The George Washington University

PSC 2219: US Political Parties and Interest Groups

Time: Monday and Wednesday, 4:45 – 6:00 pm
Place: Monroe/Hall of Government 104
Professor: Vincent Stine, PhD
Email: vstine@gwu.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment Only

Course Description
This course provides a comprehensive look at the emergence and evolution of political parties in the United States. We will explore the constitutional, legal and historical factors that contributed to the development of political parties as well as examine the functions they perform, such as coalition building, participating in elections, organizing government and setting policy. We will also examine the internal operations of the parties, the importance of third party movements, and the challenges and opportunities facing political parties in the modern era.

At the conclusion of this course, you will understand:

- The development and evolution of political parties in the United States;
- The role of political parties in representing and conveying public concerns;
- How political parties build coalitions and participate in elections; and
- How political parties organize government and set policy at the federal, state and local levels.

Commitment to Learning
To gain the most from this class requires that you invest the time and effort necessary to learn the course material. Generally, you will receive 2.5 hours of direct instruction each week that will include a combination of lecture and class discussion. Outside of class, you should set aside three hours each week to do your readings and follow current political events. You should also allocate another five hours to study for each of the three exams as well as another ten hours to research and write your paper. If you invest your time properly, you will have a much better learning experience and most likely get a better grade.
Readings
Following texts are required:

*Party Politics in America, Fifteenth Edition*, Marjorie Randon Hershey
*The Life of the Parties*, A. James Reichley
*Party Wars: Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making*, Barbara Sinclair

Grading
All graded work must be in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. There are no extra credit assignments. Your grade is determined as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Exam</th>
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<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
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<td>Exam II</td>
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<td>Exam III</td>
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<td>Paper</td>
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Exams
There will be three exams. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer questions and an essay question. Exam questions will be derived from the assigned readings and lectures. Since not all lecture material will be from the assigned readings, it’s important to attend class or, if you have to miss, to get the notes from someone else. The final exam is not cumulative.

Paper
Your paper will examine a recent political issue and how the various political parties responded and why. You should describe and analyze: (1) each major party’s position; (2) the views of key constituencies/factions within each major party regarding the issue; (3) the views of three state Democratic and three state Republican parties on the issue; and (4) the electoral and political implications of the issue for each party. The paper should be six to eight double-spaced pages in length, excluding references and footnotes.

Student Responsibilities
Read all the assignments in advance so that we may discuss them in class. Come to class prepared and take good notes. Class attendance and participation is expected and will be taken into consideration when determining final grades on the margin.

Course Outline

**Week 1 – January 18 – Political Parties and Party Systems**
Hershey Chapters 1; Reichley Chapter 1

**Week 2 – January 23 & January 25 – Emergence/Evolution of Political Parties**
Hershey 2; Reichley Chapters 2-5
Week 3 – January 30 & February 1 – Emergence/Evolution of Political Parties
Reichley Chapters 6-13

Week 4 – February 6 & February 8 – Third Parties
Hershey Chapter 2, pgs. 37-45; Rosenstone Chapters 2-4

Week 5 – February 13 & February 15 – Party Identification & Voting Behavior
Hershey Chapters 6 & 8; Rosenstone Chapters 5-8

Week 6 – February 22 – Party Organizations & Activists
Hershey Chapter 4 & 5; Reichley Chapter 18

Week 7 – February 27 (Exam I) & March 1 State and Local Parties
Hershey Chapter 3 & Reichley Chapter 15, 19 & 20

Week 8 – March 6 & March 8 -- Party Factions, Movements and Constituencies
Reichley 14, 16 & 17

Week 9 — March 13 & March 15 -- Spring Break

Week 10 -- March 20 & March 22 -- Party Coalitions and Realignments
Hershey Chapter 7

Week 11 --- March 27 & March 29 -- Nomination Process & Strategies
Hershey Chapters 9-10

Week 12 --- April 3 (Exam II) & April 5 -- Elections
Hershey Chapters 11-12

Week 13 — April 10 & April 12 Political Polarization (Paper Due April 12)
Hershey Chapters 13-15; Sinclair Chapters 1-3

Week 14 — April 17 & April 19 -- Political Polarization
Sinclair Chapters 4-7 (continuation from previous week)

Week 15 — April 24 & April 26 -- Parties in the Modern Era
Sinclair Chapters 8-10

Week 16 – May 1 -- Interest Groups
Hershey, Chapters 16

Final Exam (Between May 8 – 16)
Academic Integrity
All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.

Support for Students with Disabilities
GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Additional information is available at www.gwu.edu/~dss.

University Counseling Center 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class
If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave the classroom, we will meet at the corner of 21st and H Street in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/.