POS 3173

Southern Politics

Fall 2017

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. The class is organized around the unifying theme of partisan transformation from the once Democratic “Solid South” to a region characterized by two-party competition, and increasingly Republican dominance. This 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 the 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 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 in the aftermath of 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!

About Me and How to Contact Me.

I joined UCF in 1999. I received my BA in Political Theory and Institutions from the **University of Liverpool**, my MA in U.S. History and Politics from the **University of Keele** and my Ph.D. in Political Science from the **University of New Orleans**.

My main areas of research and teaching are southern politics (of course!), voting behavior, political parties, and comparative politics.

Outside of my day job I am a huge football (soccer!) fan and an avid supporter of **Liverpool** and, of course, **Orlando City F.C.**!

Office: Political Science department, Phillips Hall 302L

Office hours: Monday, 9.30-11.30am; Wednesday, 9.30-11.30am; Thursday 3.00-4.00pm.

Email: Use email in Webcourses. If you write me Monday through Friday, I should get back to you within 24 hours. If I don't, please feel free to send me a reminder! If you write over the weekend, you may have to wait until Monday for a reply. A note on etiquette: please sign your emails with your name, and please include an appropriate salutation. (Hint: you can't go wrong with "Dear Dr. Knuckey").

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

Course Policies

Attendance

This is fairly straightforward. 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:

- I will usually pass the attendance roll around a few minutes after our class start time. On the very rare occasion you are late to class, please enter the classroom as quietly and with as minimal disruption as possible. Constant tardiness will quickly get my attention;

- 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);

- Students should plan to be on time and stay for the entire period. Leaving class briefly and coming back 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;
- Should an emergency situation come up during class which means you have to leave class early please let me know why you had to leave no later than the subsequent class period or as soon as is feasible. Generally, I'll be reasonable, but if you simply get up and don't return with no explanation, I'll count you absent for the day.

I am not going to come chasing after you if you don't attend class. If you don't attend class, that's too bad, but I won't take it personally and you don't need to tell me why you missed a 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 four or more 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 (excused or unexcused) throughout the semester you will 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

- You can bring food and drink, although it probably should be "southern." Take any trash out with you after class is over;
- Laptops, ipads, tablets, cell phones or any other marvel of modern technology should not be out in plain sight. Take notes in class the old-fashioned way, and you will actually find you take better notes because of this.
- Silence cell phones. If your phone does go off in class the rule is I get to answer it.....

- Please avoid side conversations, falling asleep, or reading irrelevant materials during class (i.e., studying for the exam in the next class!). All of the above are distracting and simply poor manners.

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 above). 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 and in general, or English football (soccer)!

Textbook

The textbook we will use is Michael Perman, *Pursuit of Unity: A Political History of the South*

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. I have also assigned other readings, mostly book chapters, which can be accessed from the Course Schedule below.

Reading & Note Taking

I emphasized the importance of reading the textbook above. The single biggest reason for not performing as well on assignments and exams is not having a strategy for reading assigned material and taking notes on it. If your strategy entails marking up paragraphs with a highlighter you need to rethink it.

Creating your own notes for topics is the key to **active-learning**. Simply reading, and not taking notes, is passive-learning, which actually might be an oxymoron!

To this end here is a suggested **reading strategy that works!** It is called the **SQ5R strategy,** and is useful for reading assignments in <u>any</u> class you take:

- **S**urvey (look at intro, summary, bold print, italicized words, etc.)
- **Q**uestion (devise questions that you think the chapter will answer)
- **R**ead (<u>one paragraph</u> at a time)
- **R**ecite (summarize in your own words)
- **R**ecord or w**R**ite (annotate in margins)
- **R**eview (summarize the information in your words)
- **R**eflect (other views, remaining questions)

You may feel that this is a cumbersome way of reading at first, but like any skill, the more you do the better you will become at it, to the point that it becomes second-nature. Think about it like driving a car for the first time. It is nerve-wracking the very first time you sit behind the wheel, but over time you become more comfortable. Reading and note-taking is just the same.

I think this is an aspect of college education that is not emphasized enough by your professors, where reading is assigned but you are never given any method by which to get the most out of it (maybe the professor just thinks you will figure it out). Throughout the semester, I will be happy to sit down and look over your notes and give you feedback.

<u>Assignments</u>

A number of assignments will be given throughout the semester. These will be submitted either in Webcourses or completed in-class. Assignments submitted in Webcourses will always be due at **<u>5.00pm</u>** on the due date.

<u>Exams</u>

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

Midterm Exams Format

Both exams are non-cumulative and will consist of:

- 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 essay (30 points). Four essay questions will be posted in Webcourses. On the day of the exam I will randomly choose **one** of these essay questions from this list on which you will write.

Final Exam Format

Same format as midterm but there will be two essays to write, rather than one. One essay question will be mandatory and will on the theme of continuity and change in southern politics and society. The second essay question will be randomly chosen on the day of the exam.

Exam Policies

- Midterm and final exam questions will come from the the textbook, other readings and lectures; in other words, just about anything we discuss or read is fair game for testing. The exams are not cumulative, although the essay on the final exam on continuity and change in the South 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;

- You must take each exam in order to receive a passing grade in this class.

Refer to "Exam Guidelines" on "Modules" tab on the left for further exam details as well as the essay questions from which I will choose for each exam (Note: At the start of the semester only the essay questions for the first exam will be displayed).

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 30%
- Two Midterm Exams, 40% (each exam is weighted equally)
- Final Exam 30%

As there are ample grading opportunities in this course there will be no extra credit given (apart from the 3 bonus points for exceptional attendance, see attendance policy above). If you know you need a certain grade in May, you know you needed it January -- 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, 92%+

A-, 90-91.9%

B+, 86-89.9%

B, 82-85.9%

B-, 80-81.9%

C+, 76-79.9%

C, 72-75.9%

C-, 70-71.9%

D+, 66-69.9%

D, 62-65.9%

D-, 60-61.9%

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 and attendance in Webcourses. 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 encased in a hydrogen bomb-proof vault! These dates are also known at least one week ahead of time. In other words, an extension on an assignment, or make-up exam will only be given in the most exceptional circumstances that are beyond the control of a student.

As general rule of thumb an extension is more likely to be granted when requested **prior to** an assignment due date. **Requests for an assignment extension after an assignment deadline will not be accepted.**

At the top of the list of unacceptable excuses for late-work are those related to computer issues, which include but are not limited to:

- My computer is broken....
- My computer was stolen....
- I accidentally deleted the file....
- The internet is broken....
- I forgot to attach the assignment....
- I did the quiz but forgot to submit

The above are all actual excuses I have received. They 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, check you did not submit a blank assignment, check you correctly submitted the right assignment and generally plan ahead—do whatever it takes! Completing an assignment the day before it is due is always a wise move as that provides a cushion for anything that might come up that is unexpected.

From time to time the servers hosting Webcourses at UCF have been known to go down. If this happens UCF will normally post an announcement and if this coincides with the time when an assignment or exam is due, I will make alternative arrangements.

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

Any student missing an assignment, exam or any other work because of representing the university for an official function or observation of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. 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 during the semester. 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.

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 Accessibility 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 provided 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 do much better on the exams if you keep up to date (reading *everything* the night before an exam usually ends in a catastrophe!)

*Details and requirements for all assignments can be found under the relevant links under "Modules." All assignments are due at **5.00pm** on the day due, except for the "Eyes on the Prize" documentary assignments, which will be completed in class.*

(Note: While some assignments are available at the beginning of the semester, others will be made available as we progress through the semester).

Part I: Background on Southern Politics, Society and Culture *(August 22nd- September 5th)*

- 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:

- Perlman, *Pursuit of Unity*, Introduction and chapter 1 (pp. 21-32 on "The Virginia Dynasty")
- John Shelton Reed, **"Southerners as an American Ethnic Group"** *(You will need to read this for the assignment "Defining the South)*

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!

Assignment due dates:

- **Sunday, August 27th:** Identifying Famous Southerners *(Note: this assignment will be used to document student engagement in the course during the first week of class)*
- **Tuesday, August 29th and Tuesday, September 5th**: In-class assignments to be completed as we watch *In the Heat of the Night*
- **Tuesday, August 29th:** Defining the South
- **Wednesday, September 6th** : Assignment on *In the Heat of the Night*

******August 31st: No class -- UCF closing at 1pm for an (American) "football" game******

Part II: The Old Southern Politics: Race and the Democratic "Solid South" *(September 26th - November 2nd)*

- The road to secession and war
- The Reconstruction era & its aftermath
- Racism & 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:

- Perlman, *Pursuit of Unity,* chapters 1 (only from p.32 "The Missouri Crisis"), 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8

Assignment due dates

- **Monday, September 18th**: "Reconstructing" the Reconstruction of the South (due 5pm)

******Thursday, September 21st - First Midterm Exam******

The exam will cover the lecture material and assigned readings for **Parts I and II** of the course. Look at the "Exam Guidelines" links on the "Modules" page for details. Essay questions will be available here too.

Part III: The Transformation of Southern Politics - Civil Rights and Two-Party Competition *(September 26th - November 2nd)*

- The effects of the New Deal and World War II on southern politics
- The Dixiecrats - The "Solid South" cracks
- Postwar economic development of the South

- Toward the "Second Reconstruction"
- The origins of the Civil Rights movement
- The Civil Rights movement and southern politics
- The successes and failures of the Civil Rights Movement
- The emergence of southern Republicans in presidential elections

Required Readings:

- Perlman, *Pursuit of Unity,* chapters 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 (up to p. 319)

We will also watch "Eyes on the Prize," which is probably the single best documentary made on the America's Civil Rights years.

Assignment due dates:

- **Tuesday, October 3rd:** *Eyes on the Prize - Awakenings* (Assignment will be completed in class)
- **Tuesday, October 10th:** *Eyes on the Prize - Fighting Back* (Assignment will be completed in class)
- **Thursday, October 12th:** *Eyes on the Prize – A'int Scared of Your Jails* (Assignment will be completed in class)
- **Thursday, October 19th:** *Eyes on the Prize – No Easy Walk* (Assignment will be completed in class)
- **Friday, October 20th:** Letter From a Birmingham Jail
- **Monday, October 23rd:** The Rise of Republican Voting in Presidential Elections in the South
- **Tuesday, October 24th:** *Eyes on the Prize – Mississippi: Is this America?* (Assignment will be completed in class)
- **Thursday, October 26th**: *Eyes on the Prize – Bridge to Freedom* (Assignment will be completed in class)

******Thursday, November 2nd - Second Midterm Exam******

The exam will cover the lecture material and assigned readings for **Part III** of the course. Look at the "Exam Guidelines" links on the "Modules" page for details. Essay questions will be available here too (I will likely post them after the first exam)

Part IV: Party Realignment - The Republican South *(November 7th - November 23rd)*

- 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?
- Why have the Republicans dominated in state and local elections since the 1990s?
- The 2008 and 2012 Presidential Elections - Obama cracks the "Solid South."
- The South in the 2016 Presidential Election....and beyond. Toward a One-Party Republican South? Can the Democrats recover in the South?

Required Readings:

- Perlman, *Pursuit of Unity,* chapters 14 (from p. 319) and 15
- **Earl Black and Merle Black,*The Rise of Southern Republicans,* "Reagan's Realignment of White Southerners."**

Assignment due dates:

- **Friday: November 10th:** The Reagan Effect and the Realignment of Southern Whites.
- **Monday: November 20th:** Battleground Florida!

******November 9th: No class -- I will be in Philadelphia for the Northeastern Political Science Association annual meeting.******

******November 23rd: Thanksgiving Holiday******

Part V: A New South? A New Southern Politics? *(November 28th - December 5th)*

- The New South's Racial Politics
- Minority politics and the emerging Latino vote 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?

Assignment due dates:

- **Monday, November 27th:** The End of the Voting Rights Act?
- **Friday, December 1st:** From Old South to New South: Racial Legacy and Racial Reconciliation

******Tuesday, December 5th - Final Exam*** (1.00pm-3.50pm)***

The exam will cover the lecture material and assigned readings for **Parts IV and V** of the course. Look at the "Exam Guidelines" links on the "Modules" page for details. Essay questions will be available here too (I will likely post them after the second exam)

Overall course grades will be available in myUCF on Friday, December 15th.