

# POLS 3325

## Political Parties

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**Office Hours:**  
**Tuesdays 2-3**  
**Thursdays 2-4**  
**or, by appointment**

### Introduction

This is a fascinating and pivotal time to study political parties in the United States. Political parties have raised and spent unprecedented sums to ensure victory for their candidates at the polls and seek to rebuild strong partisan policy coalitions in Congress. Not surprisingly, many people, including politicians, journalists, academics and citizens, have expressed concern over the changing roles of parties in the campaign process, particularly with regard to campaign finance practices. Although such concerns have prompted numerous proposals for campaign finance reform, Congress seems reluctant to act.

The heart of the concern over the effects of the modern election process, and especially party fundraising practices, is representation - or who gets what and why. The purpose of this class is to explore, broadly, how political parties facilitate or hinder representative democracy. What is the role of parties in representing citizens' interests? Who is typically represented by parties, and why? How responsive are parties to the views of their citizen supporters? How do parties seek to influence government? And, what is the extent of their influence in the policy process? To answer these questions we will examine political science theories about the behavior and effects of political parties consider whether the real world evidence seems to live up to the theoretical expectations. In addition, we will pay special attention to the interaction of political parties, pressure groups and candidates, especially with regard to campaign activities.

### Course Requirements

#### Readings:

There are three required texts for this course:

Maisel, L. Sandy 1999. *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*. Third Edition. New York: Rowman and Littlefield (referred to in the course outline as PARTIES AND ELECTIONS)

Maisel, L. Sandy 1998. *The Parties Respond. Changes in American Parties and Campaigns*. Third Edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press (referred to in the course outline as MAISEL)

There are additional required readings that will be made available at the Library Reserve Desk (referred to in the course outline as LIBRARY).

#### Grade Components

The overall grade is based on:

Class Attendance/Pop Quizzes	10%
5 Reaction Papers	10%
3 Exams	60%
Simulation Participation and Paper	20%

Following is a discussion of each of these components in greater detail.

#### **Class Attendance/Pop Quizzes - 10%**

Class attendance is mandatory. Throughout this class, you will be working in groups on in class group projects. Because of this, it is essential that you attend class on a regular basis and complete the reading assignment before class. To encourage this, 10% of your grade will be based on your attendance and occasional unannounced quizzes over the readings for that week.

Please be aware, **the exams will cover material from lecture as well as the readings. You should not expect to score highly on the exams if you have not attended class.** If you must miss a class, please make arrangements to get notes from a classmate.

Your participation in class discussions is expected and will be solicited. You will be called upon to react to or comment on material covered in lectures and readings so you should come to class prepared.

### **Exams - 60%**

There are three required exams based on materials from lecture and readings. All exams are comprised of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions.

February 22	Exam 1	20%
March 30	Exam 2	20%
May 10 <sup>th</sup> , 7:30 am	Final Exam	20%

*Make Up Exams:* Make-up exams are given only in extraordinary circumstances, such as a *documented* illness or family emergency. If you must miss an exam due to a University sponsored activity, you must provide documentation *prior to the exam* for approval.

### **Reaction Papers - 10%**

Reaction papers are one page responses to weekly assigned readings. The purpose of these is for you to critically engage the ideas presented in the course and to raise questions for class discussion. A sample reaction paper along with more detailed instructions will be passed out during the first week of classes.

**You must submit 5 reaction papers during the semester. Reaction papers are scored on a 10 point scale. Your point score will be based on the clarity of your writing, and the extent to which you are absorbing and developing a unique response to the course material.** The papers should be submitted to me over e-mail by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday for you to receive credit for that week.

Reaction papers will not be accepted during exam weeks.

### **Simulation Participation and Paper - 20%**

During the course of the semester, you will participate in a research project that simulates the processes and activities of political parties and interest groups as they try to influence the outcome of the U.S. House and Presidential elections. Each person in the class will have a role to play in helping one of the two major parties gain control of the U.S. House and the Presidency. Your grade for this project will be based on research and a written report for the role you are playing. For example, if your role is the Presidential policy strategist, you would be expected to conduct research to identify policy positions that would appeal to voters and provide the candidate with a policy "briefing" to prepare him/her for campaign debates. You would also be expected to justify the policy choice to the party policy coordinator and convince him/her that your policy is the best choice for a party strategy as well as a presidential strategy. You will also be evaluated by your party "team" as to your contribution to the overall success.

Details for the simulation, including the specific roles and tasks will be outlined in the next few weeks after the class roster is finalized.

## **General Course Guidelines**

### **Email and the Internet**

You are required to have an e-mail account. I will be creating a class list for each section which will be used for distributing reaction papers prior to discussion days and for communicating important information about reading assignments, the simulation, tests or other relevant issues. If you need assistance, see me after class.

### **Courtesy in Classroom Discussions**

Class discussions of political issues can often stimulate strong feelings and heated debate. I ask all of you to respect the opinions of your fellow students, even if you do not agree with them. In simple terms, that means not interrupting other students while they are speaking and not verbally attacking them for their beliefs. While I believe that it is essential to connect theory to current events, I will cut short debates of current events that do not enhance the understanding of course concepts.

### **Cheating**

Don't do it. Academic dishonesty will result in you failing this course and facing University disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, submitting the same paper for multiple courses, and depriving another student of the ability to perform his or her work. If you have questions about University policy on academic dishonesty, please see me.

### **Special Needs**

If you have any special needs that will affect your ability to learn or complete the assigned work in this class, please let me know so that appropriate steps can be taken to assist you.

## **Tentative Course Outline**

### **INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW (4 classes)**

#### Representation and the Role of Parties

PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Chapter 1: Elections and Political Parties

LIBRARY: Stone, Walter J. 1990. "Political parties: An Alternative to the Republic" *Republic At Risk: Self-Interest in American Politics*. Chapter 4 p.87-106

LIBRARY: Adamany, David. 1975. "Introduction" in E.E. Schattschneider *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. Hinsdale, IL: The Dryden Press.

#### Introduction to Money In Politics

PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Chapter 11: Campaign Finance

LIBRARY: Wilcox & Joe 1998 "Dead Law: the Federal Election Finance Regulations, 1974-1996" in *PS: Political Science & Politics* 30:1 p. 14-17.

PARTIES RESPOND, Chapter 10 - Souraf "Political Parties and the New World of Campaign Finance" p. 225-242.

### **HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES (6 classes)**

#### History of Political Parties

PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Chapter 2: The Development of American Political Parties

#### Organization of Political Parties

PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Chapter 3: Party Organization

MAISEL: Chapter 2 - Bibby "State Party Organizations: Coping and Adapting to Candidate-Centered Politics" p. 23-49

MAISEL: Chapter 3 - Herrnson "National Party Organizations at the Century's End" p. 50-82.

**Exam 1 Feb 22**

**PARTY IN THE ELECTORATE - PUBLIC OPINION, PARTICIPATION AND VOTE CHOICE (3 classes)**

Public Opinion and Participation

PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Chapter 4: Political Participation  
Chapter 5: Theories of Voting Behavior

Theories of Party Identification

Parties and Voters - Reciprocal Effects

MAISEL: Chapter 4 - Stone and Rapoport. "A Candidate-Centered Perspective on Party Responsiveness: Nomination Activists and the Process of Party Change" p. 83-107.

MAISEL: Chapter 5 - Abromowitz and Saunders "Party Polarization and Ideological Realignment in the U.S. Electorate, 1976-1994." p.128-143.

**WINNING OFFICE: POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR ROLE IN ELECTIONS -- (6 classes)**

Overview

PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Chapter 12: The Media and the Electoral Process

Nominations

PARTIES AND ELECTION: Chapter 7: State and Local Nominations  
Chapter 9: Presidential Nominations

General Elections

PARTIES AND ELECTION: Chapter 8: State and Local Elections  
Chapter 9: Presidential Elections

MAISEL: Chapter 9 - Crotty "Political Parties in the 1996 Election: The Party as Team or the Candidate as Superstar? " p. 202-224.

Campaign finance revisited

MAISEL: Chapter 10 (review) - Sorauf "Political Parties and the New World of Campaign Finance" p. 225-242.

exam - April 4th

**POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR ROLE IN GOVERNMENT - 5 classes**

Organizing Congress by Party

The Effect of Political Parties on Policy

MAISEL: Chapter 12 - Sinclair "Evolution or Revolution? Policy-Oriented Congressional Parties in the 1990's" p. 263-285.

MAISEL: Chapter 13 - Brady and Buckley "Coalitions and Policy in the U.S. Congress: Lessons from the 103<sup>rd</sup> and 104<sup>th</sup> Congresses." p. 286-315.

**SIMULATION - 3 classes**

**\* \* \* FINAL SIMULATION PROJECT REPORTS DUE BY 5:00 P.M. IN MY BOX MAY 3rd \* \* \***