

Political Science 800a: Introduction to American Politics, Fall 2015

Course meeting time: Mondays 3:30-5:20, 77 Prospect Street, ISPS Library (Enter at 77 Prospect Street, immediate right, up the stairs.)

Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:30, 77 Prospect St., B213. (Next to the library.)

Sign up for office hours: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0545a4a82ba75-jacob>

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This course surveys the current study of American politics in a range of subject areas, with a focus on substance rather than methodology. Topics include the design of the Constitution; American Political Development; interest groups and parties as organized political actors; race, ethnicity, and gender; the welfare state; policy making and policy feedback; elections and the electorate; and legislative, executive, and judicial politics. It will conclude with an examination of two subjects of significant contemporary concern: polarization and inequality.

Each student will be expected to (1) read each week's required reading and be prepared to discuss it; and (2) in each of five weeks, write a 3-to-5 page analytic paper that deals with a subject addressed or suggested by the reading. **Papers are due by 9 AM on Monday of the relevant class meeting. Please upload to the classes server.**

All the readings are available online via the links below (in the case of articles) or in the "resources" section of the classes server (in the case of book chapters).

September 14 (No meeting on Labor Day) – The Constitution: Why and How

- Max Edling, *A Revolution in Favor of Government* (Oxford, 2003), Intro, Parts I and III, Conclusion: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/yale/detail.action?docID=10142419>. [Off-campus, see [here](#)]
- David Brian Robertson, "Madison's Opponents and Constitutional Design," *APSR* (May 2005): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30038934>.
- Rogers Smith, "Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz," *APSR* (Sep. 1993): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2938735>.

September 21 – American Political Development: Phenomenon, Field

- Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development* (Cambridge, 2004), Chaps. 1, 4.
- Daniel Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy* (Princeton, 2001), Chaps. 1-2, 8, Conclusion.
- Paul Pierson, "The Costs of Marginalization: Qualitative Methods in the Study of American Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* (Feb. 2007). <http://cps.sagepub.com/content/40/2/146.short>

September 28 – Organization and American Politics: Groups, Movements, Parties

- Philip Klinkner, w/ Rogers Smith, *The Unsteady March*, Introduction, Chaps. 3-4.

- Kathleen Bawn, et al., “A Theory of Political Parties,” *Perspectives on Politics* (September 2012). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1537592712001624>
- Olivia Meeks, “The Divide Between Public and Private: A Sector-Specific Examination of Organized Labor’s Political Behavior within the American States,” April 21, 2015.

October 5 – The “American Dilemma:” Race (and Gender) and Politics

- Michael Dawson, *Behind the Mule* (Princeton, 1994), Chapters 1-4.
- Cathy Cohen, *Boundaries of Blackness* (Chicago, 1999), Chap. 2.
- Beth Reingold and Adrienne Smith, “Welfare Policymaking and the Intersection of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in U.S. State Legislatures,” *American Journal of Political Science* (January 2012): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23075148>.

October 12 - Governance: Policy Making and Policy Feedback

- Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, “After the ‘Master Theory’: Downs, Schattschneider, and the Rebirth of Policy-Focused Political Analysis,” *Perspectives on Politics* (September 2014). □□□□
- Suzanne Mettler, “Bringing the State Back in to Civic Engagement,” *APSR* (June 2002). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0003055402000217>
- Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action was White* (Norton, 2005), Chap. 5.

October 19 – Ligaments of the American State I: The “Welfare State”

- Hacker, *The Divided Welfare State* (Cambridge, 2002), Intro, Chaps. 1, 5, 6.
- Monica Prasad, *The Land of Too Much* (Harvard, 2012), Chaps. 3, 10.
- Alesina, et al., “Why Doesn’t the United States Have a European-Style Welfare State,” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* 2 (2001).
http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/alesina/files/423__0332-alesina11.pdf

October 26 - Ligaments of the American State II: Regulation and the Courts

- Robert Kagan, “Adversarial Legalism and American Government,” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (Summer 2001).
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2307/3325322/abstract>
- Daniel Carpenter and David A. Moss, eds., *Preventing Regulatory Capture* (Cambridge, 2014), Introduction, Chap. 3, Conclusion.
- Keith Whittington, “Interpose Your Friendly Hand: Political Supports for the Exercise of Judicial Review by the United States Supreme Court,” *APSR* (November 2005): <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-polisci-110813-032156>.

November 2 – Elections and the Electorate

- Chris Achen and Larry Bartels, “Blind Retrospection: Why Shark Attacks are Bad for Democracy,” March 2012,
https://my.vanderbilt.edu/larrybartels/files/2011/12/CSDI_WP_05-2013.pdf.
- Hans Hassell, “Party Control of Party Primaries: Party Influence in Nominations for the U.S. Senate,”

<http://people.cornellcollege.edu/hhassell/Scholarly%20Work/Hassell,%20Party%20Control%20of%20Party%20Primaries.pdf>,

- Tali Mendelberg, *The Race Card* (Princeton, 2001), Chaps. 1, 3, 5-6.
- Michael Tomz and Robert Van Houweling, "Political Pledges as Credible Commitments," unpublished manuscript, 2012.
<http://web.stanford.edu/~tomz/working/TomzVanHouweling-Pledges-2012-03-27.pdf>.

November 9 – Congress: Parties, Procedures, Pivots

- Sarah Binder, "The Dysfunctional Congress," *Annual Review of Political Science* (May 2015): <http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-polisci-110813-032156>.
- Keith Krehbiel, *Pivotal Politics* (Chicago, 1998), 1-2.
- Van Houweling, "Parties as Enablers," unpublished manuscript, 2012, Chaps. 1, 4, 5. https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/24724021/rpvh_enablers.pdf
- **Recommended:** Phil Everson, Jim Wiseman, and Rick Valelly, "NOMINATE and American Political History: A Primer,"
http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/rvalleng1/documents/Nominate_000.pdf.

November 16 – The President: Length and Limits of Executive Power

- William Howell, *Power without Persuasion* (Princeton, 2003), Chaps. 1-4.
- Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make* (Harvard, 1993), Chaps. 1-3, 7-8.

November 30 – Contemporary Issues I: Polarization

- Michael Barber and Nolan McCarty, "Causes and Consequences of Polarization," <http://www.apsanet.org/portals/54/Files/Task%20Force%20Reports/Chapter2Manusbridge.pdf>.
- Lucy Goodhardt, "Becoming Red and Blue: The Economic Foundations of Political Diversity Across American States"
- Hacker and Paul Pierson, "Confronting Assymmetric Polarization," in Nathaniel Persily, ed., *Solutions to Polarization* (Cambridge, forthcoming).
- Damielle M. Thomsen, "Ideological Moderates Won't Run," *Journal of Politics* (July 2014), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0022381614000243>.

December 7 – Contemporary Issues II: Inequality

- Martin Gilens and Benjamin Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* (September 2014).
http://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/mgilens/files/gilens_and_page_2014-testing_theories_of_american_politics.doc.pdf
- Hacker and Pierson, "Winner-Take-All Politics," *Politics & Society* 2 (2010).
<http://polisci2.ucsd.edu/ps126aa/documents/HackerPierson2010.pdf>
- Evelyn Huber, Jingjing Huo, and John D. Stephens, "Power, Markets, and Top Income Shares," April 2015.