

## **POL324: Political Parties and Pressure Groups**

Fall 2013, M/F 1:00-2:20 pm

Instructor: Patrick Lown  
Location: Physics P113  
Office: SBS Building S753  
Office Hours: 2:30-5pm Monday or by appointment  
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### **Course Description:**

Democracy is no easy undertaking, and all mass democracies share a common problem: how can tens of millions of citizens, spread across a vast geographic area and each with differing preferences on public policy, converge on a set of rules and laws by which they are all governed? The solution is for like minded citizens to ally themselves together to create groups that can either compete in an election to control the government directly or pressure those in government to adopt their preferred policies. Thus, in theory political parties and pressure groups help to present voters with clear choices between candidates in general elections, organize legislatures to adopt their policies, and provide ambitious citizens with the resources to run for and win access to elected office.

Because political parties are among the largest and most complicated institutions in the country, we will spend time reviewing their formation, history, leadership, organizational structure, membership, and activities. This includes examinations of political parties in elections and party committees, the role of political parties in the legislative branch, the role and goals of party activists and convention, and psychology of partisanship among members of the public.

This class has two primary goals 1) to learn and apply an understanding of American political parties and interest groups as presented in the lectures and reading and 2) to learn how to construct a persuasive argument via a short paper project.

### **Books:**

The following books have been ordered at the campus bookstore and are required for the class. We have multiple readings from each of these:

*Parties, Politics, and Public Policy in America*. 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> Edition. By Hetherington and Larson. CQPress. (Abbrev. PPPP)

*Analyzing Interest Groups*. by Ainsworth. (Abbrev. AIG)

In the past the following book was required:

*Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. by Aldrich. U of Chicago Press (Abbrev. WP?)

We'll be reading the first few chapters, but you don't have to buy the book if you can track these down.

## Course Policies:

*Attendance:* As this is a lecture format course, the majority of the material will be presented in the lectures and discussed in class. This means that attendance in class is critical. And although lecture is the primary mode of the course, I also expect you to engage with the material, ask questions, and generally welcome discussion. The more you think about and try to use what we discuss in class, the better you will understand it, and the better you will do on the exams. Approximately 2/3 of items on the quizzes and exams will come from the lecture with the remaining 1/3 exclusively from the reading. There will be a modest overlap between material presented in class and the material covered in the reading, but the lecture will not be based directly on the material from the book. PowerPoint presentations used in class will be made available online.

*Cell phones:* Not allowed. Please silence them and put them away while class is in progress.

*Laptops:* Please mute the sound at the beginning of class. It should go without saying that laptops should be for note taking purposes only. This means no Facebook, no Twitter, no surfing, etc. This is a matter of respect for yourselves and the other students in the class as well as myself. Students who disrupt class repeatedly through noise or other distracting behavior will be asked to leave.

*Etiquette:* I realize that sometimes arriving late or leaving early is unavoidable; however, this can be disruptive to other students. Please do your best to enter quietly if class has already begun, and to exit quietly if you must leave early. Mostly, this is about courtesy. Use your best manners and judgment.

*Plagiarism and cheating:* If I suspect you have violated the school ethics code regarding academic integrity, I will report to the Academic Judiciary and the matter will be pursued to the full extent necessary. Please do your own work and avoid putting yourself in a position that this becomes necessary; it is not a pleasant experience for anyone involved.

*Late assignments:* Quizzes cannot be made up. Late assignments will be accepted for 75% credit the first week after deadline. After a week, late assignments will no longer be accepted.

*Make-up exams:* Make up exams will be allowed only under justifiably extenuating circumstances. This includes travel for qualified athletic events, medical and family emergencies, bereavement, and so forth. You must notify me before hand, provide documentation if the situation warrants it, and schedule an alternative date for the exam.

## Course Requirements and Grading:

*Attendance and Quizzes (20%):* Attendance will not be formally kept, but will have ten to fifteen 5-minute quizzes over the course of the semester to check attendance and reading comprehension. These may be given at any time of class, but usually at the beginning or end. Each quiz will be multiple-choice and consist of five questions. The date of each quiz will be random and the lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

**Under no circumstances will missed quizzes be allowed to made up,** so plan ahead. Some items on the quizzes will form the basis for questions on the exams.

*Persuasive Paper 25%:* Over the course of the class the student is expected to write a persuasive paper. The maximum page limit will be 6 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt, and 1" margins. Deviation from the format or page limit WILL result in AT LEAST a one letter grade reduction in the final grade of the paper. Every student will have the same topic (or set of topics) for the paper assignment. The assignment will be to answer the prompt I provide and to persuasively defend that answer, and I will hand out the details of the prompt early in the semester so that you have plenty of time to consider your response.

*Exams (15%, 15%, and 25%):* There will be two midterm exams (non-cumulative) and a cumulative final exam. These will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or short answer (1 page or 2 bluebook pages max per short answer). Missed exams will be allowed to be made up on a case-by-case basis, but only with a legitimate reason, documentation, and grade penalty of at least one letter grade per late day.

### Grading:

The grade breakdown will be as follows:

15% --- Exam 1

15% --- Exam 2

25% --- Final (Cumulative) Exam

20% --- 10-15 Short Quizzes

25% --- 6 page Persuasive Paper

### Grading Scale

94+ A

90-93 A-

87-89 B+

84-86 B

80-83 B-

77-79 C+

74-76 C

70-73 C-

67-69 D+

64-66 D

60-63 D-

0-59 F

**The University Senate Undergraduate and Graduate Councils require the following required statements appear in all teaching syllabi (graduate and undergraduate courses) on the Stony Brook Campus:**

*Americans with Disabilities Act:*

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

*Academic Integrity:*

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are **required** to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

*Critical Incident Management:*

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.

**Note on the Syllabus:**

The professor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the syllabus and class/reading schedule during the course of the semester.

## Preliminary Class Schedule and Readings

Note: This schedule may be subject to change

### Introduction

Aug 26<sup>th</sup>: *Introduction and Class Format*  
\*Read: PPPP Chapter 1

### Part 1: From Theory to Practice The Origin and History of the Major Parties

Aug 30<sup>th</sup>: Film – *John Adams*

Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>: Labor Day - No Class

Sept 6<sup>th</sup>: *Theories of Party Formation and Change*  
Read: WP? Chapters 1 and 2 – note: You can read this one after class

Sept 9<sup>th</sup>: Film -- *John Adams* (cont.)

Sept 13<sup>th</sup>: The Founders: Their Opinions and Their Actions (1760-1820)  
The Albany Regency, Martin Van Buren, and the Second Party System (1824-1852)  
\*Read: From Sundquist's *Dynamics of the Party System* (for the 20th) -  
**Blackboard**  
Optional (WP? Chapters 3+4)

Sept 16<sup>th</sup>: Slavery Polarizes the Nation and the Farmers' Revolt (1856-1924)

Sept 20<sup>th</sup>: The Coming and Aftermath of the New Deal (1928-1964)

Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>: Culture War or More of the Same? (1968-2010) and  
A Critique of Realignment

### Part 2: The Party-in-Government Learning How to Make Laws

Sept 27<sup>th</sup>: The Structure of the Congressional Parties in the House and Senate  
\*Readings on the Spatial Model of Voting: TBA - **Blackboard**

Sept 30<sup>th</sup>: The Spatial Model of Legislative Voting: Introduction  
The Spatial Model of Legislative Voting: Extensions and Findings  
\*Readings from Rhode's *Parties and Leaders in the Post Reform House* –  
**BlackBoard**

- Oct 4<sup>th</sup>: Conditional Party Government and the Procedural Cartel  
 \*Readings from Rhode's *Parties and Leaders in the PostReform House* –  
**BlackBoard**
- Oct 7<sup>th</sup>: Party Wars: Polarization in the Legislature  
 The President as Party Leader  
 \*Reading From Lee's *Beyond Ideology*- **Blackboard**
- Oct 11<sup>th</sup>: **First Midterm Exam**

### **Part 3: The Party and Elections Playing to Win**

- Oct 14<sup>th</sup>: *Nominations I: Ambition*  
 \*Read: PPPP Chapter 3  
*Nominations II: The Presidency*
- Oct 18<sup>th</sup>: *The Party as Organization*
- Oct 21<sup>st</sup>: *The Rise of Consultants*  
 \*Read PPPP Chapter 5
- Oct 25<sup>th</sup>: *Campaign Finance*  
 General Elections and Party Competition  
 \*Read: PPPP Chapter 2

### **Part 4: The Party in the Mass Public The Psychology of Partisanship**

- Oct 28<sup>th</sup>: *The Michigan, Columbia, and Economic Models of Partisanship*  
 Change and Continuity in Partisanship and the RAS Model  
 \*Read from Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes's *The American Voter* (1960)
- Nov 1<sup>st</sup>: *Further Extensions of Partisan Psychology, Polarization and Authoritarianism*  
 \*Read: PPPP Chapter 6, 7
- Nov 4<sup>th</sup>: *Political Activists, the Political Conventions and Their Delegates*  
 \*Read: "State Party Activists and State Party Polarization" and "Deaniacs and Democrats" in *The State of the Parties* edited by Green and Coffey - **Blackboard**  
 The Parties and Voter Contact
- Nov 8<sup>th</sup>: **Second Midterm Exam**

## Part 5: Social Movements and American Democracy

- Nov 11<sup>th</sup>: *Introduction to Social Movements*  
The Civil Right Movement and the Liberalization of the Democrats on Race  
\*Read: from Carmines and Stimson's *Issue Evolution* - **Blackboard**  
Why Social Change?: The Parties, Television, and Public Opinion on Lesbian and Gay Rights –
- Nov 15<sup>th</sup>: *Social Movements Continued*  
The Rise of Religious Movements and the New Right  
\*Read from Garretson's *Changing Media, Changing Minds* - **Blackboard**
- Nov 18<sup>th</sup>: *Social Movements Continued*  
Movements or Parties? Third Parties in the U.S. Context  
\*Read: from Luker's *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood* – **Blackboard**
- Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>: Break

## Part 6: Interest Groups

- Nov 25<sup>th</sup>: *Interest Groups and Democratic Theory*  
Types of Interest Groups, Their Formation, and Their Relations to Parties  
Read: AIG Chapter 1 and 2, 4
- Nov 29<sup>th</sup>: *Lobbying Congress*  
PACs and Campaign Donations  
\*Read: AIG Chapter 5 and 6
- Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>: *Lobbying the Presidency, Executive, and Courts*  
Indirect Lobbying: Public Opinion Campaigns  
\*Read: AIG Chapter 7, 8
- Note: Final Paper Due Dec 6<sup>th</sup> in Class**-----
- Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>: Review for Exam

**Final: TBA**