

PSCI 3210A
Electoral Politics in the US

Thursdays, 11:35-2:25

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

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Course Description:

In this course, we will examine many of the ways in which Americans often do not act like their counterparts around the world in terms of voting, joining parties and evaluating candidates. Similarly, the main parties in the US, Republican and Democratic, often act differently from political parties in other countries. The United States is also the most expensive country in the world in which to run for office, a fact which probably will not change soon! Another unique factor coming to the fore in the 2000 Presidential election was that unlike other countries, the states rather than the national government in the US are entrusted with most election administration, and certainly the Electoral College is unique. As we also know, the Presidential election of 2008 was quite different from previous ones since many more voters overall, including new, young and minority voters, decided to vote, and clearly the outcome of the election was new as well!

We will explore all the reasons for the above during the course of the semester, some of which were bequeathed by the "Founding Fathers" when they framed the Constitution in 1787, others which have occurred in an unintended fashion over time. It will also be important to explore potential "fixes" for a system which has in some ways outgrown the framework in which it was established.

Texts:

The following books are all required and available at the Haven Bookstore on Sunnyside Ave:

1. Andrew Gumbel, *Steal this Vote* (Nation Books, 2005)
2. Donna Brazile, *Cooking with Grease* (Simon & Schuster, 2005)
3. L. Sandy Maisel, *American Parties and Elections: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2007)
4. Lanny Davis, *Scandal* (Palgrave/MacMillan, 2006)
5. Allen Raymond, *How to Rig an Election* (Simon & Schuster, 2008)
6. Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors* (Princeton University, 2001)
7. Michael Lewis-Beck et al., *The American Voter Revisited* (University of Michigan, 2008)

Course requirements:

It is important to keep up with the readings and come to class prepared to discuss them since you will be evaluated on this. Also, ALL written work must be turned in to pass the course, and you are allowed two absences per term. After that you will start to be penalized.

Co-Leadership of a Discussion Group:	20%
Preparation of Questions to be submitted To class beforehand:	15%
Informed Contribution to class Discussions:	15%
Take home final(Due Dec 22)	25%
Final Paper (15-20 pp) (Nov 27)	25%

Outline of Class meetings:

- Sept. 10 Introduction to Class
- Sept. 17 Origins of Party System, I
Read: Maisel, Chs. 1-3
- Sept. 24 Continued, Maisel, Chs. 4-7
- Oct. 1 Voting Systems in the US, Part I
Gumbel Chs. 1-8
- Oct. 8 Continued
Gumbel, Chs. 9-12
- Oct. 15 Voting Behavior in US, Part I
Lewis-Beck et al, Parts I, 11
- Oct. 22 Part II
Lewis-Beck, Part III
- Oct. 29 Part III
Lewis-Beck, Parts IV & V
- Nov. 5 Rise of the New Right
McGirr, entire & Gumbel, Ch. 2

Nov. 12	Campaign Strategy Raymond, entire
Nov. 19	Rise of the Democratic National Committee (DLC) and Clinton years, Part I Brazile, entire & Gumbel, Chs. 13, 14
Nov. 26	Part II Davis, entire
Dec. 3	Conclusions Gumbel, Ch. 15 and Lewis-Beck, Appendix I

Academic Accommodations

For students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 16, 2009 for December examinations** and **March 12, 2010 for April examinations**.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day’s date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com, or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.