

George Washington University
The Graduate School of Political Management
PMGT 201--FUNDAMENTALS OF POLITICAL MANAGEMENT

Dr. Dennis W. Johnson
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Fall Semester 2008
Office Hours: immediately after class, or by
appointment

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide you with basic historical and political knowledge of recent American national government, tailored to the interests of political management students. We will concentrate on political trends, elections, political ideology, political parties, campaign and election law, the profession of political management, and the evolving political and social changes within society.

Readings:

We will be using the following texts:

E. J. Dionne, *Why Americans Hate Politics*, paperback
Alonzo Hamby, *Liberalism and its Challengers*, paperback
John F. Harris, *The Survivor*, paperback
Dennis W. Johnson, *No Place for Amateurs*, 2nd edition, paperback
David Maraniss and Michael Weiskopf, *Tell Newt to Shut Up*, paperback
John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *The Right Nation*, paperback
James A. Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, paperback
Gil Troy, *Morning in America*, paperback

For your research paper, we will use the Chicago Manual of Style. I strongly suggest you purchase:

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, paperback

All of these readings should be available at the GW bookstore (or online from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or Borders). In addition, there will be a number of readings hyperlinked on our Blackboard site:

Dennis W. Johnson, "The Business of Political Consulting"
Dennis W. Johnson, "Elections and Public Polling: Will the Media Get Online Polling Right?"
Dennis W. Johnson, "2008: An Election Like No Other?"
William Hamilton, "Political Polling"
Buckley v. Valeo (1976)

Blackboard

Our course has its own Web site, which will be our principal source of information and communications. I will post assignments, hyperlink readings and e-mail you through our Web site. We will be able to communicate with each other much more efficiently. Go to www.blackboard.gwu.edu for instructions.

Evaluation

There will be three points of evaluation. First, you will write a 20-25 page research paper on a contemporary political issue (50 percent of the final grade); second, you will have an in-class

midsemester examination (25 percent of the final grade), and an in-class final examination (25 percent of the final grade).

There will be no short assignments, no quizzes, and no grade for class participation.

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PART ONE: POLITICS, CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS

Week One: September 2

Emergence of Post-War America and the 1948 Election

Required Readings:

Patterson: introduction; chs. 1-7

Hamby, chs. 1, 2

Topics Covered:

1. Post-War America and liberalism
2. New Deal Political Realignment
3. African-Americans in 1930s, 1940s
4. Organized labor in 1930s, 1940s
5. Challenges of foreign policy
6. Election of 1948

Week Two: September 9

The Development of the Political Consulting Business (I)

Public and Private Polling

Required Readings:

Johnson, "The Business of Political Consulting"

Hamilton, "Political Polling"

Johnson, "Elections and Public Polling: Will the Media Get Online Polling Right?"

Topics Covered:

1. Early, pre-scientific days
2. Pioneer pollsters
3. 1948 polling fiasco
4. Early private pollsters
5. Trends in polling
6. Future on the Internet?

Research Paper topic due

Week Three: September 16

The Development of the Political Consulting Business (II)

Strategists, Specialists, and Trends

Required Readings:

Johnson, *No Place for Amateurs*, first half

Johnson, "The Business of Political Consulting"

1. Professionalization of the Political Consulting Business
2. Strategist, Specialists, and Vendors; pioneers
3. Pioneer consultants
4. Political consulting today

Week Four September 23

How Campaigns Have Changed, 1952-2000

Required Readings:

Johnson, *No Place for Amateurs*, second half

1. Television and electronic communication
2. Technological changes and campaigning
3. Election reforms
4. Lessons from 2000 and 2004
5. The Transformation of 2008

Week Five September 30

Campaign Finance Law

Required Readings:

Buckley v. Valeo (1976) (majority opinion)

1. FECA and Buckley
2. FEC and Soft Money
3. Political Action Committees
4. McCain Feingold (BCRA)
5. Emergence of 527s

PART TWO: IDEOLOGY, PARTIES, POLITICS

Week Six: October 7

Beginnings of the Conservative Revolution

Required Readings:

Dionne, ch. 6
 Patterson: chs. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14
 Hamby: ch. 3
 Micklethwait and Wooldridge, chs. 1, 2

Topics Covered:

1. Conservatism after World War II
2. Conservative thinkers
3. Eisenhower and “Modern Republicanism”
4. Goldwater and the beginnings of modern conservatism
5. Movement conservatives

Week Seven October 14

The Sixties and the High Point of Liberalism

Required Readings:

Patterson: chs. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
 Hamby: 5, 6
 Micklethwait and Wooldridge, ch. 3

Topics Covered:

1. Overview of a decade in turmoil
2. 1968: A year like no other
3. Kennedy administration
4. Revolution in Republican Party
5. LBJ and Great Society

Week Eight: October 21

Midterm Examination (25 percent), covering all material thus far.

Week Nine October 28

Vietnam, Watergate, and the American Psyche

Required Readings:

Patterson, chs. 20, 22, 23, 24, 25
 Hamby, ch. 7

Topics Covered:

1. Vietnam War's impact on American psyche
2. Richard Nixon as consummate politician and "Modern Republican"
3. Watergate
4. Nixon as Patron Saint of the Constitution

Week Ten: Election Evening: No class

Week Eleven: November 11

The Seventies, the Rights Revolution, and Carter Years

Required Readings:

Patterson, ch. 21
Dionne, entire book

Topics Covered:

1. The Rights revolution
2. Reaction against the Rights revolution; beginning of end of liberalism
3. Growth of the Conservative Right and stirring of the Religious Right
4. The Carter years and shrinking of the Democratic party

Research Papers Due Tonight, 7:10 sharp.

Week Twelve: November 18

America in the Reagan Years

Required Readings:

Troy, entire book
Micklethwait and Wooldridge, ch. 4
Hamby, ch. 8

Topics Covered:

1. Reagan ascendancy, supply-side economics, deregulation
2. Movement conservatives
3. The Teflon years
4. Ollie North and bumpy second term

Week Thirteen: November 25

The Clinton Years

Required Readings:

Harris, entire book
Maraniss and Weisskopf, entire book

Topics Covered:

1. George H. W. Bush and the one term presidency
2. Turmoil and indecision in Clinton White House
3. Newt Gingrich and the Conservative Challenge
4. Impeachment and the Vast Right Wing Conspiracy

Week Fourteen: December 2

At Century's End: Washington, Power and Influence

Required Readings:

Micklethwait and Wooldridge, chs. 5-15
Hamby, epilogue

Topics Covered:

1. Power and money
2. The political parties
2. Red States & Blue States; cultural divide
3. Congress transformed

Week Fifteen To be announced

Final examination, counting 25 percent of course. (Covering all material since the midterm examination).