

PS 5030: Seminar in American Government & Politics

Fall 2008

Thursdays 6:15pm-9:00pm

Room 1132, Old Library Classroom

Professor: Todd Hartman

Office: 2059 Old Belk Library Classroom Bldg.

Office Hours: MWF from 8:30am-9:30am

MWF from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Appointment (confirm by Email)

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Course Description

This seminar will provide you with an overview of some of the core topics in American politics. Of course, there is no way to cover every topic, nor is it even possible to evaluate the bulk of the literature within each area. Therefore, my goal is to give you a sample of the key findings in the literature, as well as help you develop critical skills for evaluating this research.

Required Readings

We will be reading the following books in their entirety (see below), as well as numerous journal articles and selected chapters from scholarly works. The books should be available in the bookstore, but you may also want to search for used copies online (e.g., Amazon.com). All of the articles can be obtained electronically through the university library's electronic databases (e.g., JSTOR), and I will leave copies of selected chapters to be photocopied (note that readings from books will be marked with an asterisk on the schedule).

1. Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0226012727.
2. Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection, 2nd Edition*. Yale University Press. ISBN: 0300105878.

As this is a graduate seminar, you are responsible for completing all of the listed readings for a given week before coming to class.

Grading

Your grade will be based on a combination of your participation, critical reviews of the weekly readings, research proposal, and the final comprehensive examination. As a general rule, I do not accept late work, so plan ahead.

Discussion Participation	20%
Critical Reviews (5 x 5% each)	25%
Research Proposal	25%
Final Examination	30%

Discussion Participation

This course is a *seminar* in American politics, which means that there will be little time devoted to lecturing you and more time allocated to discussing the readings. You are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in the group discussions. Thus, it is important (and required) that you complete the readings as assigned before coming to class. You should also prepare a list of discussion questions based on the material.

Critical Reviews

You will write 5 separate critical reviews of the weekly readings. In this review, summaries should be kept to a minimum (i.e., a few sentences – assume that everyone, including me, has done the readings). Instead, the purpose is for you to critically evaluate the theoretical and methodological findings of *all* of the readings for a given week. You are free to choose which weeks you will write on, but please note that they are due before class meets. Papers should be approximately 4 pages in length, well-organized, proof-read, and scholarly in nature. Proper citation is required if you reference outside materials.

Research Proposal

You will write a 12-page research proposal integrating the literature that you have read in class, as well as other relevant readings you find outside of class. The paper must have the following sections: introduction, theory/literature review, hypotheses, and design. While you are not required to actually conduct the analysis, the idea is that you (or someone else) could take your proposal and carry out your work. Additional information will follow.

Final Examination

The final exam is designed to mimic an American government comprehensive exam and will test your theoretical and analytical understanding of the material for the course. This will be a closed book exam.

AsULearn < <http://asulearn.appstate.edu/> >

You should get in the habit of checking AsULearn. Course announcements, hard to find readings, and grades will be posted online.

Academic Integrity

The university's academic integrity policy can be found at the Office of Student Conduct web site: <<http://studentconduct.appstate.edu/>>. Students attending Appalachian State University agree to abide by the following code:

- Students will not lie, cheat, or steal to gain academic advantage.
- Students will oppose every instance of academic dishonesty.

Disability Statement

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <<http://www.ods.appstate.edu/>> or 828-262-3056. Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

Course Overview	
Dates	Topic
Aug. 28	Course Introduction
Sep. 4	Political Parties
Sep. 11	Party Identification
Sep. 18	Political Ideology
Sep. 25	Civic Engagement & Political Participation
Oct. 2	Voting
Oct. 9	Public Opinion
Oct. 16	*** Fall Break – No Class ***
Oct. 23	Processing Political Information
Oct. 30	Emotion in Politics
Nov. 6	Race & Politics
Nov. 13	Interest Groups
Nov. 20	Congress / Research Proposal Due
Nov. 27	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class</i>
Dec. 4	The Presidency
Dec. 11	Final Exam

08/28: Introduction

1. Course overview and expectations.
2. Brief lesson on understanding statistics in political science.

09/04: Political Parties

1. Aldrich, J. (1995). *Why parties? The origin and transformation of political parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Read Ch. 1-2, 6-9; skim Ch. 3-5]

09/11: Party Identification

1. * Campbell, A., Converse, P.E., Miller, W.E., & Stokes, D.E. (1960). *The American voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Read Ch. 6-7]
2. Bartels, L. M. (2000). Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952-1996. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44, 35-50.
3. Rahn, W. M. (1993). The Role of partisan stereotypes in information processing about political candidates. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37, 472-496.

09/18: Political Ideology

1. * Converse, P. E. (1964). The nature of belief systems in mass publics. In D. E. Apter (Ed.), *Ideology and discontent* (pp. 206-249). New York: Free Press.
2. Jennings, M. K. (1992). Ideological thinking among mass publics and political elites. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 56, 419-441.
3. Conover, P. J., & Feldman, S. (1981). The origins and meaning of liberal-conservative self-identifications. *American Journal of Political Science*, 25, 617-645.
4. Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., & Sulloway, F. W. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 339-375.

09/25: Civic Engagement & Political Participation

1. Putnam, R. D. (1995). Tuning in, tuning out: The strange disappearance of social capital in America. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 28, 664-683.
2. Brady, H. E., Verba, S., & Scholzman, K. L. (1995). Beyond SES: A resource model of political participation. *American Political Science Review*, 89, 271-294.
3. La Due Lake, R. & Huckfeldt, R. (1998). Social capital, social networks, and political participation. *Political Psychology*, 19, 567-584.
4. Tolbert, C. J., McNeal, R. S. (2003). Unraveling the effects of the Internet on political participation? *Political Research Quarterly*, 56, 175-185.

10/02: Voting

1. Downs, A. (1957). An economic theory of political action in a democracy. *Journal of Political Economy*, 65, 135-150.
2. Markus, G. B. (1988). The impact of personal and national economic conditions on the presidential vote: A pooled cross-sectional analysis. *American Journal of Political Science*, 32, 137-154.
3. MacKuen, M. B., Erikson, R. S., & Stimson, J. A. (1992). Peasants or bankers? The American electorate and the U.S. economy. *American Political Science Review*, 86, 598-611.
4. Hillygus, D. S., & Shields, T. G. (2005). Moral issues and voter decision making in the 2004 presidential election. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 38, 201-209.
5. Mulligan, K. (2008). The “myth” of moral values voting in the 2004 presidential election. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 41, 109-114.

10/09: Public Opinion

1. Page, B. I., & Shapiro, R. Y. (1993). Effects of public opinion on policy. *American Political Science Review*, 77, 175-190.
2. Berinsky, A. J. (2007). Assuming the costs of war: Events, elites, and American public support for military conflict. *Journal of Politics*, 69, 975-997.
3. Gelman, A., & King, G. (1993). Why are American presidential election polls so variable when votes are so predictable? *British Journal of Political Science*, 23, 409-451.
4. Zaller, J. R., & Feldman, S. (1992). A simple theory of the survey response: Answering questions versus revealing preferences. *American Journal of Political Science*, 36, 579-616.

10/23: Processing Political Information

1. Lau, R. R., & Redlawsk, D. P. (2001). Advantages and disadvantages of cognitive heuristics in political decision making. *American Journal of Political Science*, 45, 951-971.
2. Taber, C., & Lodge, M. (2006). Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50, 755-769.
3. Lodge, M., Steenbergen, M. R., & Brau, S. (1995). The responsive voter: Campaign information and the dynamics of candidate evaluation. *American Political Science Review*, 89, 309-326.
4. Burdein, I., Lodge, M., Taber, C. (2006). Experiments on the automaticity of political beliefs and attitudes. *Political Psychology*, 27, 359-371.

10/30: Emotion in Politics

1. * Westen, D. (2007). *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation*. New York: PublicAffairs. [Read: Ch.1-6]

11/06: Race & Politics

1. * Mendelberg, T. (2001). *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [Ch. 1, 4-6]
2. Kuklinski, J. H., Cobb, M.D., & Gilens, M. (1997). Racial attitudes and the “New South.” *Journal of Politics*, 59, 323-349.

3. Kinder, D. R., & Winter, N. (2001). Exploring the racial divide: Blacks, Whites, and opinion on national policy. *American Journal of Political Science*, 45, 439-456.

11/13: Interest Groups

1. * Baumgartner, F. R., & Leech, B. L. (1998). *Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and in Political Science*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [Ch. 3]
2. Walker, J. L. (1983). The origins and maintenance of interest groups in America. *American Political Science Review*, 77, 390-406.
3. King, D. C., & Walker, J. L. (1992). The provision of benefits by interest groups in the United States. *Journal of Politics*, 54, 394-426.
4. Hall, R. L., & Wayman, F. W. (1990). Buying time: Moneyed interests and the mobilization of bias in Congressional committees. *American Political Science Review*, 84, 797-820.
5. Thompson, D. F. (1993). Mediated corruption: The case of the Keating Five. *American Political Science Review*, 87, 369-381.

11/20: Congress

1. * Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection, 2nd Edition*. Yale University Press.
2. * Hibbing, J. R., & Larimer, C. W. (2004). What the American public wants Congress to be. In L. C. Dodd & B. I. Oppenheimer (Eds.) *Congress Reconsidered* (pp. 55-76). Washington, DC: CQ Press.

12/04: The Presidency

1. * Neustadt, R. E. (1990). *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York: The Free Press. [Ch. 1, 3-4]
2. Canes-Wrone, B., & de Marchi, S. (2001). Presidential approval and legislative success. *Journal of Politics*, 64, 491-509.
3. Baum, M. A., & Kernell, S. (1999). Has cable ended the golden age of presidential television? *American Political Science Review*, 83, 99-114.
4. Mayer, K. R., & Price, K. (2002). Unilateral presidential powers: Significant Executive Orders, 1949-99. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 32, 367-386.