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PSCI 341.01: Political Parties and Elections

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Political Parties and Elections
University of Montana
Political Science 341
MWF 11:10 – 12:00; Liberal Arts 337
Fall 2012

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& by appointment

Course Description

No discussion of American politics can go too far before political parties begin to intrude. Indeed, as E.E. Schattsneider wrote: “Modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties.” Yet while they are a central feature of the American political system, parties are more elusive and difficult to study than other well-bounded institutions like Congress or the Presidency. Even definitions of “political party” are contested. Nonetheless, in a country marked by vast socio-economic, ethnic, and religious diversity, as well as fragmentation of power across branches and levels of government, parties play a central role in providing linkages. They connect voters to each other, link voters to elected officials, and bind elected officials to one another both within and across branches and levels of government. The ways in which political parties do these things has evolved in fascinating ways. This course will explore the origin, development, importance, and consequences of political parties in the United States. In addition, with the 2012 elections occurring during the semester, we will spend considerable time following and analyzing the campaigns and results.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to: 1) Demonstrate knowledge of the transformation of America's Party system over the past 200 years; 2) Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental models, terms, and concepts associated with the study of political parties and elections; 3) Demonstrate proficiency at writing critical analyses of social science theories; 4) Demonstrate an understanding of the consequences of political reform and the election process.

Readings

Most of our readings will be posted on the course's Moodle website. These readings are designated on the syllabus as: “(Moo).” Contact me if you are not familiar with Moodle.

One book is required and is available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

1. John Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America, 1828-1996* (Cambridge University Press, 1998)

The *New York Times* (electronic edition: www.nyt.com) is also required reading on a daily basis

(Monday through Friday). Students are required to read those news stories dealing with American political parties and elections. Students may substitute (or alternate between) the *Washington Post* or the *Washington Times* if they like.

The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or alter course readings as necessary.

Requirements and Grading

Midterm Exam 1 (Friday, Oct. 19):	25%
Paper (due Monday, Nov. 19):	30%
Final Exam (Wednesday, Dec. 12):	30%
Participation (including presentation and reading quizzes):	15%

Exams: The Midterm Exam will be administered in class on Friday, October 19. The Final Exam will be held on Wednesday, December 12 from 8:00 – 10:00. Exams may include a combination of multiple choice, identification, short answer, and essay questions. Makeup exams will only be permitted if I have been notified *prior* to the missed exam and only if I agree that the absence was necessitated by a serious, documented emergency. Check your calendar now to make sure you do not have anything that conflicts with the exams.

Paper: Students will write a 5 page double-spaced paper with 1-inch margins and standard 12 point font. More information about the paper will be given in class. Papers are due at the beginning of class on Monday, November 19. Extensions will only be granted if I have been notified *prior* to the due date and only if I agree that an extension is warranted due to a serious, documented emergency. Papers will be marked down half a letter grade for each day they are late.

Participation: Much of our class time will be spent discussing course material. Consequently, both quantity and quality of class participation will be very important. Students are expected to do all of the assigned readings before each class meeting and come to class prepared to discuss the material. Daily attendance will be taken and factored into participation grades. Students missing more than ¼ of our class meetings will not pass the course.

- Election Presentation: Each student will follow a competitive congressional or gubernatorial election this fall. Students should begin by reading about their election in the local press (see www.onlinenewspapers.com), in the national press (*The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, etc.), and specialized publications (*The Crystal Ball*, *The Cook Report*, etc.). Based on their research, students will develop an analysis of their election and present it to the class. I will provide much more information about these presentations in class.
- Reading Quizzes: Reading quizzes will be administered several times during the semester without prior announcement. Quizzes will cover basic aspects of the assigned reading.

Grades: Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9	below 60 F
A- 90-92.9	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9	
	B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	D- 60-62.9	

***** Student must complete both exams, the paper, and the presentation to pass the course.*****

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available online at <http://life.umt.edu/SA/documents/fromWeb/StudentConductCode1.pdf>. I take academic honesty very seriously, and will do my utmost to prevent, uncover, and penalize any form of cheating. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about academic honesty.

DSS Students

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations. Students requesting accommodations on exams, papers, or other course requirements should contact me as soon as possible, and must contact DSS in order to arrange for and provide me with a letter of approval for accommodations at least one week prior to the first exam. DSS is in Lommasson Center 154.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PART I: DEFINING POLITICAL PARTIES

Week 1, Aug. 27 – 31: Setting the Stage for the 2012 Election

Professor Saldin will be mentoring college students earning credit for internships through the Washington, D.C.-based Washington Center's National Party Conventions program. In lieu of class, PSCI 341 students are responsible for reading/viewing the following:

- (a) James W. Ceaser, Andrew E. Busch, and John J. Pitney, *Epic Journey: The 2008 Elections and American Politics* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), Chapter 1 (Moo)
- (b) Ceaser, et al., "Epilogue: 2010" (Moo)
- (c) CQ Press, *Winning in 2012: CQ Press's Guide to the Elections*, pgs. 13-52 (Moo)
- (d) Republican National Convention
 - i. required:
 - Wednesday night: watch Paul Ryan's speech

- Thursday night: watch Mitt Romney's speech
- Write a one-page response to the Republican Convention focusing on the Ryan and Romney speeches. Due in class on Wednesday, Sept. 5.
- ii. recommended: watch additional coverage of the Republican Convention (Monday-Thursday)

Week 2, Sept. 5 – 7: Introduction

- (a) David Hume, "Of Parties in General" (Moo)
- (b) Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*, paragraphs 1.1.141-48 and 1.1.151 (Moo)
- (c) Mickey Edwards, "How to Turn Republicans and Democrats Into Americans," *The Atlantic* (2011) (Moo)
- (d) Matthew Yglesias, "The Case for Partisanship," *The Atlantic* (April 2008) (Moo)
- (e) Democratic National Convention
 - i. required:
 - Wednesday night: watch Joe Biden's speech
 - Thursday night: watch Barack Obama's speech
 - Write a one-page response to the Democratic Convention focusing on the Biden and Obama speeches. Due in class on Friday, Sept. 7.
 - ii. recommended: watch additional coverage of the Democratic Convention (Monday-Thursday)

Week 3: Sept. 10 – 14: What are Parties?

- (a) John Aldrich, *Why Parties?* (1995) Chap. 1 (Moo)
- (b) Woodrow Wilson, "Wanted – A Party" (Moo)
- (c) Joseph Schlesinger, "Political Parties and the Winning of Office" (1991), pgs 1-20 (Moo)

Week 4, Sept. 17 – 21: National and State Party Organizations

- (a) Marjorie Randon Hershey and Paul Allen Beck, "The Political Party as an Organization," in *Party Politics in America* (2003) (Moo)
- (b) Thomas Nast, cartoons of Boss Tweed, *Harper's Weekly* [1871] (Moo)
- (c) William Riordan, "The Strenuous Life of a Tammany District Leader," from *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* [1905] (Moo)
- (d) Jerry Calvert, "Montana," *State Party Profiles* (1997) (Moo)

PART II: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEM

Week 5, Sept. 24 – Sept. 28: The Founding and the Origins of the American Party System

- (a) James Reichley, "Intentions of the Founders: A Policy Without Parties," from *The Life of the Parties* (Moo)
- (b) James Madison, *Federalist* #10 [1787] (Moo)
- (c) Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System* (1969), Chapter 2 (Moo)
- (d) George Washington, "Farewell Address," [1796] (Moo)

Week 6, Oct. 1 – 5: The Development of the Democratic Party, Part I

- (a) Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America*, Chapters 5-6
- (b) Thomas Jefferson, “First Inaugural Address” [1801] (Moo)
- (c) Alexis de Tocqueville, “Parties in the United States,” *Democracy in America* (Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 2) [1835] (Moo)

Week 7, Oct. 8 – 12: The Development of the Democratic Party, Part II

- (a) Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America*, Chapter 7
- (b) Nicol Rae, *Southern Democrats*, (1994), Chapter 1 (Moo)
- (c) Thomas Byrne Edsall, “The Old and New Democratic Parties,” in *Varieties of Progressivism* (2004) (Moo)

Week 8, Oct. 15 – 19: The Development of the Republican Party, Part I

- (a) Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America*, Chapter 3
- (b) William E. Gienapp, “Formation of the Republican Party” (Moo)
- (c) Abraham Lincoln, “A House Divided” [1858] (Moo)

******Midterm Exam, Friday, Oct. 19******

(---Interruption from Part II for Election---)

Week 9, Oct. 22 – 26: Presidential Nominations and Campaigns (normally in Part III)

- (a) Nelson W. Polsby, *The Consequences of Party Reform* (Oxford University Press, 1983), Part I (Moo)
- (b) Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, “The Invisible Primary in Presidential Nominations, 1980-2004,” in *The Making of the Presidential Candidates 2008*, William G. Mayer, ed. (2007) (Moo)
- (c) Larry J. Sabato, “Politics: America’s Missing Constitutional Link,” *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Summer 2006 (Moo)
- (d) David Foster Wallace, “The Weasel, Twelve Monkeys and the Shrub,” *Rolling Stone* (April 2000) (Moo)

Week 10, Oct. 29 – Nov. 2: Campaign 2012

- (a) Peter L. Francia, Wesley Joe, and Clyde Wilcox, “Campaign Finance Reform in the Post-Citizens United Era” (Moo)
- (b) The Tillman Act [1907] (Moo)
- (c) *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* [2010] (Moo)
- (d) other readings TBA

Week 11, Nov. 5 – 9: Election 2012

- (a) readings TBA

(---Post-Election Resumption of Part II---)

Week 12, Nov. 12 – 16: The Development of the Republican Party, Part II

- (a) Gerring, *Party Ideologies in America*, Chapter 4
- (b) Nicol Rae, *Decline and Fall of the Liberal Republicans* (1989), pgs. 25-45, 78-87, 118-21 (Moo)
- (c) Earl Black and Merle Black, *The Rise of Southern Republicans* (selections) (2002) (Moo)
- (d) Linwood Holton, "An End to the Southern Strategy?," *New York Times* (Dec. 23, 2002) (Moo)
- (e) Gerard Alexander, "The Myth of the Racist Republicans," *Claremont Review of Books* (Spring 2004) (Moo)

PART III: PARTIES AND ELECTIONS

Week 13, Nov. 19: Party Identification and Voting

- (a) Paper due Monday, Nov. 19, 11:10 AM
- (b) Louis Menand, "The Unpolitical Animal: How Political Science Understands Voters," *The New Yorker* (Aug 30, 2004) (Moo)
- (c) Larry M. Bartels, "The Irrational Electorate," *The Wilson Quarterly* (Autumn 2008) (Moo)

******Paper due in class Monday, November 19******

Week 14, Nov. 26 – Nov. 30: Partisan Regimes and Electoral Realignment

- (a) Walter Dean Burnham, *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (selections; Lanham Reader) (Moo)
- (b) James Sundquist, "Party Realignment: What, When, How?" from *Dynamics of the Party System* (Moo)
- (c) David Mayhew, "Electoral Realignments," *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000), 449-74 (Moo)
- (d) Elizabeth Sanders, "In Defense of Realignment and Regimes," *Polity* (2005) (Moo)

Week 15, Dec. 3 – 7: Conclusion: A Polarized America?

- (a) David Brooks, "One Nation, Slightly Divisible," *The Atlantic*
- (b) James Ceaser, "True Blue vs. Deep Red" (Moo)
- (c) Morris Fiorina, "Culture Wars?: The Myth of a Polarized America"

******FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, DEC. 12, 8:00 – 10:00******