

PARTIES & INTEREST GROUPS

POLITICAL SCIENCE 210

Spring 2004

Dr. Susan Roberts

“The Republican party wants to present itself as the pro-life, pro-family party. This pro-life, pro-family governor (Governor Jeb Bush of Florida) could not afford to not intervene in some way.”

- Randall Terry, access to abortion opponent, on Bush’s order to resume feeding Florida woman who was being allowed to starve

“A look inside the Nature Conservancy reveals a whirring marketing machine that has poured millions into building and protecting the organization’s image, laboring to transform the charity into a household name.”

- Joe Stephens and David Ottaway
The Washington Post, May 4, 2003

“Unwanted by our Founders, modern parties were invented by those same men as a necessary tool to achieve policy preferences...Seemingly made obsolete by changes in campaign technology and advances in information transferal, in recent decades parties have floundered, often demeaned but never ignored, looked on as dinosaurs from another era, but struggling to avoid extinction.”

- L.Sandy Maisel, “Political Parties in a Nonparty Era,”1994

“With 95% of Americans not giving any money and the bulk coming in \$2,000 checks from a tiny, wealthy elite, big money still dominates the electoral process. Candidates and communities without access to wealth are still essentially excluded from meaningful participation.”

- The Nation, December 29, 2003

“In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used, or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America.”

- Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy In America, Part One, 1835

In 2003 there were ten Democrats vying for their party's nomination. Each felt he or she could be elected President and be the standard bearer for the Democratic party. As the months went by, Americans witnessed these contenders trying to articulate the ideas and ideals of their party. Likewise, in the season prior to the 2000 election, John McCain challenged a far better funded nomination from George W. Bush. What do these parties represent? Are they articulated by individuals running for office or are they better represented by the individuals identifying themselves as party members?

As we approach the November 2004 election, we look back at Election 2000, an election which Americans seem ready to put aside. The unsettling nature of the 2000 presidential election, the ironies of the Electoral College, the tragedies of the terrorism of September 11, and wars in Afghanistan in Iraq have all cast a shadow over the upcoming election.

Did the aftermath of Election 2000 increase or dampen voter registration and interest? Will turnout levels respond to domestic policies such as the health of the economy or the advisability of military interventions? We will examine this current electoral climate and how it relates to the history of campaigns, elections, and party systems. Our course will also investigate the origins and electoral role of interest groups in our political process. Related and even integral to parties and interest groups are concerns of political participation, voting behavior, the conduct of campaigns, and the meanings of elections.

Following current nomination politics and incumbent campaigning, we will ask whether or not campaigns and elections provide us with the information necessary to make sound electoral and policy decisions? How do we weigh minority needs and majority rights? Is the ballot box alone a guarantor of responsible political leadership? Did 2000 presidential election and the Florida recount reveal genuine holes in our democratic institutions? When does protest become a viable democratic tool?

Despite the current electoral activity preceding the 2004 election, this course will be divided into two sections, parties *and* interest groups. Given that this is an election year, the division may not be entirely equal. Interests, whether represented by organized groups or articulated in polls are also important in this period of significant stress on the traditional two party system. We will place heavy emphasis on partisan identification and the history and characteristics of political parties. We will also examine the ways in which political parties in the United States are adapting for the fractionalized electorate.

Interest groups as well as political parties are important to our electoral process. As recent discussion of campaign finance reform indicates, interest group politics involve all branches of government. Just as political parties and elections serve as conduits of public opinion and priorities, so too do interest groups. This second central aspect of this course focuses on the origins and influence of interest groups and political action committees. Do interest groups possess an inordinate amount of power in this country? Conversely, are some "interests" systematically marginalized in the world of lobbies and PACs? How do we best accommodate the quest for representation of interests?

Course Objectives

This course is designed to acquaint the student with the multitude of questions described

above, resulting in a working knowledge of party politics and the realities of the representation of interests. It also seeks to improve your critical thinking skills, both in writing and in discussions.

Emphasis is not on your simple mastery of “facts” but on your skillful assimilation of information and opinions into arguments. Essays and papers must be both persuasive and well written.

Course Requirements

This is a course designed with multiple grading opportunities.

Midterm examination	= 25% of final grade
Quizzes/discussion	=5% of final grade *
Papers (2 @ 15%)	= 40% of final grade
	Nomination Politics Study
	Interest Group Study
Final examination (cumulative)	= 30% of final grade

*Also includes assessment of attendance, class preparation.

Testing: All examinations (“reviews”) are essay in format. A study sheet will be given out approximately one week prior to the examinations. Students are encouraged to work in study groups in preparation for the examination. This is in no way a violation of the Honor Code. I encourage any discussion of class ideas outside of the confines of the classroom.

There may be periodic quizzes on the reading materials, particularly readings from The New York Times. Students are expected to have read materials prior to class and to be prepared to engage in class discussions. To the extent possible (given class size), this class will be conducted to a significant degree in a seminar fashion.

Given that this course includes material on early caucuses/primaries, work on projects must commence immediately on paper assignments.

Papers:

“We were the Hemingway generation. We were not called journalists. We were called newspapermen or newspaperwomen. You went into newspaper work to learn how to write. It was a way to make a living, and it put bread on the table. That was 40 years ago. I wanted to write, so I went to work for a newspaper. The blank page, the blank screen, none of it terrifies me. I love to write.”

-Jim Lehrer, Interview, Washington Post Magazine, July, 28, 2002

“Writing and rewriting are a constant search for what it is one is saying.”

-John Updike

*“The art of writing has for backbone some fierce attachment to an idea.”
-Virginia Woolf*

*“Is it possible to get an extension on my paper? I have three other papers and a midterm in my other classes!”
-Anonymous Davidson student*

*“Good writing, especially about politics, helps the reader become aware of the ironies and paradoxes of human existence... Writing is a means of entering political life.”
-Gregory Scott and Stephen Garrison*

There will be two papers with fairly specific topics. Each will count 15% of your final grade. These papers will be approximately 7-10 pages in length (reasonable font, double-spaced, with approximate notation).

Leaving a voice mail does not constitute discussion.

All work in this course is bound by the Honor Code. I assume your work is covered by the Honor Code; you may or may not choose to write “pledged” on your work. It is a solid reminder of your commitment to the Honor Code.

**LATE WORK IS SUBJECT TO
PENALTIES: A DEDUCTION OF ONE-
HALF OF A LETTER GRADE FOR
EVERY DAY THE PAPER IS LATE.**

*** Please familiarize yourself with the college’s definition of plagiarism. If you have any questions, please see me.

- **Paper #1** will deal with analyze of either the nomination politics for the current Democratic candidate nomination.campaign or the politics of Bush’s campaign for president despite being an incumbent. A third option for the paper is to concentrate on money in elections, examining in particular the history of campaigning finance reform and current politics and Supreme Court decisions. You should begin selecting a topic immediately.

- **Paper #2** will involve interest groups. Students will select between several topics. Topics may include: (1) an in-depth investigation of a interest group, (2) the role of various interest groups in a major policy debate, (3) primary research of grassroots interest groups, or (4) fundraising practices of a select number of interest groups and their response to recent FECA reforms. Depending on their choice of topics, students may need to contact interest groups for primary source information and/or interviews. Although you will not be in a position to analytically examine an interest group at the first of the semester, you will most certainly want to identify an interest group you would like to study and begin assembling materials. A sheet will be handed out with additional specifics.

Attendance:

*“I’m sorry I missed class Friday. Did we do anything important?”
-Anonymous Davidson student*

We always do something important in class. Otherwise, why bother? Attendance will be monitored and regular attendance is expected. As stated in “The Red Book,” students missing in excess of one-fourth of scheduled classes will receive a failing grade in the course.

Office Hours and Consultations

Office: 2040 Chambers
 Office Hours: MWF 9:30 –10:15
 Th By appointment
 Other times by appointment
 Office Telephone: 2458
 Home Telephone: 892-9874 *Please **do not call** after 9:00p.m.
 E-mail: suroberts@davidson.edu

Students with questions are encouraged to come by either during office hours. I will make appointments to accommodate students who are unable to come during office hours. Students should feel free to drop by at times other than my office hours, but I may not be available. Most weeks, I will be in my office on Tuesdays and Thursdays (in addition to my MWF teaching schedule) I am also available by telephone at home, but please do not call late in the evening.

Textbooks

Green & Farmer	<u>The State of the Parties</u> 4 th ed.
Flanigan & Zingale	<u>Political Behavior of the American Electorate</u> 10 th ed
Black & Black	<u>The Rise of Southern Republicans</u>
Cigler & Loomis	<u>Interest Group Politics</u> 6 th ed
Malbin	<u>Life After Reform:When The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act Meets Politics</u>
Berg	<u>Teamsters and Turtles: U.S. Progressive Movements</u>
Halstead & Lind	<u>The Radical Center</u>
Required	<u>The New York Times</u> (subscription through bookstore)

Topics and Assignments

I. Participation and Politics: A Theoretical Introduction

M Jan 12 Introductory Lectures

W Jan 14 continued

F Jan 16 Federalist # 10 to be distributed
Preview of Iowa Caucus.

II. Partisanship & the Two Party System

M Jan 19 No class. Martin Luther King celebration

W Jan 21 Flanigan & Zingale Ch1: Political Culture & American Democracy
Discussion of Iowa Caucus

F Jan 23 Flanigan & Zingale Ch 2 : Suffrage & Turnout

M Jan 26 Discussion of Voting Rights Act

W Jan 28 Flanigan & Zingale Chapters 3, 4, and 5

F Jan 30 continued

M Feb 2 Black & Black : The Rise of Southern Republicans
Chapters 1 - 4

W Feb 4 Black & Black
Chapters 5 - 8

F Feb 6 Black & Black
9 - 12 -

III. Voting Behavior

M Feb 9 Flanigan & Zingale Ch 6: Public Opinion & Ideology

W Feb 11 Flanigan & Zingale Ch 7: Political Communication & Mass Media
Flanigan & Zingale Ch 8: Vote Choice & Electoral Decisions

F Feb 13 continued

II. Party Organization & Activities

M Feb 16 Green & Farmer
Sections I and III

W Feb 18 Green & Farmer
Section IV

F Feb 20 continued

V. Party Finances

M Feb 23 Green & Farmer
Section II

W Feb 25 Malbin
Section I

F Feb 27 Malbin
Section II & III

Spring Break Feb 28 – March 7

M Mar 8 continued

W Mar 10 **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**
Seconds I through IV

F Mar 12 Review Of Nomination Process

M Mar 15 Campaign video

W Mar 17 Review of Current Funding by Candidates

VII. The Future of Parties & Third Party Prospects

F Mar 19 Green & Farmer
Section V

M Mar 22 continued

W Mar 24 Green & Farmer
Section VI

F Mar 26 Debate

VIII. Pluralism: Theories & Critiques

M Mar 29	Cigler & Loomis	Introduction
W Mar 31	Cigler & Loomis	“Groups, Social Capital .. Democratic Orientations” “National Rifle Association” “Collective Entrepren..Breast Cancer Advocacy” “Just...Environmental Groups..Internet”
F Apr 2	<u>Teamsters & Turtles</u> Introduction & Section I	
M Apr 5	<u>Teamsters & Turtles</u> Section II & III	
W Apr 7	Pluralsism continued	

VIII. Pluralism in Action: “Money Makes The World Go ‘Round’

F Apr 9	Catch Up Day	
<i>Easter Break April 10 – 13</i>		
W Apr 14	Cigler & Loomis	“Interest Group Money In Elections” “Campaigning Outside the Law” “A Distant Thunder..Religious Mobilization..”
F Apr 16	Cigler & Loomis	“Interests, Lobbying..U.S. Congress..” “Corporate Lobbyists..Field” “Lobbying The Press”
M Apr 19	Cigler & Loomis	“Organized Interests & Issue Definition..” “High Tech Learns...Bill Gates & Other Nerds” “Exchange Theory..Interest Group Formation”
W Apr 21	Discussion of Current Interest Groups	
F Apr 23	Cigler & Loomis	“Interest Groups & Gridlock”

“Cracks In The Armor?..Foreign Policy”
“Always Involved, Rarely Central..”

VIII. The Future??

M Apr 26 Halstead & Lind
Introduction & Section 1

W Apr 28 Section II

*April 29 – May 5 = optional classes. At this juncture, I do **not** plan to use optional classes*

Th May 6 *Reading Day*

F May 7 – W May 12 *Final Examinations Period*