

POLS 6100
Pre-seminar in American Politics
Fall 2023

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Office: Baldwin 376
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Office hours: By appointment
Classroom: Baldwin 202
Meetings: Monday 4:00-6:45 (in-person)

Disclaimer: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

This seminar provides an overview of several subfields in American Politics. We will discuss and critique seminal research in the field as well as recent publications. This seminar is also designed to develop your ability to conduct and analyze original research. To this end, we will discuss general approaches to political inquiry, basic methodological issues, the review process, and other related topics.

Students are required to purchase the following books:

- * Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957)
- * Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (1965)
- * John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (1992)
- * Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro, *The Rational Public* (1992)
- * David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (2004 edition)
- * A. Campbell, P. Converse, W. Miller, D. Stokes, *The American Voter* (1980 edition)

Student performance evaluations are based on (1) course participation (30%), (2) a 12-15 page literature review on a relevant topic (30%), and (3) a final examination (40%). This is not a lecture course; participation is required. You must complete and think critically about the reading before you come to seminar. You will be evaluated on the quality of your analysis, which is comparable to serving as a discussant at an academic conference.

Due dates:

Course paper: November 28

Final exam: December 13

Given the importance of class participation, regular attendance is required.

Literature Review. The literature review summarizes major findings, explains the underlying theory (or competing theories), discusses research methods, and addresses problems or gaps in the literature. In an empirical project, the review “sets up” the hypotheses and research design that are the foundation for analyzing the data.

Your literature review should address several general questions: What do we know about this? What are the various theories, perspectives, approaches or “schools of thought” in this area? What are the gaps in or problems with our existing knowledge base? What questions still need to be answered; what issues need to be addressed?

You should follow a format used by the major journals in the discipline (APSR, JOP, AJPS, PRQ, etc.). If you are unfamiliar with these formats, refer to any recent edition of a major Political Science journal or the style guide of the American Political Science Association.

Academic Integrity. Neither plagiarism nor cheating will be tolerated. Appropriate citations are expected and encouraged. All students are expected to behave in accordance with the guidelines of the UGA Honor Code. If you are unsure whether certain actions are acceptable, consult your instructor. Use of artificial intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT) to write class assignments will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade (F).

UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at www.uga.edu/ovpi.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources.

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.

- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Coronavirus Information for Students

UGA continues to follow Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH) guidance on COVID-19. Self-isolation is the expectation for faculty, staff, and students who test positive for COVID-19, i.e.,

- Isolate for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave isolation.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

If you have been in close contact with someone who is COVID-positive, but you are not sick, GDPH and CDC urge you "...to monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19 during the 10 days following the last time you were in close contact with a sick person with COVID-19."

While the University Health Center continues to stock COVID-19 vaccines, surveillance testing and Dawg Check have been suspended. Mask-wearing is not mandatory on campus (and we cannot require students to wear masks nor ask about vaccination status).

Course Schedule

August 22: Democratic Theory

1. Publius. 1787. The Federalist Papers [No. 10-11, 47-51]
2. The Constitution of the United States
3. Dahl, Robert A. 1956. A Preface to Democratic Theory. [chapters 1-3]

August 29: Public Opinion: Opinion Formation

1. Zaller, John. 1992. The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [read chapters 1-3 and 7-10; skim rest of book]
2. Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1987. "Networks in Context: The Social Flow of Political Information." *American Political Science Review* 81: 1197-1216.
3. Jacoby, William G. 1995. "The Structure of Ideological Thinking in the American Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 39: 314-35.

September 5: Public Opinion: Political Sophistication

1. Page, Benjamin I., and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1992. The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences. [read chapters 1-4 and 8-10; skim rest of book]
2. Haller, Brandon H. and Helmut Norpoth. 1994. "Let the Good Times Roll: The Economic Expectations of U.S. Voters." *American Journal of Political Science* 38: 625- 650.
3. MacKuen, Micheal B., Robert S. Erikson, and James A. Stimson. 1992. "Peasants or Bankers? The American Electorate and the U.S. Economy." *American Political Science Review* 86: 597-611.

September 12: Political Parties

1. Aldrich, John H. 1994. Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [chapters 1-2]
2. Rohde, David W. 1991. Parties and Leaders in the Post Reform House. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [chapters 1-3]
3. Krehbiel, Keith. 1993. "Where's the Party?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23: 235-66.
4. Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1993. Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House. [chapters 4-5]

September 19: Partisanship

1. Key, V.O., Jr. 1955. "A Theory of Critical Elections." *Journal of Politics* 17: 3-18.
2. Key, V.O., Jr. 1959. "Secular Realignment." *Journal of Politics* 21: 198-210.
3. Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. The American Voter. New York: John Wiley. [read chapters 6-7]
4. Carmines, Edward G., John P. McIver, and James A. Stimson. 1987. "Unrealized Partisanship: A Theory of Dealignment." *Journal of Politics* 49: 376-400.

September 26: Participation and Civic Engagement

1. Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. [chapter 14]
2. Riker, William, and Peter Ordeshook. 1968. "A Theory of the Calculus of Voting." *American Political Science Review* 62: 25-41.
3. Aldrich, John H. 1993. "Rational Choice and Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 37: 246-78.
4. Brady, Henry, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 271- 294.

October 3: Voting

1. Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. [chapters 1-8]
2. Campbell, Angus, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. [chapters 1-4 and 19-20]

October 10: Interest Groups

1. Truman, David. 1951. *The Governmental Process* [chapters 2-3]
2. Olson, Mancur, Jr. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action*. [chapters 1-2 and 5-6]
3. Walker, Jack L., Jr. 1983. "The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America." *American Political Science Review* 77: 390-406.
4. Wright, John R. 1990. "Contributions, Lobbying, and Committee Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Political Science Review* 84: 417-38.

October 17: Congressional Elections

1. Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, 2nd ed.
2. Fenno, Richard F. 1977. "U.S. House Members in their Constituencies." *American Political Science Review* 71: 883-917.
3. Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 83:733-793.

October 24: Institutional Change and American Political Development

1. Polsby, Nelson. 1968. "The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Political Science Review* 62: 144-68.
2. Ragsdale, Lyn, and John J. Theiss. 1997. "The Institutionalization of the American Presidency, 1924-1992." *American Journal of Political Science* 41:1280-1318.
3. McGuire, Kevin M. 2004. "The Institutionalization of the U.S. Supreme Court." *Political Analysis* 12: 128-142.
4. Poole, Keith T., and Howard Rosenthal. 1991. "Patterns in Congressional Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 35: 228-78.
5. Wawro, Gregory and Eric Schickler. 2004. "Where's the Pivot? Obstruction and Lawmaking in the Precloture Senate" *American Journal of Political Science*. 48: 758-774.
6. Jenkins, Jeffrey A. 1999. "Examining the Bonding Effects of Party: A Comparative Analysis of Roll-Call Voting in the U.S. and Confederate Houses." *American Journal of Political Science* 43: 1144-1165.

October 31: Representation

1. Miller, Warren E., and Donald E. Stokes. 1963. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 57: 45-57.
2. Erikson, Robert S. 1978. "Constituency Opinion and Congressional Behavior: A Reexamination of the Miller- Stokes Representation Data." *American Journal of Political Science* 22: 511-35.
3. Stimson, James A., Michael B. MacKuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 543-565.
4. Giles, Micheal W., Bethany Blackstone, and Richard L. Vining, Jr. 2008. "The Supreme Court in American Democracy: Unraveling the Linkages between Public Opinion and Judicial Decision Making." *Journal of Politics* 70: 293-306.
5. Stein, Robert M., and Kenneth N. Bickers. 1994. "Congressional Elections and the Pork Barrel." *Journal of Politics* 56: 377-400.

November 7: The Executive Branch

1. Neustadt, Richard E. 1991. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. Revised edition. New York: Free Press. [chapters 1-3]
2. Kernell, Samuel. 1997. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*. 3rd edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press. [chapters 1-4]
3. Cameron, Charles. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*. [chapter 2]

November 14: Bureaucratic Politics

1. McCubbins, Mathew D., and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols vs. Fire Alarms." *American Journal of Political Science* 28: 165-79.
2. Balla, Steven, and Christopher Deering. 2013. "Police Patrols and Fire Alarms: An Emprical Examination of the Legislative Preference for Oversight." *Congress & the Presidency* 40: 27-40.
3. Kiewiet, D. Roderick, and Mathew McCubbins. 1991. *The Logic of Delegation*. [chapter 2]
4. Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. 2009. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, 2nd ed. [chapter 1]

November 21: Courts

1. Dahl, Robert A. 1957. "Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as a National Policy-Maker." *Journal of Public Law* 6: 279-295.
2. Segal, Jeffrey A., and Harold J. Spaeth. 1996. "The Influence of Stare Decisis on the Votes of United States Supreme Court Justices." *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 971-1003.
3. Segal, Jeffrey A., and Albert D. Cover. 1989. "Ideological Values and the Votes of U.S. Supreme Court Justices." *American Political Science Review* 83: 557-66.
4. Epstein, Lee, and Jack Knight. 2000. "Field Essay: Toward a Strategic Revolution in Judicial Politics: A Look Back, A Look Ahead." *Political Research Quarterly* 53: 625- 62.
5. Epstein, Lee, Rene Lindstadt, Jeffrey A. Segal, and Chad Westerland. 2006. "The Changing Dynamics of Senate Voting on Supreme Court Nominees." *Journal of Politics* 68: 296-307.

November 28: The Media and American Politics

1. Graber, Doris A. 2009. *Mass Media in American Politics*, 8th ed. [chapters 1-2 and 4-5]
2. Nie, Norman, Miller, Darwin, Saar Golde, Daniel Butler, and Kenneth Winneg. 2010. "The World Wide Web and the U.S. Political News Market." *American Journal of Political Science* 54: 428-439.

December 5: NO CLASS – UNIVERSITY ON FRIDAY SCHEDULE

Final Exam: Take-home examination due Dec. 13

* Final exam will be placed in graduate student mailboxes to be completed within 24 hours of opening envelope. Upload response to course ELC portal.