

American Political Development

Political Science 4105

Spring 2022

Baldwin 102

TR 8:00-9:15am

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Course Description:

The primary goal of this course is to familiarize the student with American political history and policy development. The class will focus on the development of American political institutions from the late 18th century through the 19th century. Throughout the semester, we will focus on topics including: the failure of the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention, the creation of American political parties, Congress and the passage and evolution of major policies. Particular attention will be given to how these institutions and policies influence contemporary American politics.

Books and Readings:

The following books are required and can be purchased from amazon.com:

Ellis, Joseph. 2001. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Ellis, Joseph. 2007. *American Creation: Triumphs and Tragedies at the Founding of the Republic*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Freeman, Joanne. 2018. *The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Students will not only be expected to have done the reading assignments, but should also be aware of relevant news stories. As such, I recommend reading a daily newspaper – such as the New York Times and/or the Washington Post – or at least checking cnn.com. Other political blogs that students may find useful include FiveThirtyEight, Political Wire, The Monkey Cage, The Upshot, Vox and the Drudge Report.

Some optional books you might want to consider purchasing can be found on amazon.com:

Aldrich, John H. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Mann, Robert. 1996. *The Walls of Jericho: Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Richard Russell, and the Struggle for Civil Rights*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.

Potter, David M. 1976. *The Impending Crisis: 1848-1861*. New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Holt, Michael F. 2004. *The Fate of Their Country*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.

Oleszek, Walter J., Mark J. Oleszek, Elizabeth Rybicki and Bill Heniff, Jr. 2020. *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*. 11th Edition. CQ Press: Washington, DC.

Schickler, Eric. 2001. *Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Additional readings will be posted on the course website. Many of these readings will be highly technical in nature. As such, students are not expected to understand all aspects of each paper. However, they will be held accountable for a basic understanding of the paper's theory and applications.

Course Grading:

Your grade in this class will be assigned according to the following:

1. Class Attendance/Participation (**0-5% of final grade**): One of the goals for this class is for students to become comfortable discussing political institutions, issues, events and research. Hence, class periods will be part lecture and part discussion. Students who attend class and participate will receive one point per course period and an additional point for adequate participation. The lowest attendance/participation grade will be dropped. At the end of the semester, a student's class attendance/participation grade will account for 5% of the student's final course grade if it improves their score. Otherwise, it will not be factored into the final course grade and the student's exam scores will be weighted higher.
2. Background Survey (**5% of final grade**): Students will be asked to fill out a Background Survey for the purposes of matching them with a legislative history topic. The deadline to fill out the survey is Tuesday, **January 18** at 5 pm.
3. Exams (**40-45% of final grade**): Two exams will be given on Thursday, **February 24th** and Tuesday, **May 10th**. These exams will be given online. Links to the exams will be e-mailed to students at 8 am and they will be due at 5 pm the same day. The exams will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions. Students are free to use whatever resources they want to answer these exams. The exams will be non-cumulative and may include questions related to a student's assigned legislative history topic. If a student is unable to take the exam on the scheduled date, they should contact the course instructor beforehand. A missed exam will only be excused for a documented illness (documentation must be provided by a physician) or a death in the family. Each midterm exam is worth either 20% of the final course grade or 22.5% depending on the attendance/participation score discussed above.
4. Legislative History (**50% of final grade**): In order to demonstrate an understanding of the historical policy-making process, students are required to complete a paper analyzing the consideration and passage of a major piece of American legislation. After filling out

the background survey discussed above, each student will be assigned to a legislative history “teams.” While students are encouraged to work with their legislative history “teammates,” they are not obligated to do so. Each student will be assigned differing questions and duties related to the legislative history and graded separately. Students are also encouraged to use material from their exams in compiling their legislative histories. A final draft of the paper will be due on Friday, **May 6th** at 5 pm. The legislative history assignment will count for 50% of the final course grade.

Students looking for feedback on their legislative history assignment are invited to turn in sections of the paper on the assigned dates below during the semester. The sections and paper grade are discussed below (more detailed discussions of the assignment will be provided in class):

(1) A brief, three-paragraph Summary detailing the legislation the student will be analyzing. More specifically, the summary section should do three things: Paragraph 1: Tell the reader what the law does/sought to do; Paragraph 2: Tell the reader why the law is or is not considered important today; Paragraph 3: Characterize its passage. Was it controversial? Partisan? What were the key votes/moments that occurred during consideration?. The summary section should not exceed 500 words and is due on Thursday, **February 10th** at 5pm. It is worth 10% of the final paper grade.

(2) A Background section that answers a specific question assigned by the instructor. Typically, this will necessitate contextualizing either the political climate the legislation was considered in or provide a history of the policy. Ideally, it will demonstrate why the legislation was needed. The background section is due on Thursday, **March 3rd** at 5pm. It is worth 30% of the final paper grade.

(3) A Member Spotlight section. This is a short, one to two-page discussion detailing a member of Congress associated with the passage of the law. It can include either on a broad overview of a member’s career and/or an interesting episode they were involved in. Students are encouraged to focus on whatever details they feel are the most interesting. The Member Spotlight is due on Thursday, **March 17th** at 5 pm. It is worth 10% of the final paper grade.

(4) A Process section that analyzes committee and floor consideration of the measure during a specific period assigned by the instructor. This may involve House or Senate consideration of a bill or conference report and will likely necessitate the discussion of a given rule or legislative procedure. It will also likely necessitate analyzing a roll call vote. The process section is due on Thursday, **April 7th** at 5pm. It is worth 20% of the final paper grade.

(5) An Aftermath section that analyzes a post-enactment event related to the bill assigned to the student by the instructor. This might include the law being amended by a subsequent piece of legislation, being altered by a series of Supreme Court decisions or its enforcement by the President and bureaucracy. The Aftermath section is due on Thursday, **April 21st** at 5 pm. It is worth 30% of the final paper grade.

Each of the sections mentioned above should be clearly labelled, written in Times New Roman 12-point font (main text) and Times News Roman 10-point font (footnotes). It should be single-spaced and include a Work Cited section. As noted above, students are not obligated to turn each section in at the assigned date. If they do so, they are welcome to respond to any feedback provided on the section. Their final grade for the section will be the average of their initial and revised scores.

Final course grades will be assigned as follows: 100-93 = A, 90-92 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-, 60-69 = D, and 60-0. Extra credit will not be given in this course.

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to notify the instructor and the Office for Disability Services at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Instructor Availability:

Students seeking to contact the instructor are encouraged to stop by during scheduled office hours. However, the instructor will also be available to meet with students either in his Zoom Meeting Room or in his 407 Baldwin Hall office by appointment.

Classroom Behavior:

Students should behave professionally throughout the course and disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes cell phone usage, excessive talking and derogatory or offensive comments made during discussion. Students will be held responsible for all material discussed or assigned.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will have their names forwarded to the University. It is each student's responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. Further information regarding academic honesty can be found at <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/>.

Tentative Lecture Outline/Readings Schedule:

| Date | Topic | Reading |
|--------|---|---|
| 11-Jan | <i>No In-Class Meeting (Survey)</i> | |
| 13-Jan | Introduction/Syllabus | |
| 18-Jan | What is American Political Development? Institutions Review <i>Qualtrics Survey Due</i> | CRS: Intro to the Legislative Process |
| 20-Jan | Why Rules? The Constitution | Cox 2000 U.S. Constitution |
| 25-Jan | Path Dependency Farrand's Records | Pierson 2000 |
| 27-Jan | Writing a Legislative History | Legislative History Resources |
| 1-Feb | The Founding | American Creation, Prologue-Ch.1 |
| 3-Feb | The Argument | American Creation, Ch. 3 |
| 8-Feb | Spatial Modeling in Congress | Shepsle and Bonchek Ch. 5 |
| 10-Feb | Pivotal Voters and the Constitutional Convention <i>Summary Section Due</i> | Dougherty and Heckelman (2006) Robertson (2006) |
| 15-Feb | The Dinner | Founding Brothers, Ch. 2 |
| 17-Feb | The Silence The First Parties | Founding Brothers, Ch. 3 Aldrich and Grant (1993) |
| 22-Feb | Marbury v. Madison | Clinton (1994) |
| 24-Feb | <i>Exam 1</i> | |
| 1-Mar | The Compromise of 1824 | Jenkins and Sala (1998) Carson and Engstrom (2005) |
| 3-Mar | Lawmaking in the Contemporary Congress <i>Background Section Due</i> | Cooper and Brady (1981) Legislation on the House Floor |
| 8-Mar | <i>No Class (Spring Break)</i> | |
| 10-Mar | <i>No Class (Spring Break)</i> | |

Tentative Lecture Outline/Readings Schedule (*cont*):

| Date | Topic | Reading |
|--------|--|--|
| 15-Mar | History and Evolution of the House | Field of Blood, Ch. 2 |
| 17-Mar | A Sectional Rift: The 1830s and 1840s <i>Member Spotlight Due</i> | Field of Blood, Ch. 3 |
| 22-Mar | The "Gag Rule" Debate | Meinke (2007) Field of Blood, Ch. 4 |
| 24-Mar | Ideological Scaling The Wilmot Proviso Using Voteview | Mapping Congressional Polarization |
| 29-Mar | U.S. Senate History | Senate Floor Process Senate: Origins and Development |
| 31-Mar | Writing a Process Section | Legislation on the House Floor Senate Floor Process |
| 5-Apr | The Compromise of 1850 | Field of Blood, Ch. 5 |
| 7-Apr | The Kansas-Nebraska Act <i>Process Section Due</i> | Field of Blood, Ch. 6 Field of Blood, Ch. 7 |
| 12-Apr | The Election of 1860 | Jenkins and Morris (2006) |
| 14-Apr | Lincoln | Binder |
| 19-Apr | Institutionalizing the Presidency | Ragsdale and Theis (1997) Klinghard (2005) |
| 21-Apr | Civil Rights <i>Aftermath Section Due</i> | Schickler, Pearson and Feinstein (2010) Jenkins, Peck and Weaver (2010) |
| 26-Apr | The Supreme Court | Vining, Zorn and Smelcer (2006) Walker, Epstein and Dixon (1988) |
| 28-Apr | The Supreme Court (cont) | |
| 3-May | Review | |
| 6-May | <i>Final Legislative History Due</i> | |
| 10-May | <i>Exam 2</i> | |