“A number of citizens, whether amounting to a minority or majority of the whole, who are united and activated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of citizens, or the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.”
--James Madison’s definition of “faction,” in Federalist X.

“Let me…warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party.”
--George Washington, Farewell Address, 1796

“If I had to go to heaven except with a political party, I would rather not go there at all.”
--Thomas Jefferson

“Political parties created modern democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties.”
--political scientist E.E. Schattschneider

“A party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life.”
--John Stuart Mill

“Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party”
--typing exercise, 1867 (author unknown)

“The (major) parties organize the electorate by reducing their alternatives to the extreme limit of simplification.”
--E.E. Schattschneider

“The Democrats are the party that says that government will make you smarter, taller, richer, and remove crabgrass from your lawn. The Republicans are the party that says government doesn’t work, and when elected prove it.”
--P. J. O’Rourke

“I am not a member of any organized political party. I am a Democrat.”
--Will Rogers

“Given the choice between a Republican and someone who acts like a Republican, people will vote for the real Republican all the time.”
--Democratic President Harry Truman

“(I will give) a choice, not an echo.”
--1964 Republican presidential nominee Barry Goldwater
“As they say in electoral politics, two’s company, three’s a problem that must be undermined through legislative obstacles….”

--Comedy Central’s Jon Stewart

“One of the best-kept secrets in American politics is that the two-party system has long been brain-dead—kept alive by … state electoral laws that protect the established parties from rivals and federal subsidies and so-called campaign reform. The two-party system would collapse in an instant if the tubes were pulled and the IV’s were cut.

--Political scientist Theodore Lowi

Class Venue and Meeting Times: MAYBANK 316, 3:05-4:20 Tuesday and Thursday

Instructor: J. David Gillespie Office: 301 Political Science Annex (26 Coming St.)

Office Schedule: 2:00-2:45 Tuesday and Thursday, and gladly by appointment

Phone: (843) 953 4936 (only during office hours) Email: GillespieD@cofc.edu or jdadigj@gmail.com
(843) 953 5724 (Political Science office)
(843) 377 8007 (Residence) (864) 923 2793 (Cell) 4

Note from the Instructor: I want to come to know you and I warmly welcome your contacting me. If your schedule allows, drop by my office some time during my printed office hours; but do not hesitate to contact me if you need to for a meeting or talk at some other time.

Catalog Course Description: This course examines the nature, functions, organizations, and activities of political parties in the American political system. Emphasis is placed on parties as democratic organizations as well as their role in government and in the electorate, both historically and in contemporary electoral politics.

Assigned Reading:

Required:


Mike Lofgren, *The Party is Over: How Republicans Went Crazy, Democrats Became Useless, and the Middle Class Got Shafted*. Order right away; now available from Amazon vendors for $10 or less, including mailing.
J. David Gillespie, *Challengers to Duopoly: Why Third Parties Matter in American Two-Party Politics*, selections. Although book is available for purchase (traditional book or ebook form), purchase is not necessary. One copy shelved in library and ebook is accessible to you through library catalog.

I may distribute from time to time copies of relevant contemporary articles or provide information about how you may access them on the Web. Treat these as required reading just as assigned materials from the texts are required.

Methods of Instruction and Criteria for Evaluation:

Remember your responsibility to take good notes on lectures and on insights gleaned from discussions in class, and it may serve you well to note important things from assigned readings.

*Although some class sessions will feature lecture-style presentations, I anticipate that much of our time together will proceed seminar-style. As in seminar courses generally, it will be incumbent upon you and your fellow students to read and think about assigned readings prior to our discussion of them in class. I expect that we will begin many of our classes with pertinent video clips, from Youtube and other sources, to launch our discussion for the day. Seminars can be far more exciting and informative than straight lectures, but only if students adopt the understanding that there is a collective responsibility of everyone in class to teach through active, informed participation in the ongoing discussion.*

Your grade for the course will be determined on the basis of the following:

Three (3) of the following (each counting 20%: 60% total):
2 pre-final tests, 2 short Research Essays

Participation grade: 10%

Final examination grade: 30%.

The two pre-final tests are tentatively scheduled for September 26 and November 5 respectively. In conformity with the College of Charleston master exam schedule, your final examination is scheduled for 4:00 pm on Saturday, December 7. *(See Schedule of Topics and Assignments, below).*

The format for the tests and final is likely to be eclectic: some essay material, some terms to identify, and a set of short-answer questions (mainly multiple choice).

The Research essay or essays you produce and submit should be no shorter than four nor
longer than six text pages (font no larger than 12 points, with standard margins). Your title and name should go on a separate header page, not on your first text page, and you are also to attach a separate bibliography page following your last text page. You may use any standard style manual and follow it with respect to whether you choose footnotes, endnotes, or in-text notes for your paper. Consistency is what is crucial. Cite the source not only for quoted material but also for anything you have paraphrased or any to whom/which you are indebted for a particular idea, insight, viewpoint, or fact. Include a separate alphabetized bibliography including all sources you have cited. If you have questions, don’t hesitate to ask me.

The topic(s) you choose for your Research essays (s) must be pertinent to the topic of this course; that is, to political parties. You may, for example, choose to write a brief essay on the history of one of our national major parties, the contemporary ones (Republican or Democratic), or one of the historical ones (Federalist, Democratic-Republican, or Whig). You may want to do an analysis of a major campaign for nomination and election—a campaign that succeeded or one that failed. Or to do a biography and character analysis of a major contemporary or historical partisan figure in the U.S. Or how about a case study of one of the critical periods of partisan realignment—1854-1868, 1892-1900, 1932-1936, or 1968-1980—what motivated it and what the results were? Or alternatively you may decide to research and write on one of the third-party or independent challengers, either past or present (for example, today the Greens or Libertarians or Constitution Party or in the past the Anti-Masons, Know Nothings, Populists, Bull Moose Progressives, Dixiecrats, Socialists, Communists, Trotskyists, George Wallace and his American Independent Party, or Ross Perot and the Reform Party), or of a third-party figure crucial in U.S. history (for example, Eugene V. Debs). You might choose to do an in-depth analysis of the attitudes of the founders of the American nation toward the concept of party. And if you are of a comparative politics bent, you may want to analyze the party system of another nation (for example, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Mexico, China, India, South Korea, Japan, or Iraq), pointing out how it differs from that of the United States. For that matter, you may find it interesting to analyze the system of party politics in South Carolina (or another state), pointing out what makes it unique or extraordinary in comparison with the pattern of party politics in most states of the U.S.

The topic(s) you choose must be of something you have never researched and written about prior to taking this course. On the title page you are to affix and sign this statement: “On my honor, I have never previously researched the topic of this paper, and all of the research and writing that went into producing this paper is mine and mine alone.”

As indicated below on the Schedule of Topics and Assignments, the scheduled due dates for Research essays are October 10 or 17 (your choice: last day before Fall break or first day after) and November 19. You are to submit your essay in person and by hard copy, not online, but you should also keep a back-up copy. You are not required to present a
preliminary “first draft”, but if you would like me to look over your preliminary work and
give you feedback, I will gladly do so provided to give me the preliminary draft at least a
full week in advance of the due date for the Research essay.

Please note: Other than your grade for participation, your pre-final average will be
determined by just three of the four graded assignments (the two tests and two
Research essays). Best case scenario is for you to do all four, after which I will drop
the lowest of these four grades in computing your grade. But if you miss one and are
unable to make it up within a reasonable period of time, the missed item will be the one
removed from consideration and I will count the other three.

Your grade for the course will be determined using the College of Charleston grading
system and will be assigned based upon your standing at semester’s end on the
following numerical scale:
A = 92-100; A- = 90-91; B+ = 88-89; B= 82-87; B- = 80-81; C+ = 78-79; C= 72-77;
    C- = 70-71; D+ = 68-69; D = 62-67; D- = 60-61; F = 59 and below.

If there is a student who has a documented disability and has been approved to receive
accommodations through SNAP services, please feel free to discuss this with me.

Attendance: An attendance roster will be distributed by the instructor each class day and
you are to initial beside your name indicating your presence. If you arrive late, it is
absolutely your responsibility to come by and initial the roster to receive credit for
attendance. Attendance is specifically required on test and exam days. Because it is
impossible to participate in the ongoing class discussion when you are absent, regular
attendance will be one of the factors used in determining your participation grade.

Honor Code: Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the
Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Cases of suspected academic
dishonesty are to be reported directly by the instructor and/or others to the Dean of
Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will
receive an XF in the course, indicating failure in the course due to academic dishonesty.
The grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years, after which the student
may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary
probation, suspended, or expelled from the College by the Honor Board. The complete
Honor Code and all related processes are presented in the Student Handbook.
AUGUST 22 and 27:

1) U.S. PARTY POLITICS: HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE SETTING


Read: Hershey, pp. 1-3; Gillespie, pp. 21-23.

AUGUST 29 and SEPTEMBER 3:

2) PARTIES AND PARTY SYSTEMS

What are political parties? The American two-party system

Read: Hershey, Chapters 1 and 2

SEPTEMBER 5, 10, and 12:

3) DIMENSION ONE: THE POLITICAL PARTY AS AN ORGANIZATION

The state and local party organizations. The parties’ national organizations. Party activists.

Read: Hershey, pp. 47-49 and Chapters 3, 4, and 5; Lofgren, pp. 1-54. Discussion on Lofgren scheduled for September 10.

SEPTEMBER 17, 19, AND 24:

4) DUOPOLY, 3RD (MINOR) PARTIES, AND THE ROLES THEY PLAY

Read: Gillespie, Preface, Chapters 1, 4, and 14, and pp. 44-47, p. 86-87, pp. 156-159, and pp. 194-197.

TEST 1: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

OCTOBER 1, 3, 8, 10, and 17 (FALL BREAK OCTOBER 15. NO CLASS)

5) DIMENSION TWO: THE POLITICAL PARTY IN THE ELECTORATE


Read: Hershey, pp. 107-108 and Chapters 6, 7, and 8; Lofgren, pp. 55-111. Discussion of Lofgren scheduled for October 3.

OCTOBER 10 OR 17 (YOUR CHOICE): DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING RESEARCH ESSAY NO. 1

OCTOBER 22, 24, 29, and 31:

6) PARTIES, NOMINATIONS, AND ELECTIONS

How parties choose candidates. Choosing the presidential nominees. The general election. Financing the campaigns.

Read: Hershey, pp. 171-172 and Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12; Lofgren, pp. 112-164. Discussion of Lofgren scheduled for October 29.

TEST 2: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

NOVEMBER 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, and 26:

7) DIMENSION THREE: THE PARTY IN GOVERNMENT

Parties in Congress and state legislatures. The party in the executive and the courts. The semi-responsible parties. The place of parties in American politics.

Read: Hershey, pp. 257-259 and Chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16; Lofgren, pp. 165-217. Discussion of Lofgren scheduled for November 12.

NOVEMBER 19: DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING RESEARCH ESSAY NO. 2

LAST PRE-FINAL CLASS NOVEMBER 26

FINAL EXAMINATION: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 4:00 PM