Rollins College

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Syllabus for Money and Politics

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/richard_skinner/29/
POLITICAL SCIENCE 580: MONEY AND POLITICS

This course considers the historical and contemporary relationship between money and government. In what ways do moneyed interests have distinctive influences on American politics? Does this threaten the vibrancy of our representative democracy? Are recent controversies over campaign finance reform and lobbying reform signs that American government is in trouble? This course is reading, writing, and discussion intensive, and we consider the large academic literature on this subject, as well as the reflections of journalists and political practitioners. Election law and regulations on money in politics are always changing, and so part of the course is designed to give students tools at tracking these developments. The overall goal of the course is to foster an understanding of the money/politics relationship in ways that facilitate the evaluation of American democracy.

This course presupposes an intimate acquaintance with the American political system. The readings will be demanding at times, but not inaccessible. Class discussion should be intense and challenging. Students should feel comfortable analyzing the texts, and noting their strong and weak points.

Your most important responsibility in this course will be the careful and reflective reading of the assignments listed in the outline that follows. Throughout the term we will also want to pay close attention to the political process as it unfolds in front of us. You should, therefore, stay abreast of such matters by reading a good national newspaper or magazine. The New York Times (www.nytimes.com) the Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com), the Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com) and USA Today (www.usatoday.com) are all available on-line, although free registration is sometimes required.

Keeping up legal or political developments on campaign finance, lobbying reform, election law, etc is very difficult. To help us do this, consider consulting the following blogs or online resources. I’ve listed them in order of most to least helpful (by helpful I mean ones that are updated most often):

d. http://opensecrets.org/
e. http://www.cfinst.org/
f. http://www.brookings.edu/

ATTENDANCE / PARTICIPATION: You are required to attend class. I will take attendance on a regular basis. If you come late, please see me after class. While regular attendance is expected, by itself it does not guarantee a perfect participation grade. Discussion is a central component of this class. You should come to each class meeting prepared to talk about the arguments made by the section’s authors and about your
response to them. A guide to my expectations for class participation can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Course Requirements
There are three major components to your grade:

1. **Five papers** (50 points; each worth 10 points)—these are about 5-page papers (double-spaced) that deal with the readings for a week. You are free to write about whatever you want on the week’s readings, but the paper must have a main idea and must be supported with evidence from the texts. Treat these as critical reviews of the readings. What was compelling about the authors’ points? What was not convincing? What are the implications of the points made in the readings? I encourage you to read up on current events (see the resources listed in the “Other Issues” section of the syllabus), and feel free to include anything relevant into your discussion of the week’s readings. I will evaluate these on the basis of the logic and defense of your argument.
   - You can may write a paper starting with the January 30 readings.
   - There are no extensions for these papers and you must hand them in during class.

2. **Class presentation** (15 points)—Every week a student will present about a 10-15 minute review of the readings and will conclude by offering a number of discussion questions. Again, I encourage students to read up on current events and include anything relevant in your presentation.
   *You cannot write a paper during the week you are presenting.
   **We will be signing up for presentations during Week 2 and presentations will begin in Week 3 (February 4).

3. **Participation** (10 points)—this includes attendance and class participation. Attendance is required, and I will take regular note of who is and who is not in class. Mere attendance is not sufficient. I expect every student to come prepared to participate every class.

4. **Final Examination** (25 points). Tuesday, May 6, 7 pm.

REQUIRED READINGS:


Victoria Farrar-Myers and Diana Dwyre. 2007.  *Limits and Loopholes: The Quest for*
Money, Free Speech, and Fair Elections. CQ Press.


All other readings will be on electronic reserve.

NOTE: The dates listed below are for your convenience only. The instructor reserves the right to change the class schedule as needed.

1. The Campaign Finance System (January 16-23)

Farrar-Myers & Dwyre, ch. 1.


Malbin, ch. 1.

2. Lobbying in Context (February 4-6)

Wolpe and Levine, Part I


3. Lobbyists in Action (February 11-13)

Wolpe and Levine, Part II


3. Campaign Finance and Lobbying (February 18-20)


Corrado et al, chs. 3 & 9

Smith, chs. 1-2, 6-8.

*Buckley v. Valeo*

*FEC v. McConnell*

*FEC v. Wisconsin Right to Life*

5. What Counts as Campaigning? (March 3-5)

Corrado et al, chs. 4 & 7


6. Financing Political Parties (March 10-12)

Corrado et al. ch. 5.

Malbin, chs. 2-4.
7. Presidential Campaigns (March 24-26)

Corrado et al. ch. 6.

Malbin et al, ch. 11.


8. Interest Groups and Campaign Finance (March 31- April 2)

Malbin, chs. 5-8.


9. Individuals and Campaign Finance (April 7-9)

Malbin, ch. 10.


10. The Campaign Finance Reform Debate (April 14-16)

Corrado at al, ch. 8
Loomis and West (entire)
Smith, chs. 3-5, 9-10.

Clean Election Laws: Consult: http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/cleanelections.html http://campfin.polisci.wisc.edu/, Click on “Publications” and read, “Do Public Funding Programs Enhance Electoral Competition?”

11. The Politics of Campaign Finance Reform (April 16-28)

Farrar-Myers and Dwyre, chs. 2-7
Malbin, ch. 9
## Expectations for Class Participation

### A Daily Guide

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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| A / A- | Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed readings exceptionally well, relating it to other readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.  
Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of reading material.  
Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds thoughtfully to other students’ comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material, etc.  
Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement. |
| B+ / B | Demonstrates good preparation: knows reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.  
Offers interpretations and analysis of reading material (more than just facts) to class.  
Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students’ points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.  
Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement. |
| B- / C+ | Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.  
Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from reading), without elaboration or very infrequently.  
Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.  
Demonstrates sporadic involvement. |
| C / D | Present.  
Tries to respond when called, but does not offer much.  
Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion. |
| F | Absent. |