

POL 327: Political Parties, Spring 2017

M/W/F 1pm-1:50pm, Maybank Hall 307

Professor: Karyn Amira

Office: Political Science Department Room 301

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 3-5 or by appointment

Course Overview and Objectives:

This course is designed to give you an understanding of how American political parties have functioned throughout history. Though we will discuss the history of the major parties, the majority of the course will be focused on how parties operate today. There are two features of this course that differ from previous years. Since the course takes place directly after a chaotic election year, we will periodically discuss how the parties are (or are not) dealing with the aftermath of a Trump victory. You will also be responsible for “representing” a minor party throughout the course. This means you will occasionally provide the class with updates on how your party is reacting (or should be reacting, theoretically) to the current political climate. It will also relate to your written assignments (see below).

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Identify and explain the historical development and contemporary structure of American political parties
- Evaluate the evolution, functioning and consequences of parties in the United States
- Demonstrate critical thinking and writing skills related to parties in the United States
- Demonstrate an analytical, social-scientific disposition toward American politics

Tests:

Over the course of the semester you will have three tests, which are non-cumulative. They are each worth 20% of your final grade. Tests will cover anything we have read for homework or anything we have discussed in class. The final test will take place during the final exam time slot provided by the school.

Assignments:

Toward the beginning of the semester you will be assigned a minor American party to follow throughout the entirety of the course. During our “Meetings of the Parties” (see course agenda), we will discuss the political climate and hear from each person about their party’s positions. This will help familiarize you with parties in the US that we don’t hear much about. This will contribute to your participation grade (along with attendance and participation during regular classes). In addition to these meetings, you will have 3 short writing assignments about the party you have been assigned. The first is a micro research paper and the other two are press releases. See writing assignment sheet for instructions.

Grading Breakdown by Percentage:

5 % - Paper #1	20% - Test 1
10 % - Paper #2	20% - Test 2
10 % - Paper #3	20% - Test 3
	15% - Participation (includes attendance)

Grading Scale for Final Semester Grades

100-94 A	79-77 C+	63-60 D-
93-90 A-	76-74 C	59-0 F
89-87 B+	73-70 C-	
86-84 B	69-67 D+	
83-80 B-	67-64 D	

Late Assignments, Incompletes, Extensions and Make-Up Exams: Late assignments will be docked 5 percent per day (half letter grade), for each day that a project is late including weekends. There will be no make-up exams and I will not grant incompletes in the course, except in cases of emergency or where university policy applies. Doctor's notes are expected for medical excuses. If you miss an exam without a valid excuse, you will receive a zero.

Attendance Policy: Attendance and participation counts towards 15% of your grade. Attendance will be taken during the first month or so of class to make sure that students are showing up, per the school's attendance verification policy. Periodically skipping class will be noticed and will result in poor grades. It happens every semester. If you are the type of person who shows up to class only once in a while, take a different course.

Office Hours: Having trouble? Have questions? Come on by. I promise it will be helpful. Email me to schedule a time to meet.

Laptop Policy: No laptops in class. Trust me, you will learn more this way!

Syllabus Policy: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary.

Course Evaluation Statement: You will have the opportunity to evaluate the course towards the end of the semester through an online evaluation system. I will remind you to bring laptops that day so they can be done during the final class.

Extra Credit: You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit by attending events put on by the Political Science Department. Details to come.

Part 1: History of the Parties

Wednesday January 11: Introduction and Review of Syllabus

Friday January 13: How Did We Get Here?

- *Why I'm Leaving the Senate* by Evan Bayh (D)
- *Why I'm Leaving the Senate* by Olympia Snow (R)
- *Speaking out Against Partisan Gridlock in the Senate*

Monday January 16: *MLK DAY. NO CLASS*

Wednesday January 18: The First Party System (1792-1824)

- *Federalist Paper #10* by Madison

Friday January 20: The Second Party System and the Albany Regency (1828-1854)

- *Life of the Parties Chapters 4-5*
- *3rd Party Selection Day*

Monday January 23: The Third Party System (1856-1894)

- *Life of the Parties Chapter 6*

Wednesday January 25: The Fourth Party System (1896-1932)

- *V.O Key's "Theory of Critical Elections"*

Friday January 27: The Fifth Party System (1932-.....?)

- *TBD*

Monday January 30: Current Party Systems I

- *No reading*

Wednesday February 1: Current Party Systems II

- *The Contemporary Parties Are Networked*

Part 2: Parties in Congress

Friday February 3: Structure of Parties in Congress: Caucuses

- *Got a General Hobby or Interest? There's a Congressional Caucus for That!*

Monday February 6: **Gathering of the Parties I******

- *FIRST PAPER DUE. Also be prepared to tell the class about your party and answer questions about its philosophy and generalities about its issue positions.*

Wednesday February 8: Conditional Party Government

- *No reading*

Friday February 10: Conditional Party Government

- *Reform and Its Consequences: A Closer Look (The Post-Reform House Chapter 2)*

Monday February 13: *TEST I*****

Wednesday February 15: Legislative Leviathan (Procedural Cartel Theory)

- *No reading*

Friday February 17: Voting the Party Line

- *Two Senators Willing to Defy the Party Line*
- *Members of Congress Who Vote Against the Party*

Monday February 20: The Tea Party Emergence in Congress

- *Tea Party Still Powerful Force Among GOP*
- *Reading the Tea Leaves: Understanding Tea Party Caucus Membership in the US House of Representatives:*

Part 3: The Party and Elections: Playing to Win

Wednesday February 22: Understanding the Primary System

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/12/everything-you-need-to-know-about-how-the-presidential-primary-works/?utm_term=.cda74bb065bf

Friday February 24: Parties and Primaries I

- *The Party Decides Chapter 6- Mastering the Reformed System*

Monday February 27: Parties and Primaries II

- *The Party Decides Chapter 7- The Invisible Primary*

Wednesday March 1: Parties and Primaries III

- *The Party Decides Chapter 8- Anatomy of a Conversation*

Friday March 3: Parties and Primaries IV & The 2016 Election

- *Hillary Clinton's Grip on the Invisible Primary*
- *Joe Biden Ran in the Invisible Primary*
- *Columbia Journalism Review: Interview with Hans Noel*

☺ !!!Monday March 6- March 10 Spring Break!!! ☺

Monday March 13: Parties and the General Election

- *No reading*

Wednesday March 15: **Gathering of the Parties II**

- *Come prepared to discuss your party's position on the current political climate*

Part 4: Third Parties

Friday March 17: Explaining 3rd Parties

- *Third Parties in America: Citizen Response to Major Party Failure*

Monday March 20: Public Mentality Towards 3rd Parties

- *No reading*

Wednesday March 22: Third Party Success Stories

- *Explaining 3rd Party Successes in Gubernatorial Elections*

Friday March 24: Third Parties in the 2016 Election

- *Frozen Out*
- *Third Party Candidates Lose Legal Fight*
- *Third Parties Faded into the Background in a Shocking Election*

Monday March 27: *TEST II*****

Wednesday March 29: *OPEN DAY- WE WILL VOTE ON A TOPIC TO COVER*

Part 5: The Party in the Mass Public

Friday March 31: Partisanship and How It's Measured

- *TBD*

Monday April 3: Partisanship as a Social Identity

- *No reading*

Wednesday April 5: Partisanship as a Social Identity: Consequences

- *Politics and Pizza*
- *Politics Makes Us Stupid*

Friday April 7: *NO CLASS. PROFESSOR AT CONFERENCE*

Monday April 10: *Gathering of the Parties III*

- *Come prepared to discuss your party's position on the current political climate*

Part 5: The Role of Ideology on Parties and the Public

Wednesday April 12: Ideology-A Closer Look at What It Is

- *TBD*

Friday April 14: Elite Polarization I

- *Causes and Consequences of Polarization (until the bottom of page 35 where it says CONSEQUENCES OF POLARIZATION)*

Monday April 17: Elite Polarization II

- *Causes and Consequences of Polarization (from the bottom of 35 where it says CONSEQUENCES OF POLARIZATION until the end)*

Wednesday April 19: Public Polarization- It's Not Happening

- *Culture War: The Myth of Polarized America*

Friday April 21: Public Polarization- It's Happening

- *Is Polarization a Myth?*

Monday April 24: Affective Polarization and Partisan Prejudice

- *No reading*

Wednesday April 26: What Can We Do?

- *ASPA Task Force Report on Negotiating Agreement in Politics (read the Executive Summary, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2)*

****Final Exam Date is FRIDAY, MAY 5TH from 12pm-3pm****