

Contemporary American Political Parties at the Second Crossroad

A.S. 191.346, Fall 2014

M and W 1:30-2:45pm in 277 Gilman Hall

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Office hours: M and W 3-4pm, or by appointment

Course description

This course examines the major American political parties and their relations to the constitutional government in the past fifty years. The study of political parties in American politics is important because the parties have reconfigured the system of U.S. Constitution, even though the document does not refer to political parties at all and the basic principles of American government has remained the same since the time of founding. To borrow the expression of a famous British observer in the late nineteenth century, “The spirit and force of party has in America been as essential to the action of the machinery of government as steam is to a locomotive engine; or, to vary the simile, party association and organization are to the organs of government almost what the motor nerves are to the muscles, sinews, and bones of the human body.”¹

Since 1964, both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party have undergone significant transformations in the public policies they support, organizational structures and geographic bases. Subsequently, their relations to the electorate, interest groups and the institutions of government have shifted. Today no one denies the polarizing influences the two major parties have in the government’s policy-making processes, mass media and the electorate. Through the course of semester, we study the historical shifts that the political actors within the parties wrought on to the American government since 1964 up to where we are now. How have these transformations happened and what are their consequences to the American government and the American life in general? Are there better ways to govern the nation and hold the government accountable to its voters, than the existent political parties? These would be the overarching questions that guide us as we explore the terrain of party politics throughout the semester.

Objectives: The primary objective of this course for the students is to gain knowledge about the historical trajectory of American party politics in the latter half of the twentieth century, with an emphasis on the change in southern politics. In doing so, students will acquire vocabularies to talk and write about contemporary American politics. Because the seminar will be held in a small class, another objective of this course is to hone both oral and written communication skills of the students by explaining complex subjects to other people.

¹ Lord James Bryce. 1897. *The American Commonwealth*. Quoted in Richard Hofstadter. 1969. *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840*. University of California Press. p.71.

Prerequisite: Introduction to American Politics (AS. 190.101) or equivalent

The reading assignments and the class discussions are given based on the assumption that you already have the elementary knowledge of American government and political history. Consult with the instructor if you have not taken the Introduction to American Politics class but are still interested in enrolling in the class.

Books for purchase:

Milkis, Sidney M. 1993. *The President and the Parties : The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hershey, Majorie Randon. 2013. *Party Politics in America*. 15th ed. Pearson.

Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides : Presidential Nominations before and after Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Noel, Hans. 2014. *Political Ideologies and Political Parties in America*. Cambridge University Press.

All other texts for this course will be available in the library reserve or e-reserve.

Course requirements: Each week you are assigned to read between 120-150 pages of selected literature and are expected to come to the class ready to discuss the week's reading assignments. If you are going to miss a class meeting, you need to notify the instructor and write a two-page review of the readings for that day. Besides the weekly reading assignments, you are expected to complete four kinds of assignments to earn credit for this class: a) an in-class presentation, b) a short mid-term exam, c) a campaign analysis memo and d) a final book review paper. The details of each assignment are as follows:

- a) In class presentation: you will present one of the reading assignments in front of the class and offer comments and questions for the class discussion. The presentation should take *no longer than 15 minutes*. The presentations will take place on Wednesday classes, except when otherwise noted on the syllabus. Presenters will need to consult with the instructor about the choice of reading materials at least one week prior to the day they deliver the presentation.
- b) One mid term exam: the short exam is intended to make sure that you gained enough knowledge from the readings and the class discussions. The exam will take place on Monday, October 6.
- c) Post-election campaign analysis memo: pretend that you're a campaign consultant hired by a Senatorial candidate running for one of the several toss-up U.S. Senate races in 2014. The instructor will announce the toss up races in early October and assign you to one of these states by drawing lots. From early October to the general election, pay attention to the development of the state's Senate campaigns and conduct independent research on the state's political parties, interest group alignment, demography, economy and other factors relevant to the candidate's election strategy. After November 4th, write a 6 page long memo addressed to the *losing* candidate, reflecting how he or she could have done better in earning more votes among the electorates. The memo is due on November 12th in class. To help you conduct the research, there will be an electronic resource orientation in class.
- d) Final book review essay: based on what you learned in the class through the semester, write a 12 to 15-page book review of Hans Noel's *Political Ideologies and Political*

Parties in America. You will need to consider the validity of his arguments, and if they turn out to be open to other interpretations, offer alternative views based on what you have learned from the course. In order to help the students to engage themselves more critically with the book, we will spend part of the last class of the course discussing the book. By noon on the day of the last class, send the instructor a five-page summary of the book from which you would develop to write the full final essay. The format of the final paper should be double space, 12 font and one-inch margin. The paper should be emailed to the instructor by midnight of Wednesday, December 17.

Grade evaluation

In Class Presentation	15%
Mid-term exam	20%
Post election campaign consultant memo	20%
Final essay	30%
Active participation in class	15%

Important dates

September 1, Monday: No class, Labor Day
September 3, Wednesday: First meeting of class
October 6, Monday: Mid term exam
October 16, Thursday: Class meets from 1:30-2:45pm on Monday schedule
November 12, Wednesday: Campaign consultant memo due
November 24 and 26, Monday and Wednesday: Thanksgiving week, no class
December 3, Wednesday: Last meeting of class
December 17, Wednesday: Final book review essay due

Attendance policy: Because this is a small seminar, your attendance and substantive participation count toward not only your grade, but also lively discussions in class, which benefit us all. If you miss the class more than three times without legitimate excuses, your final grade will be penalized by 0.33 GPA point (from B+ to B, for instance.)

Classroom etiquette on the use of electronic devices: While personal computers and tablets are not prohibited in the class, aside from note taking purposes, try to keep their use minimum in class especially during the discussion. Much of information that you will need in the discussion will *not* be easily gleaned from the quick web search you might be tempted to do while sitting in class. Rather, the important themes of this class are all in the reading assignments, with which you should familiarize yourself by the time you come to the class.

Academic Conduct: All of your work must be your own. Plagiarism is wrong and it will not be tolerated. If you have questions about proper citations in the paper and academic integrity, talk to the instructor, a reference librarian or consult the Undergraduate Student Handbook.

Special accommodation in class: If you need special assistance for the class, please immediately notify the instructor and the Student Disability Services (385 Garland Hall) so that we can do our best to accommodate your request.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

* Items with asterisks are open for in-class presentations.

Week 1. Introduction [Sept. 3]

Week 2. New Deal and political parties in the mid-twentieth century [Sept. 8 and 10]

- Schattschneider, E. E. 1942. *Party Government*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Chs. 3, 6 and 7. ("What is a political party?" "Decentralization" and "The Local Bosses," pp.35-64, 129-169, 170-186).
- Milkis, Sidney M. 1993. *The President and the Parties : The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chs. 2-4 ("The Roots of New Deal Reform," "Whose Party Is It? The Transformation of the Democratic Party," and "The Limits of Party Government," pp.21-97).
- Katznelson, Ira. 2013. *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time*. 1st ed. New York: Liveright Pub. Corp. Ch. 3 ("Jim Crow Congress," pp.156-194).
- Key, V. O., and Alexander Heard. [1949] 1984. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. New ed. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. Ch. 1 and Preface for Part I. ("Of the South" and "Preface for Part I, Political Leadership – The One Party System," pp.3-18.)

Week 3. The Tumulus 1960s: the Great Society, Civil Rights Movement and the Rise of New Left [Sept. 15 and 17]

- Milkis, Sidney M. 1993. *The President and the Parties : The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chs. 7 and 8 ("Programmatic Liberalism after Roosevelt," and "The Twilight of Modern Presidency," pp. 149-218).
- *Wilson, James Q. 1966. *The Amateur Democrat : Club Politics in Three Cities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch. 1, part from "Introduction" up to and including the section "Evaluating the Amateur Democrat" in Ch.1. pp.1-28.
- Valelly, Richard M. 2004. *The Two Reconstructions : The Struggle for Black Enfranchisement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chs. 8 and 9 ("The Coalition of 1961-1965" and "How the Second Reconstruction Stabilized (up to and including the section "Desegregating Party Organizations")" pp.173-211.)

Week 4. The aftermath of 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago [Sept. 22 and 24]

Film viewing on Monday Sept. 22 during class [Location: MSE Library A-level AV Center]:
Chana Gazit, 1996. *Chicago 1968*. [New York] : Shanachie Entertainment Corp.

Readings:

- McGovern Fraser Commission Report. 1971. In *The Evolving Presidency: Addresses, Cases, Essays, Letters, Reports, Resolutions, Transcripts, and Other Landmark Documents, 1787-1998*. M. Nelson ed.. Washington, D.C. : CQ Press. 1999. (pp.177-183)
- Klinkner, Philip A. 1994. *The Losing Parties : Out-Party National Committees, 1956-1993*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Ch. 5 ("The Democrats, 1968-1972," pp.88-104).

Hershey, Majorie Randon. 2013. *Party Politics in America*. 15th ed. Pearson. Ch. 10 (“Choosing the Presidential Nominees,” pp.189-209).

Week 5. Decline of the party machines and the emergence of a new form of parties – network of intense policy demanders and activists [Sept. 29 and Oct. 1]

*Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides : Presidential Nominations before and after Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chs. 4, 6, 7 and 9 (“Weak Structures, Strong Parties,” “Mastering the Post Reform System,” “The Invisible Primary: Theory and Evidence” and “The Voters Weigh In,” pp.81-106, 157-234, 277-331).

****October 6, mid term exam.**

Week 6. Congressional candidates [Oct. 8 and 13]

Herrnson, Paul S. 2012. *Congressional Elections : Campaigning at Home and in Washington*. 6th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE/CQ Press. Ch. 2. (“Candidates and Nominations,” pp. 40-74.)

*Fenno, Richard Jr. 2000. *Congress at the Grassroots: Representational Change in the South, 1970-1998*. The University of North Carolina Press. Chs. 2 and 4 (“Jack Flynt, 1970-1972: A Person-Intensive Strategy,” “Mac Collins, 1996-1998: A Policy Intensive Strategy,” pp.13-50, 89-116).

Herrnson, Paul S. 1986. “Do Parties Make a Difference? The Role of Party Organizations in Congressional Elections.” *Journal of Politics*. Vol. 48, No. 3. August, pp.589-615.

- Toss-up US Senate race assignment
- Library e-resource orientation

Week 7. Political consultants in election campaigns [Oct. 15 and 16]

Required readings:

*Lepore, Jill. “The Lie Factory: How Politics Became a Business.” *The New Yorker*. September 24, 2012.

Sabato, Larry. 1981. *The Rise of Political Consultants : New Ways of Winning Elections*. New York : Basic Books. Chs. 1 and 5 (“The Consultant Corps,” “Parties, PACs, and Political Consultants,” pp.3-67, 267-301).

Tracey, Evan. 2014. “Political Advertising: When More Meant Less.” In *Campaigning for President 2012: Strategies and Tactics*. pp. 92-106. ed. D. Johnson. Routledge.

Recommended viewing (both are on library reserve):

Forbes, Stefan, et al. 2008. *Boogie Man: The Lee Atwater Story*. Director's cut. ed. [New York]: InterPositive Media. DVD.

Hegedus, Chris, et al. 1993. *The War Room*. Universal City, CA: Focus Features. DVD.

Week 8. Campaign finance reform: freedom of expression and political equality [Oct. 20 and 22]

- Hershey, Majorie Randon. 2013. *Party Politics in America*. 15th ed. Pearson. Ch. 12 ("Financing the Campaigns," pp.229-256).
- Hasen, Richard L. 2013. "Is 'Dependence Corruption' Distinct from a Political Equality Argument for Campaign Finance Laws? A Reply to Professor Lessig." *Election Law Journal*. 12 (3). pp.305-16.
- *Francia, Peter L. et al. 2013. "Campaign Finance Reform in the Post-Citizens United Era." In Semiatin, Richard J. ed. *Campaigns on the Cutting Edge*. Sage CQ Press. Ch. 10 (p.157-176)

Week 9. Presidential party building and the national party committees [Oct. 27 and 29]

- Milkis, Sidney M. 1993. *The President and the Parties : The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ch. 9 ("The Republican Challenge and the Reshaping of Programmatic Liberalism," pp. 219-260).
- *Galvin, Daniel. 2010. *Presidential Party Building : Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Chs. 1, 2, 12 and Afterword ("Introduction," "A Theory of Presidential Party Building," and "Conclusion." pp.1-38, 247-254).
- Klinkner, Philip A. 1994. *The Losing Parties : Out-Party National Committees, 1956-1993*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Ch. 10 ("Party Culture and Out-Party Behavior," pp.197-215).
- Hershey, Majorie Randon. 2013. *Party Politics in America*. 15th ed. Pearson. Ch. 4 ("The Parties' National Organizations," pp.69-90).

Week 10. The Emergence of Republican Party majority since the 1980s [Nov. 3 and 5]

- Milkis, Sidney M. 1993. *The President and the Parties : The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chs. 10 and 11 ("The New Deal Legacy and the Reagan 'Revolution'" and "Divided Government and the Administrative Constitution." pp.261-299.)
- Greenshaw, Wayne. 1982. *Elephants in the Cottonfields: Ronald Reagan and the New Republican South*. Macmillan. Ch. 13 ("New Southern Strategist," pp.117-131).
- Nesmith, Bruce. 1994. *The New Republican Coalition : The Reagan Campaigns and White Evangelicals*. New York: P. Lang. Chs. 5-6. ("Advocacy: Reagan and White Evangelicals" and "White Evangelicals in the South," pp.73-108.)
- *Waterhouse, Benjamin, C. 2014. *Lobbying America: The Politics of Business from Nixon to NAFTA*. Princeton University Press. Ch. 7. ("A Tale of Two Tax Cuts." pp.201-228.)

Week 11. Party Polarization in Congress [Nov. 10 and 12]

- Hershey, Majorie Randon. 2013. *Party Politics in America*. 15th ed. Pearson. Ch. 13 ("Parties in Congress and State Legislatures," p.260-282)
- Jacobson, Gary C. "Explaining the Ideological Polarization of the Congressional Parties since the 1970s." In Brady, David W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2007. *Party, Process, and*

- Political Change in Congress. V. 2 : Further New Perspectives on the History of Congress.* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press. (pp.91-101)
- Sinclair, Barbara. 2006. *Party Wars : Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. Ch. 4 ("Internal Engines of Partisan Polarization: The Republican House." pp.110-142.)
- *Hacker, Jacob S, and Paul Pierson. 2007. "Tax Politics and the Struggle over Activist Government." In *The Transformation of American Politics : Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*, pp.256-280. ed. P. Pierson and T. Skocpol. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

*** November 12, Post election campaign memo is due in class.**

Week 12. The party system in the twenty-first century [Nov. 17 and 19]

- Milkis, Sidney M., and Jesse H. Rhodes. 2009. "Barack Obama, the Democratic Party, and the Future of the 'New American Party System'." *The Forum* 7 (1).
- *Williamson, Vanessa, Theda Skocpol, and John Coggin. 2011. "The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism." *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (1). pp. 25-43.
- Medvic, Stephen K. 2014. "Outside Voices: Super PACs, Parties and Other Non-Candidate Actors." In *Campaigning for President 2012: Strategies and Tactics*. pp.151-171. ed. D. Johnson. Routledge.

Week 13. Conclusion [Dec. 1 and 3]

- Noel, Hans. 2014. *Political Ideologies and Political Parties in America.* Cambridge University Press.

***The final book review paper is due on December 17.**