

Political Parties

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Political Science (POS) 6455

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Course Objectives

Since the 1950s, political scientists, journalists, and practitioners alike have alternatively hailed and lamented the supposed death of political parties in America. Yet, contrary to these occasional pronouncements, party polarization and partisanship is alive and well, and the RNC and DNC don't seem to be withering on the vine. Parties have proven to be amazingly resilient, able to adapt to the changing times and political conditions. The study of political parties is once again in vogue amongst political scientists. Showing renewed interest, scholars are drawing on a host to theoretical and methodological approaches to generate new questions about the representativeness of parties, their ability to include and mobilize citizens, their place in governmental policymaking and legitimacy, and their relationship to state capacity and development. While E.E. Schattschneider's claim—that "political parties created democracy and that modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties"—is perhaps a truism, political parties have shown themselves to be central to the democratization of American political institutions and practices.

This graduate seminar is intended to provide students with a scholarly overview of American political parties. Over the course of the semester, we will probe the origins, conceptions, dynamics, importance, relevance, strength, and impact of political parties in American politics. We'll consider their evolving institutional form, their relative impact on mass participation, and changing levels of partisan identification in the electorate. In doing so, we'll tackle several open-ended theoretical, normative, and empirical questions, including: What are parties and how should we define them? What explains the emergence and development of political parties? Are American parties ideological or functional? Should parties be responsible? What are party systems, realignments, and critical elections, and they useful prisms through which to compartmentalize and explain parties? Why is there a two party duopoly in the U.S.? What is the role of the state in party formation and evolution? Are parties declining or resurging (in terms of party organization, parties in government, and party identification)? What is the relationship between parties and various racial and ethnic groups, and have parties become captured? Is voter turnout related to the strength or weakness of political parties? How do campaign finance reforms affect party organizations, and vice-versa? How do parties inform questions of representation and participation? And, finally, do parties matter?

Class Participation

Your weekly attendance is required. If you think you may have to miss more than one class during the semester, it is advised that you drop this course. If for some unforeseen reason you are unable to attend class, it is imperative that you contact me ASAP. All students are expected to participate in class discussions, which means not only showing up for class, but being fully prepared to critically discuss the required readings. Please bring your copies of the readings to class so that you may refer to them. On days on which you are not providing a thought piece (see below), you should be prepared to share with the class at least one question about each of the readings. Your question can be about a concept or finding about the reading, but the best questions are those that are tied to other readings or discussions from class. Participation is worth 20% of your final grade. Do not assume that by merely showing up for class you will earn full participation credit.

Thought Pieces

Students are required to write three response papers, or what I like to call “thought pieces.” Rather than summarizing, you are to react to the assigned material, critically analyzing the theses, themes, and assumptions of the readings and evaluating the appropriateness of the research designs or methodological techniques. When analytically questioning, comparing, and criticizing the texts, you should relate and interpose the arguments and empirical findings of the readings to the other readings or current political events. You should only briefly summarize the arguments of the readings. Each thought piece is to be roughly 800 words. They may be written in the first person. There is no need to provide a reference page unless you cite material not listed in the syllabus. When quoting from or citing the assigned articles, just refer to them by the author’s name, date, and page numbers in the body of the text (e.g., Smith 1998: 45-6).

You will sign up for your four thought pieces during our first session. You must email your thought pieces to me as a Microsoft Word or PDF attachment. They are due by *noon* on Sundays, prior to our Monday morning classes. Turning your assignments in early allows me to consider your thoughts, which in turn, helps to give me an idea of how to structure our discussions. ***I do not accept late thought pieces.*** Each essay is worth 10% of your final grade (30% total). I expect students who turn in thought pieces to be especially ready and willing participants during class.

Research Paper/Strategic Party Plan

Ph.D. students and M.A. students have different final assignments.

Ph.D. students will write an original research paper (18-25 pages) on an aspect of American political parties or a 20-25 page research proposal/prospectus on your dissertation topic (for those thinking of writing dissertations on political parties). It is possible that I might be interested in collaborating with some students on one of my ongoing research projects. A **two-page research prospectus** is due in class on **February 1**. Students will meet with me prior to that time to discuss their proposals. The prospectus should state your research question, your tentative argument and hypotheses, and any data and research methods you plan to use. You might also mention any foreseeable limitations to your research. Before class on **March 15**, students should submit to me a **detailed outline of their research paper or prospectus, a summary of the data being used, and a bibliography of sources** expected to be used for the theoretical section of the paper. On the final day of the seminar (**April 19**), students will **present an overview of their research in class** (approximately 10-12 minutes each), to be followed by suggestions from fellow students and me. The **final research paper, emailed to me, is due on April 26**, by 5pm.

M.A. students will split into teams and will write a 30-40 page strategic party plan for either the Republican or Democratic Florida state party focusing on party building and the 2022 state elections. On **March 15**, student teams will submit the outline of their party’s strategic plan, including the overarching strategy, likely political environment, theme and message (including sample direct mail, TV spots, etc.), demographics and targeting of likely and persuadable voters, likely voter contact and GOTV efforts, polling, opposition research, fundraising goals (including a calendar), and a preliminary budget. Obviously, lots of work investigating previous efforts by the Republican and Democratic state parties is needed to come up with a viable and credible strategic plan for November 2022. During the semester, each team will meet with me to discuss the progress they have made on their campaign plans. Students will present their party campaign plans in class on the final day of the semester (**April 19**), and their group strategic plans need to be emailed to me by **April 26**, by 5pm.

Grading

Class Participation	20 points
4 Thought Pieces	30 points (10 points each)
Research Paper/Group Strategic Plan	50 points

The following cutoffs will be used for grades:

A	90-100	B	80-85	C	70-76
A-	88-89	B-	78-79	C-	68-69
B+	86-87	C+	76-77	D+	66-67

Only in the rarest of all circumstances will I grant an Incomplete ('I').

I do not accept makeup assignments, except if arranged in accordance with UF policy. This information can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/exams.aspx>

The above grading policies are consistent with UF policies regarding grade determination. This information can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Information regarding UF attendance policies can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Professionalism and Honor Code UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." [The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with me.

Software Use Policy All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Students Requiring Accommodations Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [online evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students on the [Gator Evals page](#).

Health Counseling and Emergencies Contact information for UF counseling and mental health services are: 392-1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> . Dial 9-1-1 for any emergencies. Other services are listed below:

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: counseling.ufl.edu/cwc, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or police.ufl.edu.

Additional Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

Library Support, Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints Campus

On-Line Students Complaints

Course Recording

If we go online (Zoom) due to COVID-19 or other reasons, students are expected to have their cameras on and be un-mutable to participate in class. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Readings are available through UF library's course reserves, online, or via JSTOR. You will need to use UF's VPN to access many of these readings, as they are gated.

Course Outline

Week 1, January 11

Post Trump: What is the Future of the Republican Party?

- Jonathan Chait, "[Citizens, United](#)," *New York Observer* (2016).
- Michael Hiltzik, "[Republicans have destroyed the idea of the 'loyal opposition' — and Eroded Democracy](#)," *LATimes* (2020).
- Nicholas Lemann, "[The Republican Identity Crisis After Trump](#)," *The New Yorker* (2020).
- McKay Coppins, "[The Bitter Reality of the Post-Trump GOP](#)," *The Atlantic* (2021).

Week 2, January 18

No Class: MLK Day

Week 3, January 25

Theorizing about Parties

- Anson Morse, "[What is a Party?](#)" *Political Science Quarterly* 11 (1896): 68-81.
- Anthony Downs, "[An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy](#)," *Journal of Political Economy* 65 (1957): 135-50.
- John Aldrich, *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), [Chapter 1](#).
- Bawn, Kathleen, et al., "[A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* 10(3):571-597.
- Nolan McCarty and Eric Schickler, "[On the Theory of Parties](#)," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21 (2018): 175-193.
- Leon D. Epstein, *Political Parties in the American Mold* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986). [chpt 2: "The Scholarly Commitment"]

Week 4, February 1

Responsible Parties and a Loyal Opposition?

- E.E. Schattschneider, *Party Government*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1942. [chpt 3]
- APSA Committee on Political Parties, "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System: A Report of the Committee on Political Parties," *American Political Science Review* 44 (1950), "[Summary of Conclusions and Proposals](#)."
- Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969) [[chpt 1](#)].
- Heather Gerken, "[The Loyal Opposition](#)," *The Yale Law Journal* (2014).
- John Green and Paul Herrnsen, "[Party Development in the Twentieth Century: Laying the Foundations for Responsible Party Government?](#)" (APSA 2000)

Week 5, February 8

Party Organization

- M. Craig Brown and Charles N. Halaby, "[Machine Politics in America, 1870-1945](#)," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17:3 (1987): 587-612.
- Seth Masket, *No Middle Ground* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2009) [[chpt 1](#)]
- John Coleman, "[Party Organizational Strength and Public Support for Parties](#)," *American Journal of Political Science* 40 (1996): 805-824.
- Paul S. Herrnsen, "[The Roles of Party Organizations, Party-Connected Committees, and Party Allies in Elections](#)," *Journal of Politics* 71:4 (2009): 1207-1224.
- David Doherty, Conor M. Dowling, and Michael G. Miller, "[Do Local Party Chairs Think Women and Minority Candidates Can Win? Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment](#)," *Journal of Politics* 81:4 (2019): 1282-1297).

Week 6, February 15

Parties in the Electorate: Partisan Identification

- Campbell, Angus, Phillip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. [*The American Voter*](#). Chicago, IL: University Of Chicago Press. [chpts 1-2, 6-7]
- Kent M. Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, "[The Transmission of Political Values from Parent to Child](#)," *The American Political Science Review* 62:1 (1968): 169-184.
- Donald Green, Bradley Palmqest, Eric Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) [[chpts 1-2](#)].
- Michael MacKuen, Robert Erikson, and James Stimson, "[Macropartisanship](#)," *The American Political Science Review* 83 (1989): 1125-1142.
- Morris P. Fiorina, "[Parties and Partisanship: A 40-Year Retrospective](#)," *Political Behavior* 24 (2002): 93-115.

Week 7, February 22

Political Polarization, Sorting, and Ideological Convergence

- Alan Abramowitz and Kyle L. Saunders, "[Is Polarization a Myth?](#)" *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 542-55.
- Morris Fiorina and Samuel Abrams, "[Political Polarization in the American Public](#)," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 563-588.
- Matthew S. Levendusky and Jeremy C. Pope. "[Red States vs. Blue States: Going Beyond the Mean](#)," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75:2 (2011), 227-248.
- Lilliana Mason, "[The Rise of Uncivil Agreement: Issue versus Behavioral Polarization in the American Electorate](#)," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57:1 (2013): 140-159.
- Matt Grossman and David A. Hopkins, "[Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats: Asymmetry of American Politics](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* 13:1 (2015): 119-39.

Week 8, March 1

Parties and Extremism: The Tea Party, Trumpism, and the Republican Extremism

- Kevin Arceneaux and Stephen Nicholson, "[Who Wants to Have a Tea Party? The Who, What, and Why of the Tea Party Movement](#)," *PS* (2012): 700-710).
- Rosenblum Nancy L., "[Extremism and Anti-Extremism in American Party Politics](#)," *Journal of Contemporary Legal Issues* 12:2 (2002): 843-886.
- Vanessa Williamson, Theda Skocpol, and John Coggin, "[The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* 9(1): 25-43.
- Michael Barber and Jeremy C. Pope, "[Conservatism in the Era of Trump](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* 17:3 (2019): 719 – 736.
- Eric J. Oliver and Wendy M. Rahn, "[Rise of the Trumpenvolk: Populism in the 2016 Election](#)," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 667: 189-206.

Week 9, March 8

Recharge Day (aka, work on your research paper/project or get ahead on your readings)

Week 10, March 15

Electoral Realignments?

David Mayhew, "[Electoral Realignments](#)," *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000): 449-474.

"Responses" to Mayhew's critique

Larry Bartels, "Electoral Continuity and Change, 1868-1996," *Electoral Studies* 17 (1998): 301-26.

Walter Dean Burnham, "Party Systems and the Political Process," in William Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham, eds., *The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development* (New York: Oxford, 1967).

Paul Allen Beck and Kent Jennings, "Political Periods and Political Participation," *American Political Science Review* 73 (1979): 737-750.

Ryan Claassen, "Political Awareness and Partisan Realignment: Are the Unaware Unevolved?" *Political Research Quarterly*, 64, 818-830.

V.O. Key, "A Theory of Critical Elections," *Journal of Politics* 17 (1955): 3-18.

Warren E. Miller, "[Party Identification, Realignment, and Party Voting: Back to the Basics](#)," *The American Political Science Review* 85 (1991): 557-568.

Daniel Shea, "The Passing of Realignment and the Advent of the 'Baseless' Party System," *American Politics Quarterly* 27 (1999): 33-57.

Jeffrey Stonecash and Everita Silina, "The 1896 Realignment: A Reassessment," *American Politics Research* 33 (2005): 3-32.

James Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1973). [chapters 1-2]

Daniel Schlozman and Sam Rosenfeld, "[The Hollow Parties](#)," in *Can America Govern Itself?* Frances E. Lee and Nolan McCarty, eds. Cambridge University Press, 2019 (120-152).

Week 11, March 22

Electoral Capture and Racial and Ethnic Minorities

V.O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Knopf, 1949) [chapter 14].

Paul Frymer and John David Skrentny, "[Coalition-Building and the Politics of Electoral Capture During the Nixon Administration: African Americans, Labor, Latinos](#)," *Studies in American Political Development* 12 (1998): 131-161.

Mara Cecilia Ostfeld, "[The New White Flight?: The Effects of Political Appeals to Latinos on White Democrats](#)," *Political Behavior* 41 (2019): 561-582.

Ismail K. White, Chryl N. Laird, and Troy D. Allen, "[Selling Out?: The Politics of Navigating Conflicts between Racial Group Interest and Self-interest](#)," *American Political Science Review* 108:4 (2014): 783-800.

Tatishe M. Nteta and Douglas Rice, "[Driving a Wedge? Republicans, Immigration, and the Impact of Substantive Appeals on African American Vote Choice](#)," *Political Research Quarterly* (2020).

Hajnal, Zoltan L. and Taeku Lee. 2011. *Why Americans Don't Join the Party: Race, Immigration, and the Failure (of Political Parties) to Engage the Electorate*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [[chpt 1](#)]

Week 12, March 29**Gender and Political Parties**

- Tiffany D. Barnes and Erin C. Cassese, "[American Party Women: A Look at the Gender Gap within Parties](#)," *Political Research Quarterly* 70:1 (2017): 127-141.
- Jeremiah J. Castle, et al., "The Effect of the #MeToo Movement on Political Engagement and Ambition in 2018," *Political Research Quarterly* 73:4 (2020): 926-941.
- Nadia E. Brown, "[Political participation of women of color: An intersectional analysis](#)," *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 35:4 (2014): 315-348.
- Nadia E. Brown and Danielle C. Lemi, "[Life for Me Ain't Been No Crystal Stair": Black Women Candidates and the Democratic Party](#)," *Boston University Law Review* 100:5 (2020): 1613-1636.
- Benjamin Melusky, Eric Loepp, and Kristin Kanthak, "[Candidate Emergence and the Success of Women](#)," *PS* 2020.
- Yalidy Matos, Stacey Greene, Kira Sanbonmatsu, "[Do Women Seek "Women of Color" for Public Office? Exploring Women's Support for Electing Women of Color](#)," *Political Research Quarterly* 2020.

Week 13, April 5**Georgia, Georgia: A Breakthrough for Democrats?**

- Danny Hayes and Seth McKee, "[Toward a One-Party South?](#) *American Politics Research* 36 (2008): 3-32.
- Nicholas Carnes and Noam Lupu, "[The White Working Class and the 2016 Election](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* (2020).
- Seth Masket, [Learning from Loss: The Democrats, 2016-2020](#). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020. [chpts 1, 2, & 6]
- Lauren Gambino and David Smith, "[Democrats' Georgia success reshapes US political landscape](#)," *The Guardian* (2021).

Week 14, April 12**Cracking the Two Party Duopoly?**

- Lee Drutman, [Breaking the Two Party Doom Loop](#) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020) [[AEI Talk](#)]
- Steven Rosenstone, Roy Behr, and Edward Lazarus, *Third Parties in America*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). [chpts 1 & 2]
- Barry Burden, "[Minor Parties and Strategic Voting in recent U.S. Elections](#)," *Electoral Studies* 24 (2005): 603-18.
- Frances E. Lee, "[Populism and the American Party System: Opportunities and Constraints](#)," *Perspectives on Politics* 18:2 (2019):

Week 15, April 19**In-Class Research Presentations**

Research Paper/Strategic Party Plan Due Friday, April 23, 5pm.