POS 3173

Southern Politics

Fall 2015

Instructor: Jonathan Knuckey

Welcome to Southern Politics!

This class is designed to provide you with a comprehensive overview of politics in the American South. For a political scientist the South is the most interesting region in the United States to study. Why study and be concerned about southern politics?

- First, the South continues to be the most distinctive region in the United States. Although the South and the rest of the nation have converged in a number of important ways that we will study this semester, there is still much that sets the South apart from other regions. This continuing distinctiveness is demonstrated by the fact that the South is the only region of the United States to have developed its own subfield of study within political science.

- Second, the post-World War II period in the South has been characterized by momentous, social and economic change. Thus the South provides a compelling case study of the effects and consequences of these changes on political structures, attitudes and behavior.

- Third, anyone interested in developments in the American party system needs to comprehend the partisan changes that have taken place in the South. One of the main themes stressed in this class, the movement of the once Democratic "Solid South" to a region characterized by two-party competition, and increasingly Republican dominance is a fascinating and important story in its own right. However, it also has enormous implications for national party and electoral politics in the battle for the White House and control of Congress.

Although our focus we be primarily on southern politics since the mid-twentieth century we will spend some time at the start of the class talking about the history of the South, and some of the key events that shaped the "traditional" or "Old" South and nature of politics in the one-party Democratic "Solid South." We will then turn to an examination of the forces that began to transform the South with particular attention given to the Civil Rights movement era (1954-1968) in the South. This leads to the next part of the course which focuses on the rise of southern Republicans and the onset of a two-party competition. We will end the course by addressing the question of whether a "New South" has emerged, whether the South is still a distinctive region and where the South might be heading - socially, economically and politically - over the next few decades.

Hopefully your study of southern politics this semester will not just serve an academic interest but help in shedding some light on recent party politics in the South and, indeed, the nation, especially as we head into the 2016 presidential election. Furthermore, the type of knowledge that you will acquire is exactly what campaign consultants across the South might be looking for. Maybe in the not too distant future you will be running a campaign where you can put into practice some of the material you learned about this semester.

I look forward to the class and hope you find it enjoyable and informative. I look forward to learning a lot from you!

How to Contact Me.

Office: Political Science department, Phillips Hall 302L

Second office: Lou Frey Institute, Orlando Tech Center, 12443 Research Parkway, 400 Building Suite, Suite 406. Easy parking and no parking permit needed! To get to the Lou Frey Institute from the main campus take the #9 UCF Shuttle and get off at Stop #2.

Office hours: TBA

Email: Use email in Webcourses

Skype: I am happy to talk via Skype. My Skype name is jonathan.knuckey70

Course Policies

Attendance

This is fairly straightforward. Attend class, arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class.

I will take attendance each day by circulating a class roll. Some quick points on attendance:

- The rule is that if you don't sign the roll when it comes around, you're absent from that day's class (no "late" notations). I will usually pass the roll around a few minutes after our start time;

- Do not sign the roll for any other student - ever. It is academic dishonesty to do so, and I have been in the unfortunate position of having to prosecute a few unfortunate souls in the past who apparently thought this rule did not apply to them. They were wrong (as were the absent students who solicited the dishonesty from friends);

- Leaving class on one or two occasions throughout the semester, if you need to…. no big deal. *Constantly* coming and going during classes throughout the semester.... quite a big deal. I reserve the right to mark students retroactively absent and/or take additional disciplinary action if needs be.

You are adults so I am not going to come chasing after you if you don't attend class. However, It should go without saying that you will not be getting the most out of the class -- nor your education in general -- by frequently being absent from class. Moreover, your performance on exams will start to suffer once you start missing lots of classes. For information purposes, when I have taught this course in the past, students with 4-plus absences generally have their overall grade turn out to be something just south of a train wreck.

***Note:* If you have no more than a *single absence* throughout the semester youwill be eligible for *3 points* added to your overall grade total at the end of the semester. This will likely make a difference between overall letter grades if you are on the borderline between grades.**

In keeping with the **UCF policy of respecting students' religious commitments** all attempts will be made to accommodate conflicts arising out of religious observances. If you plan on missing scheduled class meetings due to religious holidays, you must notify me within the first two weeks of the semester.

Other General Policies

- Silence cell phones. If your phone does go off in class the rule is I get to answer it.....

- You can bring food and drink, although it probably should be "southern." Take any trash out with after class is over

- Laptops, ipads, tablets should not be out during class. It is just distracting to sit behind someone who spends the entire class time emailing, instant-messaging, tweeting, updating Facebook profiles, etc., etc. Take notes in class the old-fashioned way, and you will actually find you take better notes because of this.

Start of Semester Meetings with Students

Each student is required to schedule a brief meeting with me in my office **(Phillip Hall 302L)** at some point during the first two weeks of the semester. Make your appointment using the "Schedule" function using the Calendar in Webcourses.

Hopefully these meetings will give you a chance to ask me any questions you may have about the course. Likewise it will help me put names to faces.

Office Hours

Students are encouraged to take advantage of office hours (these are posted under instructor contact on the course front page). Don't just view office hours as the time you come and talk to me when you have done indifferently on an exam. They are an opportunity to discuss issues relating to the course as well as to help you to prepare for exams, to talk about politics in the South, or English football (soccer)!

Textbook

The textbook we will use is: J. David Woodard, *The New Southern Politics* (2nd edition)

You will need to buy and read this book to do well in the class. Exam questions and assignments will partly be based on material from this textbook.

Assignments

There will be a number of assignments given throughout the semester that emphasizes analytical and critical thinking skills as well as data analysis exercises. Details will be provided during the semester.

Exams

Three exams will be given during the semester, scheduled as follows:

- First midterm exam, **Thursday, September 24th (regular class time)**
- Second midterm exam, **Tuesday, November 3rd (regular class time)**
- Final exam, **Tuesday, December 15th (1.00pm-3.50pm).**

Midterm Exams Format

20 multiple-choice questions with 4 choices per question (2 points per question = 40 points)

10 true/false questions (2 points per question = 20 points)

10 fill-in-the-blank questions (1 points per question = 10 points)

1 Short-essay question consisting of three parts (30 points). Four short-essay topics/questions will be posted in Webcourses a couple of weeks prior to each exam. On the day of the exam I will randomly choose the topic/question from this list on which you will write for the exam.

Final Exam Format

Two-part exam, each part weighted equally:

Part I: Same format as midterm exams;

Part II: Extended essay question "Is there a New South?" *(and yes that is the actual question that will be asked!).* This extended-essay question will you a chance to thoughtfully reflect upon the changes that have taken place in the South that we will discuss throughout the semester.

Exam Policies

- Midterm and final exam questions will come from the required readings and lectures; in other words, just about anything we discuss or read is fair game for testing. The exams are not cumulative, although clearly the extended-essay on the final exam will integrate material from throughout the course;
- Exams should be written in black or blue ink. I will be providing an answer booklet for you to write your answers on, so you don't need to buy a blue-book or scantron;
- All exams are closed-book;
- Please be on time for each exam. You must take each exam in order to receive a passing grade in this class.

Academic Honesty

UCF faculty support the UCF creed. Integrity – practicing and defending academic and personal honesty – is the first tenet of the UCF Creed. This is in part a reflection of the second tenet, Scholarship: "I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of membership in the UCF community." Course assignments and tests are designed to have educational value; the process of preparing for and completing these exercises will help improve your skills and knowledge. Material presented to satisfy course requirements is therefore expected to be the result of your own original scholarly efforts.

Violations of student academic behavior standards are outlined in **The Golden Rule Student Handbook.**

Academic Dishonesty is defined as follows:

1. Cheating, whereby non-permissible written, visual or oral assistance including that obtained from another student is utilized on examinations, course assignments or projects, is prohibited. The unauthorized possession or use of examination or course related material shall also constitute cheating.

2. Plagiarism, whereby another's work is deliberately used or appropriated without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own, is prohibited. Any student failing to properly credit ideas or materials taken from another has plagiarized.

Please note that any student who has assisted another in any of the aforementioned breach of standards shall be considered equally culpable.

Students who attempt to obtain unearned academic credentials that do not reflect their skills and knowledge can also undermine the value of the UCF degrees earned by their more honest peers. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in you automatically failing the class and referred to the University authorities. Also, please remember that those caught cheating will have a notation made in their University records that they have been found guilty of academic misconduct. This can and will keep you out of law school so do not be tempted to cheat in any way.

Grades

My philosophy of grading is decidedly against what is generally known as "competitive grading" or "grading on the curve." You are not competing against fellow students for grades in this class. You are competing against yourself at all times, hopefully pushing yourself to excel against my objective standards of what students should reasonably get out of this class.

Average mastery of those standards is the baseline for earning an "average" grade of C. Do above-average work, you earn a B. Do excellent work, you earn an A…. and so on. In any case, please understand that the points you earn toward a final grade will not be jerked around up or down to fit some predetermined grade curve. If everyone deserves an A, they'll get it. If everyone flunks, they'll all get an F and then, in all likelihood, I will leave the jurisdiction quickly under cover of night in heavy disguise and an assumed name!

Your final grade will be weighted as follows:

- Assignments 25%
- First Exam 20%
- Second Exam 20%
- Final Exam 35%

As there are ample grading opportunities in this course there will be no extra credit given. If you know you need a certain grade in December, you know you needed it August -- go to work to earn it! Under no circumstances can or will a course grade be awarded on any basis other than those stated in the syllabus.

Grade boundaries are as follows:

A, 93%+

A-, 90-92.9%

B+, 87-89.9%

B, 83-86.9%

B-, 80-82.9%

C+, 77-79.9%

C, 73-76.9%

C-, 70-72.9%

D+, 67-69.9%

D, 63-66.9%

D-, 60-62.9%

F, 59.9% and below.

Students typically obsess about grades too late, often at the end of the semester. There is little that can be done at that point. So, if you think you are struggling in this class please come and talk to me as often as you like - never think you are being a pest! I cannot recall ever failing a student who early sought this kind of help. However, students who are struggling and delay assistance do fail.

You will be able to access your grades in Canvas. Please make sure that grades entered here are correct. While every effort is made to ensure grades are correct, from time-to-time errors can occur (incorrectly add/subtract, miss points, and even fail to understand what a student wrote).

A time limit of 1 week is imposed on all change of grade requests after the grade has posted. This is sufficient time to identify any errors. After that prior grades will not be reviewed. This is to bring the course grade to completion and to minimize "end of semester" opportunism.

Grade grievance policies are outlined under the UCF Golden Rule.

Make-up Policy and Incompletes

The time and dates for all assignments and the exam are fixed in krypton-coated granite, which is further encased in a hydrogen bomb-proof vault! In other words, an extension on an assignment, or a make-up exam will only be given in the most exceptional circumstances that are beyond the control of a student.

At the top of the list of unacceptable excuses for late-work are those related to computer problems. I will generally not accept "My hard-drive crashed.... I accidentally deleted the file.... My internet connection is down....Etc...." These are the "dog ate my homework" excuses of the "Technology Age" and will not fly! It is your responsibility to secure ample time at a computer, make backups of your work, and generally plan ahead—do whatever it takes!

I do not consider vacations or other trips out of town (other than when the student is away from campus representing at an official university function) to be exceptional circumstances.

Any student missing an assignments, exam or any other work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor no later than the end of the first week of class of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. This policy shall not apply in the event that administering the test or examination at an alternate time would impose an unavoidable hardship on the instructor or the university.

An incomplete standing will only be granted if requested in writing to me (an email or phone call is not acceptable). You must explain why you are requesting an incomplete standing and include, where appropriate, documentation that must be original and verifiable. Such documentation must be on a letterhead, and contain a contact name and telephone number. An incomplete will only be granted if you have a passing grade in the class.

Remember an incomplete grade is only reserved for when you have missed an assignment or exam for a legitimate reason but are otherwise passing the class. Incompletes are not given because you have achieved a low grade.

Disability Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Disclaimer

I reserve the right to change, add or modify any part of the syllabus. Of course, advance notice will be given of any such changes.

Course Schedule

The course is divided up into five parts, with readings assigned for each part. Stay up to date with the readings! You will often find that the material presented in class will be easier to follow and note-taking easier if you have already skimmed the assigned reading prior to class. Moreover, you will likely do better on the exams if you keep up to date (reading everything the night before an exam usually ends in disaster!)

Details of assignments will be provided in Webcourses

Part I: Background & Setting of the South & Southern Politics, *(August 25th - September 8th)*

- Background on the South
- What is the South?
- Where is the South?
- What is a southerner?
- Why study southern politics?
- Why are southerners different? The origins of the South and its people

Required Readings:

- Woodard, *The New Southern Politics*, ch.1; ch.2 (pp 25-34)

We will also watch the movie *In the Heat of the Night,* which is a good way of beginning your immersion into the traditional southern culture!

Part II: The Old Southern Politics: Race, Poverty and the Democratic "Solid South" *(September 10th - September 24th)*

- The Road to secession and war
- The Reconstruction era & its aftermath
- Race & poverty in the Old South
- The emergence of the Democratic "Solid South"
- State-by-state varieties of factional politics in the Old South
- The consequences of the one-party "Solid South"

Required Readings:

- Woodard, *The New Southern Politics*, ch. 2 (pp. 34-46); ch. 4 (pp.131-148); ch. 8 (pp. 327-337); ch.9 (pp. 355-364)

******Thursday, September 24th - First Midterm Exam******
The exam will cover the lecture material and assigned readings for **Parts I and II** of the course.

Part III: The Changing South: The Civil Rights Movements, Economic Development and Two-Party Politics *(September 29th-October 29th)*

- The effects of the New Deal and World War II
- The Dixiecrats - The "Solid South" cracks
- Toward the "Second Reconstruction"
- The origins of the Civil Rights Movement
- The Civil Rights Movement and its effect on southern politics
- The successes and failures of the Civil Rights Movement
- The emergence of southern Republicans

Required Readings:

- Woodard, *The New Southern Politics*, chapter 2 (pp. 44-66), chapter 4 (pp.148-168)
- Earl Black and Merle Black, *The Vital South*, "White Revolt in the Deep South."
- Earl Black and Merle Black, *The Vital South*, "The Republican Breakthrough in the Peripheral South."

******Tuesday, November 3rd - Second Midterm Exam******

The exam will cover the lecture material and assigned readings, for **Part III** of the course as well as the *Eyes on the Prize* Documentary

Part IV: Party Realignment & the Republican South *(November 5th - November 17th)*

- Why did the Republican dominate in presidential elections in the South?
- The consequences of a Republican South in national politics
- How did southern Democrats survive at the state and local level?
- Explaining Republican dominance in state and local elections since the 1990s
- The 2008 and 2012 Presidential Elections - Obama cracks the "Solid South"
- The South and the 2016 Presidential Election

Required Readings:

- Woodard, *The New Southern Politics*, ch. 6; ch.7; ch. 8 (pp. 337-353)

- Earl Black and Merle Black, *The Vital South*, "The Republican Dominance After the Great Society."

******November 12th: No class -- I will be in Philadelphia for the Northeastern Political Science Association annual meeting.******

Part V: A New South? A New Southern Politics? *(November 19th - December 3rd)*

- Race, conservatism and political attitudes in the New South
- Minority politics and the emerging Latino vote in the New South
- Religion and politics in the New South
- Demographic changes and the New South
- Economic development and the urban New South
- Is the South and southern politics still distinctive?

Required Readings:

- Woodard, ch. 4, (pp. 168-184); ch. 5; ch. 9 (pp. 368-372, i.e., only material on the Confederate flag controversy); ch. 10

******Tuesday, December 19th - Final Exam*** (1.00pm-3.50pm)***

The exam will cover the lecture material and assigned readings, for Parts IV and V of the course.