall Hunt support at [HelpDesk@kendallhunt.com](mailto:HelpDesk@kendallhunt.com). If you do not hear back from Kendall Hunt support within 24 hours, you may contact Brittanie Tucker at [btucker@kendallhunt.com](mailto:btucker@kendallhunt.com).

**Option 2 (NOT recommended): Purchase from GSU Bookstore - \$62.50 / 3-7-day mail delivery or in-person pick up**

You will not want to use this option unless it is the only way you can use your financial aid. Most students will not need to purchase from the bookstore for financial aid purposes unless they have a special scholarship that can only be used for books through the bookstore. Remember, you can use this code **PE3JUB5KUY35** to get instant free temporary access for the first week of the semester. Thus, you do NOT need to wait for your financial aid refund check before getting started with the work in Area9. Please note that the bookstore’s website (which can be accessed by following the link in iCollege that says "View / Order Course Materials") makes it look like you are purchasing a physical paper textbook from them, but this is not the case because **THERE IS NO PAPER BOOK AVAILABLE FOR THIS COURSE**. Instead, the bookstore is only selling you an access code that you will pay more for and will find less convenient to obtain in comparison to Option 1 above

**Financial Hardship**

If you anticipate facing significant financial hardship making it impossible for you to purchase the textbook after the free temporary access code - **PE3JUB5KUY35** - expires on May 17<sup>th</sup>, please work with the Financial Management Center ([FMC](#)) to find a solution during the first three weeks of the semester. If FMC cannot help you, you may need to consider dropping the course and taking it during a semester when you can afford to purchase the required adaptive learning textbook. **But please do not drop the course without discussing with me first.**

**Grading Scale:**

This course is graded on a +/- letter scale. The following scale will be used to calculate grades.

A+	4.3	97-100		B+	3.3	87-89		C+	2.3	77-79		D	1.0	60-69
A	4.0	94-96		B	3.0	84-86		C	2.0	74-76		F	0.0	0-59
A-	3.7	90-93		B-	2.7	80-83		C-	1.7	70-73		WF	0.0	

**ALL GRADES WILL BE POSTED ON iCOLLEGE**

For more information please visit: [www.gsu.edu/es](http://www.gsu.edu/es)

### **Required Internet Connection and Equipment**

As this is a fully online course, you will need a reliable internet connection. [This page provides information about free and low-cost internet access options for GSU students.](#)

All exams in this course require the use of Respondus Lockdown Browser with Monitor. This means you must have access to a computer with a functioning webcam and microphone for each exam. Unfortunately, Respondus with Monitor does NOT work on Android devices, iPhones, or Chromebooks. (Note: an iPad *will* work for all class requirements, including taking exams.) If you want to confirm your equipment will work, you can try it out on a special quiz designed solely for this purpose called “FAKE Quiz (not real / not required) – Requires Respondus LockDown Browser + Webcam,” which is available in iCollege under Assessments -> Quizzes. You can “take” this fake quiz as many times as you want for purposes of checking your equipment. It is NOT graded. Instructions for downloading Respondus Lockdown Browser are [available at this link](#).

If you do not have a functional microphone, webcam, and/or a Respondus-compatible device, the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Online Education (CETLOE) will rent the needed equipment to you for free. You can pick up rented equipment on campus or have it delivered. **The university has limited supplies, so make sure to order your equipment as early in the semester as possible.** You can request equipment [on the form available at this link](#) beginning as early as May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Where it says, “Tell Us About Your Technology Need,” make sure to specify that you need to be able to take exams with Respondus Lockdown Browser with Monitor and tell them what equipment you are lacking for doing so.

### **Course Requirements and Graded Evaluations:**

Your final grade will be calculated on the basis of four components. First, 5% of your final grade will be based on accurate completion of a syllabus quiz located on iCollege. Second, 15% of your final grade will be based on three activities. Third, 40% of your final grade will be based on required work you do each week within the Area9 adaptive learning system (the textbook). Fourth, 40% of your final grade will be based on three multiple choice exams, which you are required to do during their respective exam periods. These exams will be conducted via iCollege. Below you will find more information about the three required components of your grade:

**Syllabus Quiz (5%):** You will be taking a brief syllabus quiz on iCollege to verify your understanding and acknowledgement of the duties, structure, and requirements of this course. By completing this quiz, students accept the responsibilities laid out in the syllabus, and agree to abide by them. This quiz is open book, open note, and you have unlimited attempts. There is no reason you should not get 100% on this quiz. This quiz will also be conducted with Respondus so that you can test if your webcam and computer meet its requirements.

**Area9 Chapters (40% of Grade):** Each week, Monday to Thursday, you will read 1-2 chapters (with each normally divided into 2-3 parts) in the Area9 digital adaptive learning textbook. The adaptive system will frequently ask you questions, called “probes,” which test your understanding of the material. The system takes your performance on probes and several other variables into account to give you a personalized learning experience aimed at helping you master the material as fully and efficiently as possible. While working through the system, you will earn a score based on how far you progress and how well you answer probe questions. You can work to improve your scores by re-reading and answering probes up until the deadline each

week (Sunday at 11:59pm). You can expect to see your progress score update in the iCollege gradebook every time you end a session in Area9. Your grade will reflect your progress, and it will steadily increase as you complete more and more of the chapter. With time and effort, you should be able to get close to 100% on every chapter. Your average chapter score at the end of the semester will be worth 40% of your final grade.

*The due dates for the Modules are listed in the course schedule.*

**Activities (15%):** , you will complete three separate activities that are cumulatively worth 15% of your final grade for the semester. Specific instructions will be provided about each activity in iCollege, but here is a brief overview:

<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>Estimated Time Required</b>	<b>Week Available</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade</b>
<i>Know Thy Political Self?</i>	40 minutes	Week 1	Sunday, 5/16 at 11:59 pm	Take a political survey to identify the political parties you align with most and least	5%
<i>Voting in Action</i>	50 minutes	Week 2	Sunday, 5/23 at 11:59 pm	Learn how to register to vote and vote in Georgia through scenario-based interactive lessons	5%
<i>Budget Decisions on the Fiscal Ship</i>	80 minutes	Weeks 1-3	Sunday, 5/30 at 11:59 pm	Learn budgetary politics by playing a game aimed at balancing the federal budget in a manner consistent with your values	5%

**Section Exams (40%):** You will be taking three one-hour multiple choice exams in the designated periods. Each exam is worth 10% of your final grade, with the exam you score highest on worth an additional 10%. For example, if you score 80% on the first two exams, and 90% on the third, the third exam will count for 20% of your final grade while the first two will count for 10% each. The exams are collectively worth 40% of your final grade. Each of the three section exams will consist of approximately 50 multiple-choice questions and each will be non-cumulative i.e., each exam will focus only on the material in the unit just covered and not on material from previous units. Given the abbreviated nature of this course, there will be no final exam.

### Exam Periods

**Exam 1:** 5/14 at 12:00am to 5/16 at 11:59pm (Chapters 1 to 4)

**Exam 2:** 5/21 at 12:00am to 5/23 at 11:59pm (Chapters 5 to 9)

**Exam 3:** 5/28 at 12:00am to 5/30 at 11:59pm (Chapters 10 to 14)

These exams are embedded within iCollege, and use the Respondus Lockdown Browser function to identify cheating. Respondus operates as an automated proctor during your exam. It monitors both your screen activity and your physical behavior while taking the exam. I then review this footage to monitor for cheating. I understand that this may seem an invasion of your privacy, and I am both sympathetic to this and understand your concerns. However, this is the best available option for this course. I do not take privacy concerns lightly, and you should be confident that I will:

- A. Not share or otherwise show any footage to anyone but me, except in the case of academic dishonesty in which case this footage may be shown to representatives of the Dean's Office.
- B. Immediately delete any record of this footage from my computer following the conclusion of the course.

*Please email me if you have privacy concerns, or otherwise wish to discuss these issues.*

### **Exam Review:**

Although I do not publicly release exam questions and answers, I am happy to thoroughly review each exam with you either by email, or via virtual (Zoom, Skype, WebEx) meeting.

### **Makeup Exams and Late Assignments:**

No late assignments will be accepted, and there will be no makeup exams. As this is an abbreviated course, you need to complete all assignments and exams in the period specified. This may seem harsh, but there is no time to catch-up once you fall behind. If you fail to complete a chapter before the deadline, you will receive a zero for that chapter. If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero. See "Problems and Emergencies" for the only exceptions to this rule.

### **Study Guides:**

I have posted Study Guides for each of the 3 Exams. I urge you to complete these *while* completing the chapters. These Guides are a good way to structure your learning. Moreover, these Study Guides will prove an invaluable resource when preparing for the Exams. Everything that will be covered on the Exams is included in the Study Guides, although not everything on the Study Guides will be in the Exams. I urge you to download and print these out immediately and fill them out as you go along.

### **Extra Credit Opportunities:**

As this is an online, abbreviated course, there will be no opportunities for extra credit. You should focus your efforts on completing the graded course components.

### **Miscellaneous Course Policies and Notifications:**

#### **Cheating and Academic Misconduct:**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Any violations of Georgia State University's Policy on Academic Dishonesty (Section 409) will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. If you would like to view the policy in full, you can go to <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwfhb/sec409.html>. Please note that the University considers violations of dishonesty rules to be grounds for receiving an "F" in this course. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, academic misconduct, or plagiarism, examine the university policy and/or ask me.

#### **Policy on Missed Assignments & Deadlines:**

There will be no makeup assignments or exams. If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero. If you are late to an exam period, you must take it in the time that remains when you arrive. If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from attending an exam, you should contact me via email immediately. You will be expected to provide a university-approved excuse and documentation. My policy on the make-up exams is that the same material will be covered, but the questions will be harder and may include short answer or essay questions. Given the abbreviated nature of this semester, make up exams will rarely be given, and only for university approved and documented reasons. Late assignments WILL NOT be accepted.

#### **Withdrawals and Hardship Withdrawals:**

The last day to withdraw and receive a W is May 21<sup>st</sup>. Students who withdraw on or before that day receive a W; students who withdraw after will receive a WF. Ws have no effect on your GPA whereas WFs count as Fs for GPA calculation purposes. If you are struggling in the course and are worried about keeping your HOPE Scholarship, then you should consider taking a W before 5:00pm on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Please feel free to contact me before doing so for advice, as I will be able to offer you a clear accounting of where you stand in the course. Another kind of withdrawal, called "Hardship Withdrawals," are only given if students experience non-academic emergencies beyond the midpoint of the semester which interfere with or prevent the completion of their coursework. Such hardships are usually due to medical, personal or financial emergencies, and are not to be used for academic issues. These withdrawals also do NOT count as F's for GPA calculation purposes.

#### **Disability Policy:**

Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services (located in Suite 230 of the New Student Center). Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodations are sought. Please advise me (and provide me with a signed copy of your Accommodation Plan) if you have a documented disability that needs to be accommodated.



### **Privacy and Personal Information:**

In keeping with USG and university policy, I will make every effort to maintain the privacy and accuracy of your personal information. Specifically, unless otherwise noted, I will not actively share personal information with anyone except university employees whose responsibilities require access to said records. However, some information may be subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. This means that while I do not actively share information, in some cases I may be compelled by law to release information. Also, your information will be managed in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which prohibits the release of education records without student permission. For more details on FERPA, [go here](#). Furthermore, after reviewing the Respondus footage to identify cheating, I will immediately delete all video and screen logs of the exam period upon conclusion of the course.

### **Online Behavior:**

It is the expectation of the instructor that students will behave in a professional and polite manner in this class. Interactions on the internet often seem impersonal, but there is always someone else on the other side of the monitor. Students will interact with one another in a courteous and professional manner on any course or university platform.

### **Problems, Emergencies, and Counseling Services:**

If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from taking an exam or completing an assignment, you should contact me. Also, generally speaking, college can be a challenging time for students and it can all feel overwhelming at times. This is especially true during the novel and trying times. If you are feeling a lot of stress, thinking of harming or killing yourself, have been a victim of a crime, and/or are having difficulties in your relationship with an intimate partner, there are a lot of people and resources eager to help you at GSU and off-campus. Both GSU and non-GSU resources have adapted to offer virtual or by-phone assistance. Please consider taking advantage of these opportunities if you might benefit from help:

- GSU Counseling Center: 404-413-1640
  - Offers immediate crisis help (including after-hours), counseling, support groups, stress management and meditation classes, and more.
  - <https://counselingcenter.gsu.edu/crisis-services/>
  - <https://counselingcenter.gsu.edu/immediate-help>
- GSU Student Victim Assistance: 404-413-1965
- GSU Campus Police: 404-413-3333
- Off-Campus Resources:
  - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
  - Rape Crisis Center: 404-616-4861
  - Atlanta Victim Assistance: 404-588-4740
  - Multi-County Crisis Helpline: 1-800-715-4225

**\*\*\*\* Your constructive assessments of this course, on these and most importantly the end of the semester evaluations, play an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State University. Upon completing this course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation when checking final grades on PAWS. \*\*\*\***

**Deadlines and Exam Periods:**

*This schedule provides the due dates of assignments and exam periods for the course. The calendar on the following page provides a suggested day-by-day plan for staying on track in the course. Each exam period is 72 hours – beginning Friday morning, ending Sunday at midnight.*

**Week One:**

**Due Friday (5/14) by 11:59 pm:** Syllabus Quiz (on iCollege)  
Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and Welcome Module

**Due Sunday (5/16) by 11:59 pm:** Activity 1: *Know thy Political Self*

**Exam One Period:** Friday (5/14) at 12:00 am through Sunday (5/16) at 11:59 pm

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**Week Two:**

**Due Friday (5/21) by 11:59 pm:** Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

**Due Sunday (5/23) by 11:59 pm:** Activity 2: *Voting in Action*

**Exam Two Period:** Friday (5/21) at 12:00 am through Sunday (5/23) at 11:59 pm

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**Week Three:**

**Due Friday (5/28) by 11:59 pm:** Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14

**Due Sunday (5/30) by 11:59 pm:** Activity 3: *Budget Decisions on the Fiscal Ship*

**Exam Three Period:** Friday (5/28) at 12:00 am through Sunday (5/30) at 11:59 pm

**Daily Schedule with Due Dates – Maymester 2021**

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Welcome Chapter ○ Chapter 1  ○ <b>Week 1 chapters open - 12:00 am</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 2	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 3	<b>13<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 4	<b>14<sup>th</sup></b> ○ <b>Exam 1 Period open: 12:00 am</b> ○ <b>Syllabus Quiz Due: 11:59pm</b> ○ <b>Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and Welcome Chapter Due: 11:59pm</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup></b> ○ <b>Exam 1 Period closes: 11:59 pm</b>  ○ <b>Activity 1 Due: 11:59pm</b>
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 5  ○ <b>Unit 2 chapters open - 12:00 am</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 6	<b>19<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 7	<b>20<sup>st</sup></b> ○ Chapter 8 ○ Chapter 9	<b>21<sup>st</sup></b> ○ <b>Exam 2 Period open – 12:00 am</b>  ○ <b>Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 Due: 11:59pm</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup></b> ○ <b>Exam 2 Period closes - 11:59 pm</b>  ○ <b>Activity 2 Due: 11:59pm</b>
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 10 ○ Chapter 11  ○ <b>Unit 3 chapters open - 12:00 am</b>	<b>25<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 12	<b>26<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 13	<b>27<sup>th</sup></b> ○ Chapter 14	<b>28<sup>th</sup></b> ○ <b>Exam 3 Period open – 12:00 am</b>  ○ <b>Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 Due: 11:59pm</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup></b> ○ <b>Exam 3 Period closes - 11:59 pm</b>  ○ <b>Activity 3 Due: 11:59pm</b>

Items in **bold font** indicate deadlines  
 Items in normal font indicate suggested completion schedule