“On the whole, the development of parties seems bound up with that of democracy, that is to say with the extension of popular suffrage and parliamentary prerogatives.”
Duverger, Political Parties

“[P]olitical parties created democracy and … modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties. As a matter of fact, the condition of the parties is the best possible evidence of the nature of any regime.”
Schattschneider, Party Government

COURSE OUTLINE AND REQUIREMENTS

Political Parties and Elections is an examination of political parties, elections and voting behavior in the United States. As linkage organizations, political parties help to organize opinion and to mobilize voters. Relatively free of state interference (and completely unmentioned in the US Constitution), US political parties are distinctive in their instrumentalist nature: their purpose is to win elections. In addition, they help to organize elections and campaigns; they nominate candidates for office; they intend to govern; and, once in office, structure the internal workings of Congress (and of state legislatures and other governmental institutions). They also function to represent public policy preferences within government.

US political parties are distinctive for several reasons. In comparison with the industrialized democracies of West Europe, the US is a federal presidential political system, with a single-member plurality electoral system for electing Members of Congress. These factors function to limit effective competition to only two major parties, and the Democrats and the Republicans continue to encompass all electoral competition at the national level. The extent to which the two parties have become increasingly competitive and polarized is a current subject of debate, as are the range of explanations offered for party polarization. Additional issues include changes in campaign finance and the results for candidates and political parties, the influence of women in party electorates, the impact of changing voter demographics, the extent of voter suppression and election fraud, and the protection of voting rights. This course will address these questions, with particular attention to the 2020 congressional elections.

Two books are required for this course, listed below:


Additional readings support the required books; these are extensive and provide a deeper understanding and analysis of elections and electoral systems. The additional readings are identified in the Schedule of Readings and Assignments, below, and are available on the course Canvas site. Students are encouraged to read a daily national newspaper (e.g., the New York Times, the Washington Post).

There are several excellent political science blogs that include a focus on US politics, including The Monkey Cage (https://www.washingtonpost.com/monkey-cage/); Mischiefs of Faction (https://www.mischiefsoffaction.com/), Election Updates (http://electionupdates.caltech.edu/), and the Scholars' Strategy Network (http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/). Students may wish to peruse some of these blogs from time to time, for timely political science analysis and news related to US political parties and elections. Additional sites, such as RealClearPolitics (http://www.realclearpolitics.com/), Fair Vote (http://www.fairvote.org/), Frontloading HQ (http://frontloading.blogspot.com/), and Ballot Access News (http://ballot-access.org/), provide polling data, information about candidate status, and other useful evidence. Political party sites, such as GOP (https://www.gop.com/#) and the Democratic National Committee (https://www.democrats.org/) may be helpful (see also, e.g., http://www.lp.org/ for the Libertarian Party and http://www.gp.org/ for the Green Party). Finally, candidates and campaigns have their own websites as well; students may find these useful for following a specific candidate.

In addition to these, please refer to the Research Resources list, provided on the course Canvas site.

Evaluation of student performance in this course will be based on the following criteria. First, each student is expected to attend class and to be prepared for each class meeting by having read, in advance, the materials assigned for that day. Students should be prepared to discuss the material in detail in class every day, and all students are expected to participate. Students are expected, and obliged, to comport themselves, in class, in a professional manner. Professionalism refers to adherence to standards of behavior and performance expected from political scientists. This includes, but is not limited to, courteous attention to other speakers; engagement with the work at hand; appropriate use of language; and, of course, adherence to university standards of academic integrity. Informed class participation and professionalism are requirements of the course, and account for 10 percent of the final course grade.

Second, students will complete two short research papers, each of which is worth 20 percent of the student’s course grade. A separate Guidelines for Short Research Papers discusses the details of these papers. The Guidelines are available on the course Canvas site.

Third, students will complete a final research paper, worth 25 percent of the course grade (see Guidelines for Final Research Papers for details concerning the final paper, available on the course Canvas site). Students will also have responsibility for presenting their final paper results to the class in the last two weeks of the semester. The final paper presentation is worth 10 percent of the student’s course grade. Presentation guidelines are provided in the Guidelines for Final Paper Presentations (available on the course Canvas site).

Fourth, each student will have responsibility for facilitating discussion during one class meeting; the student facilitating discussion for the day will also submit a brief summary discussion report. Discussion facilitation is worth 10 percent, and the summary discussion report is worth 5 percent, of the student’s course grade. Discussion facilitation is assigned by the professor, and Guidelines for Discussion Facilitation and Report are available on the course Canvas site.

It is a requirement of this course that students use their CWRU email account for correspondence with the professor.

Students are not to record or to photograph class sessions, or to share recordings of class sessions with others; this course requirement honors and protects the privacy of rigorous in-class discussion.
Standards of professionalism and academic integrity are integral components of this course. Students are reminded that they are obliged to understand, to uphold, and to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy of the University. A copy of the Code may be found online at [http://students.case.edu/groups/aiboard/policy.html](http://students.case.edu/groups/aiboard/policy.html). Students who do not understand the Academic Integrity Policy after having read it should make an appointment to discuss it with me; indeed, I welcome this discussion and encourage students to contact me in advance of any assignment about which they have doubts or questions. It is a course requirement that students read the University’s Academic Integrity Policy.

Note that students are required to attend all classes and to complete all course assignments.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

January 17  Introduction to the Course: Parties, Elections and Democracy in the US

January 19  Why Elections and Why Parties?

READ: E. E. Schattschneider, *Party Government*, Chapters 1 and 3 [available on Canvas]

January 24  Political Parties and the Party System in the United States


February 7  READ: Grossman and Hopkins, *Asymmetric Politics*, Chapters 5 and 6

February 9  DISCUSSION
February 14  **Primary Elections and the Nominating System**


February 21  **Reapportionment, Redistricting, and the Electoral College**


February 23  **DISCUSSION**

FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE BY EMAIL

February 28  **Campaign Finance and Money to Run**


RECOMMENDED: *Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act* [available on Canvas];


CANDIDATE SELECTION FOR SECOND PAPER DUE BY EMAIL

March 7  **Campaigning and Campaign Constraints**

March 8
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

March 9
Lecture by Irene Lin, Democratic Party Campaign Manager

March 14 - March 16
SPRING BREAK

March 21
Who Gets to Participate in Elections?


RECOMMENDED: Voting Rights Act (1965); Help America Vote Act (2002; available on Canvas); US Constitution, Article I, Sections 2, 3.1, 4.1; Article II, Section 1; Amendments 12, 15, 17, 19, 23, 24, and 26 (https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution).

March 23
DISCUSSION
SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE BY EMAIL

March 28
READ: Tarrow, Movements and Parties, Introduction and Chapter 1

March 30
READ: Tarrow, Movements and Parties, Chapters 6 and 7

April 4
READ: Tarrow, Movements and Parties, Chapter 8; and Larry M. Bartels, “Partisanship in the Trump Era,” Journal of Politics, 80 (4), 2018 [available on Canvas].

April 6
DISCUSSION

April 11
Party Reform and Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>NO CLASS; PROFESSOR ATTENDING MIDWEST POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION MEETINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>In-class presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>In-class presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>In class presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td><strong>Conclusion to the Course</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FINAL PAPERS DUE FRIDAY, MAY 11 BY 11:00AM**