Description

Political scientists are nearly unanimous in their belief that mass democracy is impossible save for parties. Parties facilitate democratic representation and accountability. This class is about party organizations and the behavior of actors who work through party organizations. We’ll study how parties organize political conflict in America and how party coalitions shape public policy outputs.

Course Materials


- It is also OK to use the 14th edition of this book.

All other the required reading will be made available on the Blackboard page for this class.

Grading

The course grade will be determined by the following:

- Midterm 1 (33 percent)
  - Tentatively scheduled for February 14
- Midterm 2 (33 percent)
  - Tentatively scheduled for March 28.
  - Midterm 2 will address material covered after midterm 1.
- Final (34 percent)
  - May 2
  - The final exam will address all material covered in the course but will emphasize material covered after midterm 2.
- Attendance (extra credit)\(^1\)
  - If you miss no more than two classes during the semester, you will get one percentage point of *extra credit* added to your course grade.\(^2\)
  - All absences are excused! But to get the extra credit you cannot miss more than two classes.

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\(^1\)You are strongly encouraged to attend class. Anything covered during lecture is fair game for exams. And because I know you’ll ask ... no, I won’t post lecture slides online – my slides are meaningful only accompanied by the lecture.

\(^2\)Getting credit for attending a class involves being in class when I take role and remaining for the duration of the class. If you sleep or hold private conversations or are otherwise disruptive, I will not give you credit for attending class.
Course Policies

- Students are expected to be courteous and considerate of the instructor and one another. This consideration includes, but is not limited to, not engaging in activities that draw your attention away from the seminar – including sleeping, holding private conversations, surfing the internet, reading, doing homework, etc.

- Computers may only be used for taking course notes.

- Of course, the standard disclaimers regarding cheating, plagiarizing, and the Student Honor code all apply.

Reading Assignments

- January 15 and 17: What are political parties?
  Hershey chapter 1

- January 22: The American two-party system
  Hershey chapter 2

- January 24: Party identification
  Hershey chapter 6

- January 29 and 31: Party coalitions and party change
  Hershey chapter 7
  Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- February 5 and 7: Party organizations
  Hershey chapter 3
  Hershey chapter 4

- February 12: Ideology and the parties
  Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- February 14: Midterm 1

- February 19: Party activists
  Hershey chapter 5

- February 21: Parties and voter turnout
  Hershey chapter 8

- February 26 and 28: Party nominations
  Hershey chapter 9
  Hershey chapter 10

- March 5: Campaigns
Hershey chapter 11

- March 7: Campaign Finance

Hershey chapter 12

- March 12 and 14: Spring Recess

- March 19 and 21: Parties in Congress and state legislatures

Hershey chapter 13

Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- March 26: The parties and the formation of public policy

Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- March 28: **Midterm 2**

- April 2: The party in the executive

Hershey chapter 14

- April 4: The semi-responsible parties

Hershey chapter 15

- April 9: Party decline and resurgence

Hershey chapter 16

- April 11: Third parties

  Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- April 16 and 18: Comparative political parties

  Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- April 23: Parties, democracy, and political representation

  Academic article posted in Blackboard.

- April 25: Wrap up