

PSC231W Money in Politics

Prof. L. Powell

Tuesday 2-4:40

Dunkman Library in Wallis Center 1st Floor Harkness no food allowed

Office Hours: W,Th 1-2:30

We will examine two main questions: How much influence does money have in determining who seeks and who wins elective office? How much does money spent on contributions and lobbying influence government actions and policies?

Political scientists have reached no consensus on the answers to these questions. We will read the literature that debates these and closely related issues. Because many of the studies use quantitative methods, all students should have completed a basic statistics course. (This need not be a political science methods course.) Students should have a good basic understanding of American government.

The course will be a small seminar and will use a discussion format. Each student will be expected to read the assigned material before class, and to take turns summarizing and critiquing particular readings, as well as participating in class discussion.

Grades will be based on class discussion, on written and oral brief presentations on the readings and on a final research paper. The final research paper will constitute 60% of the grade. Students will present their research papers in the final 2-3 class sessions. The research papers should be emailed to all participants 24 hours before the class presentations. Absent a documented excuse, missing a class presentation or the final research presentation will incur a substantial penalty in the final grade.

Each student will be responsible for learning how the campaign finance process works in one state. Each of you can then contribute detailed knowledge of one state to the class discussion. Most students will chose to write about some aspect of the campaign finance process in their state for their research paper, but you may propose other alternatives for the research paper.

Readings: Most readings will be available on Blackboard or through the library databases. We will be reading large sections from two books available in paperback that should be purchased. (I will request the library to put them on reserve also.) I they should be cheaper online from Amazon or other sellers.

Raymond J. La Raja. 2008. *Small Change: Money Political Parties and Campaign Finance Reform*.

Stacy B. Gordon. 2005. *Campaign Contributions and Legislative Voting*.

Readings:

January 18th. Why do we care about money? Discuss course setup. Describe how to choose states. Email me to choose states rank 3 choices.

January 25th. Federal regulation of presidential and congressional campaign finance.

www.FEC.gov E-learning resources. Interactive Presentations: Contributions
Explains hard money donations

between soft money and hard money, and the differences between presidential and congressional campaign finance.

Please read:

La Raja, Raymond J. 2008. *Small Change* Chapters 1-4. University of Michigan.
Potter, Trevor. 2005. The Current State of Campaign Finance Law. Chapter 2 in
The New Campaign Finance Sourcebook ed. by Corrado, Mann, Ortiz and
Potter.

La Raja, Raymond J. 2008. Has the U.S. Campaign Finance System Collapsed?
The Forum, 6/1.

Mann, Thomas E. *The Forum*, 6/1.

Hay *The Forum*, 6/1.

OpenSecrets.org Campaign Finance Links

February 1st. What do states do?

Begin to research your own state. Be prepared to discuss what you have found out about campaign finance in your state and to share ideas for locating information.

Powell *What Money Buys* Chapter 2 Patterns of State Legislative Campaign Finance.

Hamm, Keith E. and Gary F. Monc

th

Edition by Virginia Gray and Russell Hanson, eds. CQ Press.
Wilcox, Clyde. 2005. Designing Campaign Finance Disclosure in the States:
Tracing the Tributaries of Campaign Finance. *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy*, 4/4: 371-

Lowery, David, Virginia Gray, Jennifer Benz, Mary Deason, Justin Kirkland and
Health Lobby