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PSC 495.01: American Political Development

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Political Science 495
Seminar in American Political Development
Spring 2005
T Th 8:10 – 9:30 LA 337

Professor Gregory Koger
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 Office Hours: 9:30 – 10:30 Tuesday & Wednesday

Phone: 243-4418

What is “American Political Development?” Well, it’s a course on the development of American politics. That is, it is the study of American political history from a political science perspective, with a concern for *patterns* and *theories* of historical change, a focus on political phenomena, and interest in the relationship between the past and present.

This course will focus on a specific thread of American history: the role of political patronage. Patronage politics—the distribution of government benefits and jobs in exchange for donations and votes—was once the dominant basis for American politics. The demise (in a relative sense) of patronage as the motivation for voting and the premise of governing has quietly transformed the nature of electoral campaigns.

In this course we shall first establish an understanding of what patronage politics is, how it works, and the pros and cons of patronage. Then we shall trace a) the effect of patronage on elections and governing and b) the consequences of depoliticizing the federal bureaucracy.

Your grade is based on participation, a midterm, a research paper, and a final:

Grading

| | | |
|----------------|-----|--------------------------------|
| Participation | 20% | |
| Midterm | 20% | |
| Research Paper | 30% | (5% based on the presentation) |
| Final | 30% | |

It is your responsibility to bring two *blank* blue books to class during the first two weeks; I will re-distribute the blue books during the midterm and final. Students will have the choice of writing papers solo or in teams of two.

Class Rules

Make-up exams are allowed in the event of illness or death in the family with documentation. There are no excuses for late papers; start papers early and protect yourself against computer failures.

Course Texts

The primary texts are a) a set of copied readings available on reserve at the library and b) *Politics By Other Means* by Shefter and Ginsberg, 3rd edition. PBOM is available in the bookstore or online.

Course Schedule

| Week | Topics |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Jan 25, 27 | Introduction. The Mechanics of Machines. |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Reading: <i>The Bosses</i> , 1-44. |
| Feb 1, 3 | The Age of Jackson Reichley, 69-89; Aldrich, <i>Why Parties?</i> 97-125 |
| Feb 8, 10 | Patronage and Campaigning McGerr, <i>The Decline of Popular Politics</i> , 12-41 |
| Feb 15, 17 | The Debate Over Machines "The Local Bosses: The Politicians versus the Public." E.E. Schattschneider <i>Party Government</i> , 170-186. "An Apology for Bossism." <i>The Bosses</i> , 45-50. "The Future of Machine Politics," <i>The Bosses</i> , 105-114 |
| Feb 22, 24 | Gilded Age and Progressivism Reichley 115-132; 167-182 (start reading Skowronek!) |
| Mar 1, 3 | Reform and State Capacity Skowronek, <i>Building a New American State</i> 19-84 |
| Mar 8, 10 | Evolution of Patronage Politics 1 "The Reformer Boss" "The New Deal and the Boss" <i>The Bosses</i> , 51-78 Reichley 251-260 |
| Mar 15 | Midterm |
| Mar 17 | Evolution of Patronage Politics 2 "Daley" "Machine Politics Chicago Style" <i>The Bosses</i> 79-104 Reichley, 261-288 |
| Mar 22, 24 | Spring Break |
| Mar 29, 31; Apr. 5 | Polarization and Amateur politics Gary Jacobson, <i>Polarized Politics</i> , 9-30, John Aldrich, <i>Why Parties</i> , 241-274 <i>No class on Apr. 7</i> |
| Apr 12, 14 | <i>Politics By Other Means</i> 15-82 |
| Apr 19, 21 | <i>Politics By Other Means</i> 83-133 |
| Apr 26, 28 | <i>Politics By Other Means</i> 134-191 Papers due April 28. |
| May 3, 5 | Presentations |
| May 12 | Final 8-10 a.m. |