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American Public University System

School of Arts and Humanities

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

POLS511
POLITICAL PARTIES AND INTEREST GROUPS
3 Hours
8 Weeks
Prerequisite(s): NONE

Course Description (Catalog)

POLS511 Political Parties and Interest Groups (3 hours)

This course examines the organization and behavior of political parties and interest groups within the American political system.

Course Objectives

Objective 1: Analyze the past and future of the American party system.

Objective 2: Investigate the role of race, age, gender, class, and occupation in voting behavior.

Objective 3: Consider the advantages and disadvantages of various party nomination systems.

Objective 4: Debate the role of political parties in presidential nominations.

Objective 5: Analyze the history of major party performance in the Electoral College.

Objective 6: Dissect the theory and practice of responsible party government.

Objective 7: Apply pluralist theory, disturbance theory, and collective action theory to contemporary American politics.

Objective 8: Identify the four major types of political action committees, with examples.

Course Delivery Method

Online assignments are due by Sunday 11:55 pm Eastern time.

Assignments include Forum questions, a research paper, and a final exam.

Course Materials

Author	Book Title	Publication Info	ISBN
Maisel and Brewer	<u>Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process</u> , sixth edition, 2012	Rowman & Littlefield	978-1-4422-0769-1
Franz	<u>Choices and Changes: Interest Groups in the Electoral Process</u> , 2008	Temple University Press	978-1-59213-673-5

Evaluation Procedures

Course Requirements: Your final grade is a compilation of the following:

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
8 Weekly Forums	40%
10-12 page Research Paper	30%
Final Exam	30%

Forum Participation: Questions are posted for you to research and discuss. You are expected to post your initial response by **Friday at 11:55 pm ET** and reply substantively to two or more of your classmates by **Sunday at 11:55 pm Eastern time.**

Research Paper: A 10-12 page research paper is due Sunday at 11:55 pm Eastern time of the seventh week. Topics must be approved by the professor. Possible topics include:

- campaign finance
- super PACs
- party in the electorate
- party as an organization
- parties in government
- Congressional parties
- presidents and political parties
- critical elections/ partisan realignment
- third parties
- independent voters
- theories of interest groups
- interest group society critiques
- interest group entrepreneurs
- lobbying regulations
- analyze the goals and strategies of a specific interest group

Final Exam: There will be 10-12 page untimed final exam, with three essay questions. The exam is due Sunday at 11:55 pm Eastern time of the eighth week. Please submit the essays as a Word document.

Grading – Graduate

Please see the [student handbook](#) to reference the University's [grading scale](#).

Course Outline

8 Week Course

<u>Week</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Course Objective</u>	<u>Assignment(s)</u>
1	<u>Parties and Elections</u> , chapter 1,2	1	▪ Introduction ▪ Forum 1
2	<u>Parties and Elections</u> , chapter 3	2	▪ Forum 2
3	<u>Parties and Elections</u> , chapters 6,7	3	▪ Forum 3
4	<u>Parties and Elections</u> , chapter 8	4	▪ Forum 4
5	<u>Parties and Elections</u> , chapter 9	5	▪ Forum 5
6	<u>Parties and Elections</u> , chapters 11,12	6	▪ Forum 6

7	<u>Parties and Elections,</u> chapter 4 <u>Choices and Changes,</u> chapters 1-4	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forum 7 ▪ Research Paper due, Sunday, 11:55 pm, Eastern time
8	<u>Parties and Elections,</u> chapter 5 <u>Choices and Changes,</u> chapter 5-8	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forum 8 ▪ Final Exam due Sunday, 11:55 pm, Eastern time

Polices

COURSE POLICIES

Policies specific to this course are listed below, but please consult the [student handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

I will randomly submit your weekly essays and all research to "Turnitin.com" to assure that you are identifying the sources for all of your written assignments. Getting information from other sources and quoting section of references is completely acceptable (of course, I want to see your original analysis, too), but using sources without citations is plagiarism.

The Internet and Plagiarism: The Internet has made it quite easy to copy and insert materials into a paper. Students must be careful to properly attribute materials found on the Internet. In a collegiate setting, attribution typically relies on a formal academic style manual for its citation models (See [citation and reference style](#).) Such models describe how to append footnotes and endnotes, when:

- Quoting another's exact words, you are obviously expected to name the author and place the words in quotation marks or in indented text blocks. The citation number is placed immediately at the end of the quotation.
- Acknowledging background sources to your own descriptions. The citation number is normally placed at the end of the paragraph.

The University offers tools in its [online library research center](#) to help you analyze your papers for possible plagiarism violations and for instructors to uncover such activities.

Plagiarism penalty: The instructor has the option of awarding any assignment that has been found to have been plagiarized a zero. Subsequent violations may result in an F in the class.

Writing Expectations

All written submissions should be submitted in a font and page set-up which is readable and neat. It is recommended that students try to adhere to a consistent format, which is described below.

- Typewritten in double-spaced format with a readable style and font and submitted inside the electronic classroom (unless classroom access is not possible and other arrangements have been approved by the professor).
- Arial 12-point font.
- Page margins: top, bottom, left side, and right side margins should be one inch.

CITATION AND REFERENCE STYLE

All assignments must follow the Chicago Style guidelines. Students should refer to the APUS Online Library [Chicago/Turabian Style Manuals](#) for the correct citation method.

Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, using Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Rev. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007). You can find a helpful CMS Style Sheet in the resources.

DUE DATES

Assignments are due by Sunday at 11:55 pm, Eastern Time of the assignment week. Forum posts are due by Friday at 11:55 pm Eastern time.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time

to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade. If you do not make prior arrangements with me, late work will be penalized five percent per day. Exceptions can be made under exceptional circumstances or when you have notified me before your absence.

COURSE EXTENTIONS

Students must determine the need for their first course extension and submit their "request course extension" form *before* the end of the course. This must be done electronically through the Office of the Registrar.

Courses may be extended in 30-day intervals for a maximum of 90 days. Students who will be prevented from participating in a course due to extenuating circumstances may be eligible for [Deployment and/or Special Circumstances extension](#).

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

This institution complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and state and local requirements regarding students with disabilities. In compliance with federal and state regulations, reasonable accommodations are provided to qualified students with disabilities.

A request for accommodation is deemed reasonable if the request:

- is based on documented individual needs
- does not compromise essential requirements of a course or program.
- does not impose an undue financial or administrative burden upon APUS.

A qualified student can, with or without reasonable accommodations, perform the essential functions of program or course requirements. The essential requirements of an academic course or program need not be modified to accommodate an individual with a disability.

Final responsibility for selection of the most appropriate accommodation rests with the University's Disability Support Services Committee and is determined on an individual case-by-case basis, based on the nature of the student's disability. Students are encouraged email registrar@apus.edu to discuss potential academic accommodations and begin the review process. It is the student's responsibility to:

- follow the accommodation procedure outlined in this section,
- identify the disability to the staff and/or faculty of the university,

- provide (and incur expense for) current appropriate documentation of disability and accommodation needed from a qualified medical or other licensed professional, and
- request specific accommodations or services.

NETIQUETTE

Discussions on the Internet have the potential to degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting--basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the fun and excitement of learning that does not include descent to personal attacks, or student attempts to stifle the discussion of others.

- **Technology limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple.
- **Humor note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and--especially--satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺

Academic Services

ONLINE LIBRARY RESEARCH CENTER & LEARNING RESOURCES.

The APUS online library resource center is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Center provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions may be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors’ publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.

- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Turnitin.com:** [Turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com) is a tool to improve student research skills that also detect plagiarism. Turnitin.com provides resources on developing topics and assignments that encourage and guide students in producing papers that are intellectually honest, original in thought, and clear in expression. This tool helps ensure a culture of adherence to the University's standards for intellectual honesty. Turnitin.com also reviews students' papers for matches with Internet materials and with thousands of student papers in its database, and returns an "originality report" to instructors and/or students.
- **Request a Library Guide for your course:** (<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>).
- The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the "open web" and licensed resources on the "deep web." The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:
 - - ⦿ Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Marc J. Hetherington and Bruce A. Larson, *Parties, Politics, and Public Policy in America*, 11th edition (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009).

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Sidney Milkis, *Political Parties and Constitutional Government: Remaking American Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

James Reichley, *The Life of the Parties* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).

Interest Groups

Jeffrey M. Berry, *The Interest Group Society* (New York: Longman, 2009).

Allen J. Cigler and Burdett Loomis, *Interest Group Politics* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011), 8th edition.

Matt Grossman, *The Not-So-Special Interests: Interest Groups, Public Representation, and American Governance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

Paul S. Herrnson, Clyde Wilcox, and Ronald G. Shaiko, *The Interest Group Connection: Electioneering, Lobbying, and Policymaking in Washington* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004).