

Political Science 105 and History 168

Fall 2015

Lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays (and occasional Fridays), 10:25-11:15

Recitations on Thursdays and Fridays

Introduction to American Politics

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Office hours: Monday afternoons, 1:00-3:00, and Thursday mornings, 10:00-11:00

Recitation leaders: David Gelman and Doug Johnson, both in Harkness Hall 316

When did some states turn blue—and others red—in presidential elections? What are the origins of the modern Congress, including the filibuster-prone Senate and a House run by its majority party? Why did politicians begin to campaign for the presidency, rather than waiting on their front porches for voters to appear? How did voting rights—and other rights of citizenship—change over time? Drawing broadly on historical as well as contemporary evidence, this course will introduce students to the foundations of American government. We will examine political institutions as well as the linkages that connect institutions, political leaders, and ordinary citizens. This course is designed for first-year students considering a major, minor, or cluster in Political Science or History, but it is also appropriate for sophomores, juniors, and seniors who want a basic foundation in American political history and government.

All books are available for purchase in the university bookstore. They are also on two-hour reserve at the circulation desk of Rush Rhees Library. (You might also consider online sources, including www.abebooks.com, for book purchases.) The required books are these—

Samuel Kernell and Steven S. Smith, eds., *Principles and Practice of American Politics*, Sixth Edition (Los Angeles: Sage and CQ Press, 2016). **Be sure to get this edition—i.e., the sixth edition.**

Gordon S. Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (New York: Random House, 2002). **Any edition is fine.**

William L. Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics*, edited with an introduction by Terrence J. McDonald (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994). **Be sure to get this exact edition—i.e., the book edited by Terrence McDonald.**

All other readings are available at the course website on Blackboard. To access the Blackboard readings off-campus, you will first need to download and run VPN, so that your computer can be viewed as part of the University's network. You can find VPN at <http://rochester.edu/it/vpn/>. If any link on the website does not work, please let Professor Gamm know immediately, by phone or e-mail, so he can address the problem.

Requirements

. Students must conduct themselves in accordance with the University's Academic Honesty Policy. In this class, students are encouraged to discuss readings and course material with anyone they choose—including the professor, TA's, and other students. But, unless all assignments have been submitted, they may not share, receive, or discuss written work for this class, including outlines, plans, and notes for papers (except for simple proofreading as specified in the next sentence). They may receive basic help with spelling and grammar from others, including from Writing Fellows, but never substantive help with their written arguments nor help of any sort with their papers from current or former students in this class.

The course grade is based on class participation, three short papers, two hourly exams, and a final exam.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings, including lectures and recitations, having read the assigned material. The baseline participation grade is determined by participation in recitations, though it may be revised upward for students who also speak up in lectures. Participation requires good preparation (by doing the reading carefully in advance), active listening to other students, and smart questions. It's always okay to take risks when you speak—either in asking questions or offering an answer even when you're not sure you're right. In this realm, as in most places, quality of contributions matters more than quantity.

In 500-700 words (about two pages), students should address three of the paper questions listed below. Keep papers short and to the point. *No paper may exceed 750 words.* Double-space the papers, use 12-point fonts, and no funny stuff with the margins; an inch on each side is about right. Students may write papers for any three of the ten units that include a paper question, though *all students must submit a paper in at least one of the first three units that include a paper question.* Students may write as many as five papers; in calculating the course grade, only the three highest paper grades will be included. (This policy does not include students who fail to submit papers in at least one of the first three units: in this case, students will receive a "0" for the missing paper and that "0" will be included in calculating the course grade.) Place your recitation leader's name at the top of your paper. *Papers are due no later than 12:30 on Tuesday afternoons. All papers should be submitted as hard copies in your recitation leader's box in Harkness 314.* No late papers will be accepted without prior permission. **Students must submit at least three papers to receive credit for the course.**

The hour exams will be administered during classtime on Monday, Sep. 28, and Monday, Nov. 9.

The date and time of the final exam are set by the registrar. The exam is a three-hour exam, which will be administered on Thursday, December 17, at 12:30-3:30 pm. Please note the time of this exam and make your holiday travel arrangements accordingly.

WE THE PEOPLE

Aug. 31 Lecture

Kernell and Smith, *Principles and Practice*, pp. 452-64:

[Appendix] Constitution of the United States. (If you do not have access to the book yet, you can find the Constitution in many other places. Just be sure to read a version that includes all amendments.)

Jeffrey Toobin, "Heavyweight: How Ruth Bader Ginsburg Has Moved the Supreme Court," *The New Yorker*, 11 Mar. 2013, 38-47.

CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS, RESISTANCE, AND REVOLUTION

Sept. 2 Lecture

Sept. 4 *No class*

Sept. 7 *No class—Labor Day*

Sept. 9 Lecture

Sept. 10/11 Recitation

Paper due Sept. 8. According to Wood, why does the British government levy taxes on its subjects in the American colonies in the 1760s and early 1770s? On what grounds do Patrick Henry (author of the Virginia Stamp Act Resolutions) and John Dickinson object to this taxation, and how do Jenyns and Hutchinson defend this practice?

Wood, *American Revolution*, pp. 1-62.

Virginia Stamp Act Resolutions, 1765.

Soame Jenyns, "The Objections to the Taxation of our American Colonies by the Legislature of Great Britain, briefly consider'd."

THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

Sept. 21 Lecture

Sept. 23 No class—Yom Kippur

Sept. 25 Lecture/Discussion

Paper due Sept. 22. How do Kenyon, Shklar, and Wood characterize the views of the Anti-Federalists? According to each scholar, were the Anti-Federalists or Federalists better able to grasp the future of American politics?

Wood,

ORIGINS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Oct. 12 Lecture

Oct. 14 Lecture

Oct. 15/16 Recitation

Paper due Oct. 13. How have issues of gender and race shaped American party development?

In answering this question, draw on Baker, Key, and Welch to examine women's changing place in American politics in the 19th century as well as the reasons why the battle over the Federal Elections Bill of 1890 elicited such strong passions.

Virginia Resolutions, 1798.

PRESIDENTIAL POWER

Oct. 26 Lecture

Oct. 28 Lecture

Oct. 29/30

RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES

Nov. 16 Lecture
Nov. 18 Lecture
Nov. 19/20 Recitation

Paper due Nov. 17. Drawing solely on Jackson and Sugrue, analyze the ways in which federal government policies and the actions of private individuals limited the ability of blacks to purchase homes on the same terms as whites. (Be prepared to discuss the other readings in class and on the exam.)

Kenneth T. Jackson, "Race, Ethnicity, and Real Estate Appraisal: The Home Owners Loan Corporation and the Federal Housing Administration," *Journal of Urban History* 6 (1980), 419-52.

Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964," *Journal of American History* 82 (1995): 551-78.

Kernell and Smith, *Principles and Practice*, pp. 86-98:

[4-1] Supreme Court of the United States, *Schuetz v. Bamn*.

[4-2] Justin Levitt, "from *New State Voting Laws: Barriers to the Ballot?*"

Jill LePore, "To Have and To Hold: Reproduction, Marriage, and the Constitution," *The New Yorker*, 25 May 2015, 34-39.

RED STATES AND BLUE STATES

Nov. 23 Lecture
Nov. 25 No class—Thanksgiving break
Nov. 27 No class—Thanksgiving break
Nov. 30 Lecture
Dec. 2 Lecture
Dec. 3/4 Recitation

Paper due Dec. 1. Are Americans sharply divided today, or not? In your paper, consider how Fiorina, Abramowitz, and Bartels answer this question as well as the ways in which parties have changed in recent decades.

Kernell and Smith, *Principles and Practice*, pp. 308-24, 371-90.

[10-3] Morris P. Fiorina, "from *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*

THE MODERN CONGRESS

Dec. 7 Lecture

Dec. 9 Lecture

Dec. 10/11 Recitation

Paper due Dec. 8. What is the relationship between electoral polarization and congressional dysfunction? To what extent is gridlock in Congress a function of divided constituents and to what extent is it due to factors within the legislature itself?

Kernell and Smith, *Principles and Practice*, pp. 138-76, 330-50, pp.