

Political Science 675

AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES

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2140 Derby Hall (292-2880)

Spring 1997
Office Hours: 2:30-3:30 MW, 3-5 F

Focus. Political parties are key institutions in the political process in the United States and other democracies. They appear in one form or another in virtually every forum of politics. Some would even go so far as to say that parties have been indispensable to the development of political democracy in America and around the world. It certainly is difficult to imagine democratic politics without them. Nonetheless, political parties seem to have been in decline in recent years -- both as important players in American politics and as objects of voter support and loyalty, and the role they play today seems quite different from what it once was.

By political parties, we typically mean any one or all of (1) the legally-recognized organizations that carry their names in the localities, the states, and the nation; (2) the coalitions of voters who are united in professing the same partisan loyalties; and (3) the teams of politicians who organize under the same label to contest and hold public office. This course will study the role and behavior of the American parties in each of these forms, as well as in the electoral process, and how they are interrelated. We also will consider, as a principal sub-theme, the question of how the role of parties in American politics has changed, and how the parties have responded to these changes.

Required Readings. The required texts for the course are Paul Allen Beck, *Party Politics in America* (New York: Longman, 1997), eighth edition, and L. Sandy Maisel, ed., *The Parties Respond: Changes in American Parties and Campaigns* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), second edition. Both books may be purchased at the main campus bookstores. (Author's royalties on the sale of the Beck book will be returned to students who have purchased a new copy, so that the instructor does not profit from using it.) Lectures and discussion are designed mainly to complement, and only occasionally review, the readings, so regular attendance is important.

Grading Policy. Course grades will be based on a midterm (25%), final (25%), and research paper (50%). Class attendance also will be taken into account at the margins in determining final grades. For undergraduates, half of the research paper grade (25% of the total) will be accumulated from five required short assignments. The research paper is to be original 8-10 page research paper which describes and analyzes party politics in one American state other than Ohio from the 1960s through 1996; it will be "built up" from five 1-2 page paper assignments. For graduate students, the research paper should be 18-20 pages in length on this topic or any other approved by the instructor, and the short assignments are not required. Failure to take examinations at the scheduled times or to turn in the research paper by the deadline, unless excused in advance by the instructor, will result in an E for that assignment.

Academic Honesty. All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will not be tolerated. All cases of academic misconduct in the form of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the University Committee on Academic Misconduct and handled according to University policy.

Disability. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor, and seeking available assistance, during the first week of the course. Course materials

may be made available in alternative formats upon request. For such materials, please contact the instructor or Mr. Wayne DeYoung, Department of Political Science, 2140 Derby Hall (292-2880).

Course Syllabus. The following pages contain a topical outline for the course, the reading assignments for each topic, and the schedule of exam dates and paper deadlines. All readings should be completed in the week for which they are assigned.

THE AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEM: DEFINITION AND DEVELOPMENT

March 31, **The Evolution of the American Parties**
April 2

Beck, "Parties and Party Systems," *Party Politics in America*, 1-5.
Beck, "In Search of the Political Parties," *Party Politics in America*, 7-29.
Silbey, "The Rise and Fall of American Political Parties 1790-1993," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 3-18.

The American Party Duopoly

Beck, "The American Two-Party System," *Party Politics in America*, 30-57.

ASSIGNMENT 1: Party Competition across the American States (DUE: April 9). How does the level of party competition for the state you have chosen compare to that for the other 50 states in the 1990s and in previous decades? What does this imply for the viability and strategies of the state parties and their candidates? See, for your state, Table 2.2 in Beck, *Party Politics in America*, and class handouts. It also will be useful to consult one of the state party books on reserve for this and later assignments

POLITICAL PARTIES AS ORGANIZATIONS

April 7, 9 **Party Organizations at the Grassroots**

Beck, "The Political Party as an Organization," *Party Politics in America*, 59-63.
Beck, "The State and Local Party Organizations," *Party Politics in America*, 65-84.
Bibby, "State Party Organizations: Coping and Adapting," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 21-44.

ASSIGNMENT 2: Party Organization in the States (DUE: April 16). How does the nature of party organization in your state compare with that of other states now and in previous decades? What does this imply for the campaign capabilities of the parties and the motivations of the party activists? See, for your state, Table 3.1 from Beck, *Party Politics in America*; class handouts; and Appleton and Ward, *State Party Profiles*, and Mayhew, *Placing Parties in American Politics* on reserve.

April 14, 16 **The Washington Party Organizations**

Beck, "National Organizations: A New Presence at the Summit," *Party Politics in America*, 85-105.

Herrnson, "The Revitalization of National Party Organizations," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 45-68.

Party Activists: Who and Why?

Beck, "The Political Party of the Activists," *Party Politics in America*, 107-125.

POLITICAL PARTIES AS COALITIONS OF VOTERS

April 21, 23 **The Party Coalitions -- Yesterday and Today**

Beck, "The Political Party in the Electorate," *Party Politics in America*, 127-130.

Beck, "The Loyal Electorates," *Party Politics in America*, 131-150.

Miller, "Party Identification and the Electorate of the 1990s," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 103-121.

ASSIGNMENT 3: The Changing State Electoral Coalitions (DUE: April 30).
How does the composition of the party coalitions in your state (who are Democrats? Who are Republicans?) compare with those nationwide and in your state in the past? What does this imply for the cohesiveness and programmatic orientation of the parties? See class handouts, Tables 6.4 and 6.5, and the appropriate state chapter in Barone and Ujifusa, The Almanac of American Politics. It would be useful to consult one of the state books on reserve for this assignment.

April 28, 30 **Party Loyalties and Political Behavior**

Beck, "The Party Within the Voter," *Party Politics in America*, 151-167.

Beck, "The Active Electorate," *Party Politics in America*, 168-192.

Fiorina, "The Electorate at the Polls in the 1990s," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 123-142.

MID-TERM EXAMINATION: Monday, May 5

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

May 5, 7 **Parties and the Selection of Candidates for Office**

Beck, "The Political Parties in the Electoral Process," *Party Politics in America*, 193-195.

Beck, "The Naming of the Party Candidates," *Party Politics in America*, 196-217.

Beck, "Choosing the Presidential Nominees: Primaries and Caucuses," *Party Politics in America*, 218-245.

Maisel, Fowler, Jones, and Stone, "Nomination Politics: The Roles of Institutional, Contextual, and Personal Variables," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 145-168.

Kamarck and Goldstein, "The Rules Do Matter: Post-Reform Presidential Nominating Politics," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 169-195.

ASSIGNMENT 4: State Candidate Selection Practices (DUE: May 14). How does your state's current process for selecting party candidates compare with that in other states and with that used in your state in the 1960s? What does this imply for the recruitment of party candidates and party influence over them? See class handouts.

May 12, 14 **Political Parties in Electoral Campaigns**

Beck, "Parties and the Campaign for Election," *Party Politics in America*, 246-269.

Financing the Political Campaigns

Beck, "Financing the Campaigns," *Party Politics in America*, 270-300.
Sorauf and Wilson, "Political Parties and Campaign Finance: Adaptation and Accommodation Toward a Changing Role," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 235-253.

POLITICAL PARTIES AS GOVERNING COALITIONS

May 19, 21 **Political Parties in the Legislative Process**

Beck and Sorauf, "The Party in Government," *Party Politics in America*, 301-304.
Beck and Sorauf, "Party and Partisans in the Legislature," *Party Politics in America*, 305-330.
Sinclair, "Parties in Congress: New Roles and Leadership Trends," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 299-318.
Brady and Buckley, "Coalitions and Policy in the U.S. Congress," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 319-340.

ASSIGNMENT 5: Governmental Parties in the States (DUE: May 28). How cohesive are the two parties in your state and how unified is their control over state government compared to the two parties in Washington and in your state for earlier decades? What does this imply for the role of party in governmental politics? See, for your state, class handouts and the state party books on reserve.

May 28 **Political Parties in the Executive and Judiciary**

Beck, "The Party in the Executive and Judiciary," *Party Politics in America*, 331-352.
Mackenzie, "Partisan Leadership through Presidential Appointments," in Maisel (ed.), *The Parties Respond*, 341-362.

Responsible Party Government: Ideal and Reality

Beck, "The Quest for Party Government," *Party Politics in America*, 353-378.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN AMERICAN POLITICS

June 2-4

American Parties Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

Beck, "The Place of Parties in American Politics," *Party Politics in America*, 379-397.

Maisel, "Political Parties at the Century's End," in Maisel (ed.), *The Party's Respond*, 379-395.

FINAL EXAMINATION: Monday, June 9, 3:30 - 5:18 p.m.
TERM PAPERS DUE: Wednesday, June 11, 5 p.m.