When the number and variety of political parties increases, the chance of oppression, factionalism, and non-critical acceptance of ideas decreases.
--James Madison

If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all.
--Thomas Jefferson

The old parties are husks with no real soul, divided by artificial lines, boss-ridden and privilege-controlled, each a jumble of incongruous elements, and neither daring to speak out wisely and fearlessly on the vital issues of the day.
--Theodore Roosevelt

Our democracy is but a name. We vote. What does that mean? ...We choose between two bodies of autocrats. We choose between Tweedledum and Tweedledee.
--Helen Keller

May God write us down as asses if ever again we are found putting our trust in either the Democratic or Republican parties.
--W.E.B. DuBois

There’s not a dime’s worth of difference between the Democrat and Republican parties.
--George Wallace

Saying we should keep the two-party system simply because it is working is like saying the Titanic was a success because a few people survived on life rafts.
--Eugene McCarthy

America’s seemingly-perfect two-party duopoly has produced a politics of near-total paralysis.
--Micah Sifry

If someone as blessed as I am is not willing to clean out the barn, who will?
--Ross Perot

It’s not easy bein’ (G)reen!
--Kermit the Frog
Political Science 399 Syllabus, p. 2

Nature of the Course:

We will explore a little-known but fascinating domain beyond the major parties: the world of Know Nothings and Populists, Progressives and Dixiecrats, Libertarians and Greens, Prohibitionists and Communists and others. Understanding their mutual interest in maintaining duopoly, the Democrats and Republicans (despite their dislike of each other) have united in stacking the deck against such outside challengers.

Even so, whatever one’s definition of “there” is, third parties have almost always arrived there years before the major parties. They were the first to nominate women, African Americans, and gays for the presidency. There were the first parties to push for transparency in government, the abolition of slavery, women’s suffrage, national health insurance, social security, and ending the Cold War.

This course will proceed seminar style. You will be expected to be a regular participant in our shared discussion of assigned readings.

Class Venue and Meeting Times: Maybank 307, 12:15-1:30 Tuesday and Thursday

Professor: J. David Gillespie  
Email: gillespied@cofc.edu or jdavidgi@gmail.com  
Office: Room 301, Political Science Annex  
(26 Coming St.)  
Office Hours: 1:45-3:00 Tuesday and Thursday  
And gladly by arrangement

Telephone: Cell: (864) 923 2793  Home: (843) 377 8007  Office: (843) 953 4936

Required Texts:


Micah Sifry, Spoiling for a Fight: Third-Party Politics in America

Theresa Amato, Grand Illusion: The Myth of Voter Choice in a Two-Party Tyranny

Honor Code:

In all of your work in this class, please remember your obligations under the College of Charleston Honor Code, which will be strictly enforced.
**Political Science 399 Syllabus, p. 3**

**Methods of Instruction and Criteria for Evaluation:**

This may be your first experience in a seminar course. If so, please note: There will be very little if any formal lecture-type presentation. Our discussion will focus upon common assigned readings and the discussion thereof. At my request, the enrollment for this class was capped at 22. That is a bit higher than the optimum for a seminar but not too large to permit good discussion.

It is absolutely essential that you resolve to read beforehand and then bring along with you the material assigned for class for each particular date, and that you participate actively and regularly in our discussion. The success of this seminar is dependent upon you, individually and collectively. If you feel you will be unwilling or unable to devote your time to preparing and then participating in the day-to-day discourse in this class, please look elsewhere, right away, for a more traditional replacement class.

Your grade for this course will be based in equal measure upon the first and two of the three other components which follow:

- Classroom Participation. Including regular and devoted participation (you cannot participate when you are not present!) and informed contributions to our ongoing discourse and discussion (note in the Schedule of Topics and Assignments that you will be called upon to lead the discussion on some occasions).

We will probably have one or two evening pizza sessions to watch films (for example, *Iron-Jawed Angels* and *Reds*) relevant to our topic. You will be encouraged though not required to attend these.

- A midterm exam to be given on March 2
- A seminar paper (see below) due on April 1
- The final exam, scheduled for April 29 at Noon

You have two options with respect to the midterm test, the seminar paper, and the final exam:

1) Complete all three, and the instructor will drop the lowest of the three grades you earn for these components. (The participation grade will be counted in any circumstance).

OR
2) Skip the midterm, the seminar paper, or the final exam (which will not be comprehensive), and the two remaining grades, along with the participation grade, will count.

Seminar papers should be

- Typed, doubled-spaced, preferably in Times New Roman font size 12

- Include reference notes indicating your indebtedness not only to sources for quotes but also to material you have paraphrased or used for contentions, facts, ideas, and the like which are not in the public domain. They may be in-text notes, footnotes, or end-notes: the only requirement here is consistency.

- Include a separate page(s) at the end titled “Works Cited or Consulted.” The citations contained on this page should be arranged alphabetically and should include all works consulted by you and relevant to your topic, whether or not you have cited them in any of your reference notes.

- Attach to your submission a statement, personally signed by you, indicating that you have never previously researched this topic and that the present research and writing have been entirely your own.

Seminar papers are due on April 1 and they are to be submitted (one copy) to the instructor in person, not by email. You should keep a copy on your hard drive as back-up.

The following topics are pre-approved by the instructor. Any others must be negotiated by you and me. Even if you choose one of the listed topics, you are to schedule a conference with me to discuss the dimensions of your topic, possible sources, and other matters.

1. America’s Two-Party System: an Assessment and Critique

2. The Party Systems of the UK, Canada, and the US: a Comparison

3. Nader and the 2000 Election: a Content Analysis of Media Accounts

4. Outreach via Media: a Comparison of Libertarian, Green, and Communist Media Today

5. Learning from the GOP: How the Republicans Went from Third Party to Major Party (and Did It)?

6. The 1860 Southern Democrats and 1948 Dixiecrats: a Comparative Study
Political Science 399 Syllabus, p. 5

7. The Third-Party Tradition in Minnesota
9. The Third-Party Tradition in New York
10. The Third-Party Tradition in Vermont
11. Partisan Alliances of Farmers and Workers: the Historical Record
12. What Manner of Man? The Life and the Character of George C. Wallace
13. Leon Trotsky, Trotskyism, and the United States
14. Sacco and Vanzetti, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and Alger Hiss on Trial
15. Eugene V. Debs and Norman Thomas: a Comparison
16. The Industrial Workers of the World (the “Wobblies”)
17. George Lincoln Rockwell, William Pierce, David Duke: Heroes of the Neo-Nazi Right
18. The Third-Party Money Problem
19. COINTELPRO: a History and Assessment
20. The Southern Poverty Law Center and the American Extreme Right
21. Mass Media Treatment and Coverage of the 1948 Dixiecrats and Progressives
22. The Know Nothings and the American Nativist Tradition
23. Demolishing Duopoly Through Institutional Reform: a Proposal
24. Ron Paul and the Movement to Build a Major Third Party
25. The “Socialist Senator”: the Life and Character of Bernard Sanders
26. Why There Has Never Been a Major Socialist (or Communist) Party in the U.S.
27. The Lives and Accomplishments of Victoria C. Woodhull and Belva Ann Lockwood
Political Science 399 Syllabus, p. 6


29. Communist Party USA as Revealed Since the Soviet Collapse

30. Historic Freemasonry and Its Antimasonic Enemy

31. Strange Odyssey: The Life, Psyche, and Movement of Lyndon La Rouche

Grade Distribution:

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.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments:

- Connotes area within this topic in which student may lead discussion

January 14:

1. Introduction: Duopoly and Its Challengers

   Read: Gillespie, Ch. 1

   - Ross Perot and the Reform Party ________________________________
   - Ron Paul ______________________________________________________
   - Ralph Nader _________________________________________________

January 19, 21:

2. Protecting Major-Party Turf

   Read: Gillespie, Ch. 2

   - Single-member district v. proportional representation (PR)____________
   - The electoral college and minor parties ___________________________
   - Restrictive ballot-access requirements _____________________________
   - Sore loser and anti-fusion laws ___________________________________
   - Duopoly in debates _____________________________________________
   - The First Red Scare _____________________________________________
   - The Second Red Scare and COINTELPRO __________________________

Read: Sifry, pp. 1-142 for January 26 class
January 28, February 2:

3. **On the Outside, Looking In**

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 3

- Third-party types
- The Prohibition Party
- Why third parties matter

February 4:

4. **Constitutionalists, Greens, and Libertarians**

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 4

- Constitution Party
- The Greens
- Libertarian Party

Read: Sifry, pp. 145-220 for February 9 class

February 11:

5. **The Early Years: Short-lived Parties Before 1860**

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 5

- The Antimasonic Party
- The Know Nothings
- Anti-slavery parties

February 16, 18:

6. **Union, Reform, and Class: Short-lived Parties, 1860-1908**

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 6

- Third parties in the 1860 election
- The first women presidential candidates
- The Greenbackers
- The Populists (People’s Party)
Political Science 399 Syllabus, p. 8

February 23, 25

7. **Thunder Left and Right: Short-lived Parties, 1912-1960**

   Read: Gillespie, Ch. 7

   - Teddy Roosevelt and the Bull Moose Progressive Party
   - Robert La Follette and his 1924 Progressive campaign
   - Strom Thurmond and the Dixiecrats
   - Henry Wallace and the Progressives

**Midterm Test:** March 2

March 9, 11: No class (Spring Break)

March 4, 16:

8. **George Wallace and Beyond: Short-lived Parties, 1968-**

   Read: Gillespie, Ch. 8

   - The American Independent Party, 1968 and beyond
   - George Wallace (biography)
   - The Peace and Freedom and People’s parties
   - The Citizens Party
   - Lyndon La Rouche
   - The New Alliance Party
   - The Natural Law Party

March 18:

9. **The New Independents: the Anderson and Perot Movements**

   Read: Gillespie, Ch. 9

   - The 1980 Anderson movement
   - Perot and his 1992 independent campaign
   - Perot and the movement after 1992
March 23, 25:

10. Taking the Less-Traveled Road: Women, African Americans, Latinos

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 10

- Alice Paul and the National Woman’s Party
- The Black Panther Party
- Partido de La Raza Unida

March 30, April 1:

11. Doctrinal Parties 1: the Socialists and Communists

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 11

- Eugene V. Debs and the Socialist Party
- Communist Party USA
- Maoist Parties: Progressive Labor and Revolutionary Communist

April 1: Seminar papers due

April 6:

12. Doctrinal Parties 1: the Neo-Nazis

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 12

- George Lincoln Rockwell and the Neo-Nazi movement
- Interview with Martin Kerr
Political Science 399 Syllabus, p. 10

April 8:

13. State/Local Significant Others

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 13

- Burlington and the Vermont Progressive Party
- Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party
- Minor parties in the state of New York
- The Working Families Party

Read: Sifry, pp. 223-276 for April 13 class

April 15:

14. Conclusion: Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Read: Gillespie, Ch. 14, and Sifry, pp. 279-309

April 20 and 22:

15. Amato’s Insights on the American Party System

Read: Amato

Exam: Thursday, April 29, 2010, Noon