

American Political Parties

L32 5225

montgomery.wustl.edu/ps5225.html

Day: Mondays
Time: 4:00 – 6:00
Location: TBD

Instructor Information

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Course Description

This seminar will introduce students to core literature on political parties with a strong bias towards recent work. After first surveying research on the role of parties in the American political system from the broadest perspective, the class will cover topics in two loosely defined areas. First, it will explore the role that parties play in public opinion, political behavior, and elections. Second, it will examine party institutions in their interactions with elected officials and other political elites.

The course will be seminar-style. The ultimate goal is to introduce students to new areas of research and further students' own research agenda. Accordingly, students will be given a free hand in choosing topics of particular interest to themselves for additional reading and further research.

Requirements and Evaluation

There are four components of student evaluation in this course.

1. *Class participation (20%)*. Class sessions will be in a seminar style and students are expected to do required readings before the class and come prepared to both ask questions and offer opinion on the work they have read.
2. *Discussion leadership (15%)*: Each student will be asked to sign up as a "discussion leader" for one week. For this class session, the student is expected to pay special attention to the required readings and come prepared to help lead class discussion.
3. *Two response papers (25%)*: Twice during the semester students will be expected to choose work from the supplemental reading list and compose an analytical response (approx. 5 pages). This paper should be roughly five pages, and no more than one page may include summary information. Students will be asked to informally explain their chosen supplemental readings and their critique in class. Students are encouraged, in consultation with

me, to go beyond the reading list and incorporate additional work if this would make the exercise more relevant to their own research agenda.

4. *Research paper (40%)*: An original research paper that (hopefully) furthers students' own research agenda. This paper (or preliminary results from it) will be presented in the final weeks of the course.

Required Books

The required books for this class are listed below. For some books, only a subset of chapters will be assigned. I have tried to put all of these books on reserve in the library. The Grynaviski book is still pretty pricey and The Mickey book doesn't appear to actually be available yet. We can discuss those two during the first class.

- *Why Parties?: A Second Look* (Aldrich 2011)
- *Dynamics of American Political Parties* (Brewer and Stonecash 2009)
- *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the US House of Representatives* (Cox and McCubbins 2005)
- *The Macro Polity* (Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson 2002)
- *Partisan Hearts and Minds* (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002)
- *Partisan Bonds: A Unifying Account of Politicians, Political Parties, and their Reputations* (Grynaviski 2010)
- *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States* (Sundquist 1983)
- *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (Key 1949)
- *The Partisan Sort: How Liberals Became Democrats and Conservatives Became Republicans* (Levendusky 2009)
- *No Middle Ground: How Informal Party Organizations Control Nominations and Polarize Legislatures* (Masket 2009)
- *Paths Out of Dixie: The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America's Deep South* (Mickey 2011)
- *Party Influence in Congress* (Smith 2007)

Academic Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. I strongly encourage you to review the University's policies regarding academic honesty.

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
9/5	NO CLASS (Labor Day)	
9/12	Introduction	Aldrich (2011) Aldrich and Grynaviski (2010)
Part I: The Big Picture		
9/19	Party systems	Sundquist (1983) Silbey (2010)
9/26	Party dynamics	<i>Required</i> Brewer and Stonecash (2009) Brewer (2010) <i>Supplemental</i> Key (1955, 1959) Layman et al. (2010) Miller and Schofield (2003) Aldrich (1983 <i>a,b</i>) Kollman, Miller and Page (1992) Mayhew (2000, 2002) Rosenof (2003)
10/3	Parties and race	<i>Required</i> Key (1949) Chapters 1, 14, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, 31 Mickey (2011) Chapters 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 <i>Supplemental</i> Aldrich (2000) Karol (2009) Feinstein and Schickler (2008) Carmines and Stimson (1989, 1986, 1982)
Part II: Parties and the Public		
10/10	Party ID #1	<i>Required</i> Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson (2002), Chapters 1, 4-5, 8-10 Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002) Chapters 1-5, 8 <i>Supplemental</i> MacKuen, Erikson and Stimson (1989) Green and Palmquist (1990, 1994) Green, Palmquist and Schickler (1998) Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson (1998) Huddy (2003) Campbell et al. (1960) Chapters 2,4,6-8

10/17 Party ID #2

Required

Levendusky (2009)
Achen (2002)
Carsey and Layman (2006)

Supplemental

Fiorina (2002)
Bartels (2000)
Achen (1992)

10/24 Party reputations

Required

Grynaviski (2010)

Supplemental

Snyder and Ting (2002)
Levy (2004)
Downs (1957)
Taber (2003)
Lodge and Taber (2005)
Lau and Redlawsk (2001)
Rahn (1993)
Conover and Feldman (1989)

Part III: Parties and elites

10/31 Parties-in-government 1

Required

Cox and McCubbins (2005) Chapters 2, 3, 9, 10
Aldrich and Rohde (2001)
Rohde (2010)

Supplemental

Den Hartog and Monroe (2011)
Sinclair (2010)
Aldrich (1994)
Patty (2008)

11/7 Parties-in-government 2

Required

Smith (2007)
Primo, Binder and Maltzman (2008)

Supplemental

Krehbiel (1993)
Cox and Poole (2002)
Jenkins (1999)
Wright and Schaffner (2002)
Lawrence, Maltzman and Smith (2006)
Krehbiel (1998)
Milkis and Rhodes (2010)

11/14	Parties-as-organization	<p><i>Required</i> Herrnson (2010) Masket (2009)</p> <p><i>Supplemental</i> Cohen et al. (2008) Koger, Masket and Noel (2009) Noel (2010) Monroe (2001) Masket (2007) Magleby (2010) Montgomery and Nyhan (2011)</p>
11/21	Parties & ideology	<p><i>Required</i> Lee (2009)</p> <p><i>Supplemental</i> Hinich and Munger (1996) Denzau and North (1994) Gerring (2001) Noel (2007) or similar</p>
11/28	Student presentations	
12/5	Student presentations	
TBA	Paper due on date of final	

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In the United States, there have usually been two main political parties. Since the 1860s, these two main parties have been the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party has the most seats in the House of Representatives while the Republicans hold a majority in the Senate. The three largest parties aside from the two main political parties are the Libertarian Party, Green Party of the United States, and the Constitution Party in respective order. While the Democratic Party and Republican Party are the bigwigs of American politics, there do exist other small political parties in the United States which are active as of today. In the United States, the political stage has been dominated by the two-party system right from the era of Federalists versus Jeffersonian Republicans to the ongoing era of Democrats versus Republicans. However, these are not the only parties in the country. American politics is also characterized by the presence of small political parties, which are not in contention for the Presidential elections and thus, are un Fed up with decades of two-party rule, hundreds of thousands of Americans tuned in for the People's Convention, where they voted to form a new political alternative un beholden to corporate power or the military-industrial complex. The event drew more than 400,000 viewers to its livestream on Sunday, organizers said. It continued to trend on Twitter through more than 5 hours of speeches that culminated in a vote to create a "major new corporate-free political party in America." Among the speakers at the convention were several disgruntled Democrats, from Sen. Bernie Sanders's 2020 national co-c