POS 3173

Southern Politics

Fall 2020

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 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 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 (1954-1965) in the South. This leads to the next part of the course which focuses on the rise of southern Republicans and the onset of two-party competition, and increasingly Republican dominance. 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 as our class coincides with the 2020 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**.

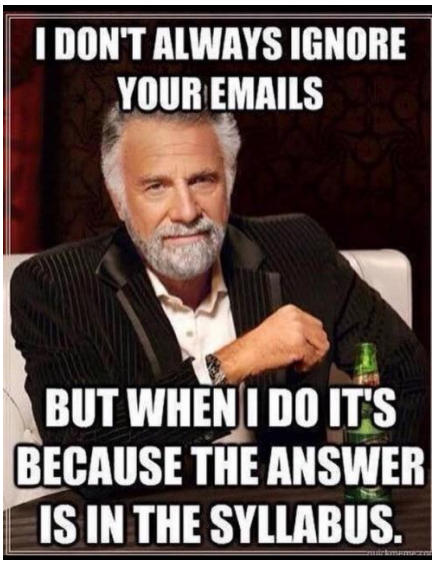
My main areas of research and teaching are southern politics, voting behavior, campaigns and elections, political parties, race and politics, gender and politics and comparative politics.

Outside of 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: Phillips Hall, 302L

Office hours: By appointment via Zoom

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!

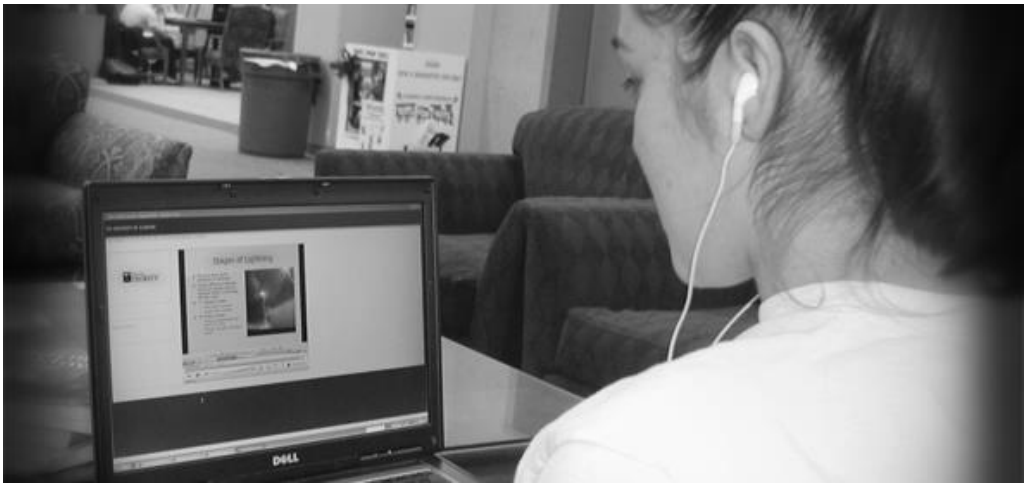


If you send a message after 5.00pm assume it probably will not get a reply until the following day. Do allow adequate time for a reply to a question about an assignment. If you send a question a few hours before an assignment is due, I may not see it in time to provide an adequate answer.

Please don't use the comments box on assignments to message me. I receive no notification of messages sent here. So always use the email in Webcourses if you wish to follow up on any assignment.

A note on etiquette: You are what you email, which means your instructors will often shape their opinion of you according to the quality of the email messages you are sending. To that end, be sure to please keep the tone of your emails professional, sign your emails with your name and include an appropriate salutation (Hint: you can't go wrong with "Dear Dr. Knuckey").

Requirements for a Web-Based Class



This is a completely web-based class, and, consequently, requires a different approach in terms of requirements than a regular class. Most obviously, we will not be meeting as a class where you are listening to lectures two or three times a week. However, you should realize that a web-based class does not mean that you will be doing less work. Indeed, as those of you who have taken web-based classes before will attest, a completely on-line class will require that you take a much more active role in your education as compared to a regular face-to-face class.

Generally I have found that students who do well in a web-based class are self-motivated and have usually received good grades (B or higher) in regular face-to-face classes.

My general rule of thumb for any undergraduate college-level course is that you should devote **2 to 3 hours of study per course credit hour per week**. As this is a three credit hour class you should plan on devoting **6 to 9 hours** per week to this class. This involves reading, taking notes and taking quizzes and other writing assignments.

I know you have other commitments—other classes, jobs and life in general—and that you will not *always* be able to devote this time every week. But managing your time is essential to doing well in any class, especially a web-based class. You will also find that much of the material in this class is about applying the material learned, rather than memorizing or looking things up.

Thus, to do well in the class you need to make an investment in it throughout the semester—not just the night an assignment is due.

Modules

Requirements for each section of our class will be detailed in modules that are accessed in Webcourses. I do not release all the modules at once in order to provide as much feedback as possible on quizzes and assignments. If every module was released at once some students would invariably rush through several in a week, giving little time to provide feedback and hence facilitate understanding of the material. I believe this approach best captures the pace of a regular course.

Assignment due dates: Due dates can be found in the Course Schedule below and in each module.

The deadline submission of work will always be midnight (actually 11.59pm) on a particular day. However, you are permitted a grace period where you can still submit work up to 5pm on the following day. As you automatically have a grace period for all work no further extensions will be granted.

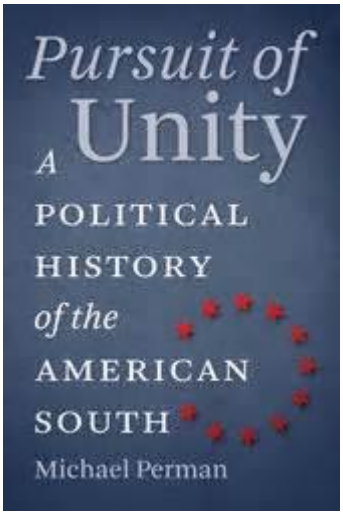
All deadlines are, of course, for Eastern time, so keep that in mind if you are in a different time-zone for part, or all, of the semester!

Please remember that you will know what assignment is due, and what that assignment entails, well in advance of a due date. **The single biggest source of missed points on assignments is starting an assignment too late and not making enough time to complete the assignment.** So pace yourself on all assignments.

Quizzes and written assignments are not timed, so if you plan ahead you can complete work over multiple days, which is far more conducive to learning than opening a quiz up just a couple of hours before it is due and rushing through it. This also allows you to ask me questions if you are not grasping the material.

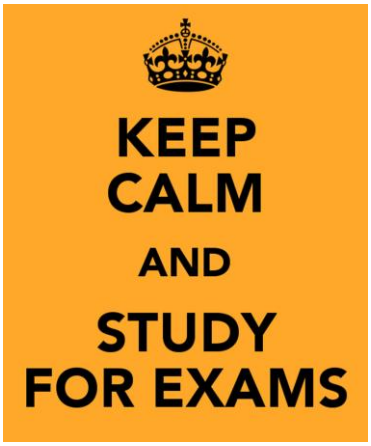
Textbook

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



You will most definitely 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 some other readings, mostly book chapters, which can be accessed from the Course Schedule below.

Exams



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

- First midterm exam **Thursday, October 1st**
- Second midterm exam, **Thursday, November 5th**
- Final exam, **Friday, December 11th**

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). 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. An essay question consists of three parts, so you will be writing the equivalent of three solid paragraphs in answering the essay.

Final Exam Format

Same format as midterm but the essay section will consist of four parts. There will only be a single essay topic, so you'll know for sure what the essay questions are going to be on the final exam!

Exam Policies

- Midterm and final exam questions will come from the textbook, other assigned readings, and the Power Point 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 will integrate material from throughout the course;
- 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).

Student Conduct

All students are expected to adhere to the UCF Golden Rule, which includes conducting oneself in a professional manner both in the classroom and in written and verbal communication with me and to other students. Violations of the Golden Rule -- both academic and non-academic -- can result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct.

Unauthorized Use of Class Materials

There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are actually cheat sites. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. **Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.**

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:

- Quizzes & Written assignments: 35%
- Two Midterm Exams, 35% (each exam is weighted equally)
- Final Exam, 30%

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, 62-69.9%

D- 60-61.9%

F, 59% 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.

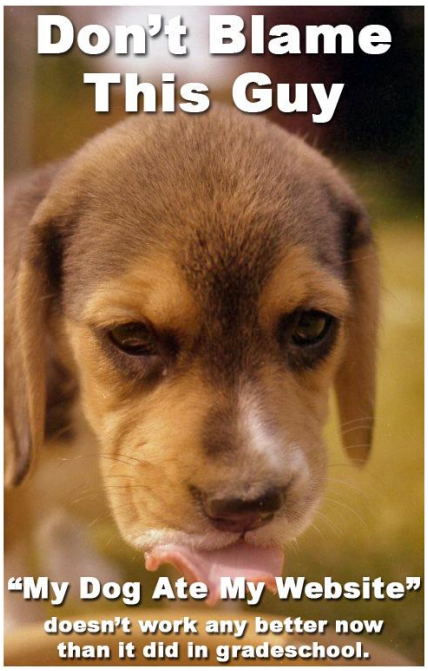
You will be able to access your grades in Webcourses. Please make sure that grades entered here are correct. While every effort is made to ensure grades are correct, from time-to-time errors can occur (incorrectly add/subtract, miss points, and even fail to understand what a student wrote).

A time limit of **1 week** is imposed on all change of grade requests after the grade has posted for a completed piece or work. 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.

When grades fall exactly on the borderline of letter grades (91.9%, 89.9%, 85.9%, 81.9, 79.9, etc, etc), I'll take the overall performance of a student throughout the semester into account when deciding whether to round up.

Grade grievance policies are outlined under the UCF Golden Rule.

Make-up Policy and Incompletes



The time and dates for all assignments and the exams 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.

Note that requests for an assignment extension after an assignment deadline will not be granted, unless a student was unable to make such a request prior to the deadline. However, this will have to involve something truly exceptional.

Here are some unacceptable excuses for late-work, and its by no means an exhaustive list:

- *"My computer is broken...."*
- *"My computer was stolen...."*
- *"I accidentally deleted the file....".*

- *"My computer magically deleted my homework from the hard drive. I do not understand it myself...."*
- *"The internet is broken...."*
- *"I forgot to attach the assignment...."*
- *"I could not find the assignment...."*
- *"I did the quiz but forgot to submit it..."*
- *"It was my birthday so I never got around to the assignment..."*

The above are all **actual excuses** I have received. Many, as you can see, are computer-related, which 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. Of course, this is an on-line class, so as long as you have reliable internet access being out of town does not really present a problem. If you are going to be out of town for more than a week with no internet access during the semester, then you may want to reconsider taking this web-based course.

Any student missing an assignment, 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 (a 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.** An incomplete will only be granted if you have a passing grade in the class.

Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons. 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.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact me at the start of the semester to discuss your circumstances.

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

All due dates are midnight (actually 11.59pm) on the date noted. However, a grace period is allowed so that work submitted by 5pm the following day will still receive full credit.

Module 1: An Introduction to the South and Studying Southern Politics

Quizzes & Assignment for Module 1

- **Quiz:** Identifying Famous Southerners (due 8/27) *(Note: this assignment will be used to document student engagement in the course during the first week of class)*
- **Survey:** How Do You Define the South? (due 8/28)

- **Quiz:** What is the South? Why Study Southern Politics? (9/3)
- **Written assignment:** Defining the South (due 9/6)
- **Movie:** *In the Heat of the Night (**Quiz** based on watching the movie due 9/10)*

Module 2: Politics in the "Old South"

Quizzes & Assignment for Module 2

- **Quiz:** Slavery, Sectionalism and the Road to Secession; The Reconstruction Era in the South (9/16)
- **Quiz:** The "Solid South" (9/20)
- **Written Assignment: "**Reconstructing" the Reconstruction of the South (9/26)

First Exam

The exam will cover the Power Point lectures and assigned readings for **Modules 1 and 2.** Look at the "First Exam Guidelines" link on the "Modules" page for further details. Essay questions will be available here too.

You will have **2 hours** to complete the exam. Submission deadline is **Thursday, October 1st**

Module 3: The Transformation of Southern Politics - Civil Rights and the Emergence of Two-Party Competition

Quizzes & Assignment for Module 3

- **Quiz:** The Effects of the New Deal & World War II on the South; The Emerging Civil Rights Agenda & the 1948 Election (10/8)
- **Quiz**: *Eyes on the Prize - Awakenings* (10/11)
- **Quiz:** Toward a Two-Party South in Presidential Elections; the Rise of White "Massive Resistance" (10/13)
- **Quiz**: *Eyes on the Prize - Fighting Back* (10/15)
- **Quiz:** The 1957 Civil Rights Act; the 1960 Election; JFK & the Politics of Civil Rights (10/18)
- **Quiz**: *Eyes on the Prize - Ain't Scared of Your Jails* (10/20)
- **Quiz**: *Eyes on the Prize - No Easy Walk* (10/22)
- **Quiz:** LBJ & the Politics of Civil Rights; the Civil Rights Act; the 1964 Presidential Election & the Republican "Southern Strategy" (10/25)
- **Quiz**: *Eyes on the Prize - Mississippi: Is this America* (10/27)

- **Written assignment:** The Rise of Republican Voting in Presidential Elections in the South (10/29)
- **Quiz**: *Eyes on the Prize - Bridge to Freedom* (10/31)
- **Quiz:** Voting Rights Act of 1965; the Collapse of the "Solid South" in the 1968 Presidential Election (11/1)

Election Day - November 3rd

Second Exam

The exam will cover the Power Point lectures and assigned readings for **Module 3.** Look at the "Second Exam Guidelines" link on the "Modules" page for further details. Essay questions will be available here too.

You will have **2 hours** to complete the exam. Submission deadline is **Thursday, November 5th**

Module 4 - Party Realignment & the Ascendancy of the Republican Party in the South

Quizzes & Assignment for Module 4

- **Quiz:** Nixon, the Southern Strategy and the GOP Advantage in Presidential Elections (11/11)
- **Quiz:** Reagan's Realignment of Southern Whites; Republican Dominance in Presidential Elections in the South in the 1980s (11/15)

- **Written Assignment:** Ronald Reagan and the Realignment of Southern Whites (11/18)
- **Quiz:** The "Semi-Solid" South - Presidential Elections in the South Since the 1990s (11/22)
- **Quiz:** Elections Below the Presidency in the South: Trickle-down Realignment (11/24)

Module 5: The Past, Present & Future of Southern Politics

Quizzes & Assignment for Module 5

- **Quiz:** Minorities and the Newest Southern Politics (11/29)
- **Written Assignment*:*** Latinos and Southern Politics (12/1)
- **Quiz:** The Past, Present & Future of Southern Politics (12/3)
- **Written Assignment:** The End of the Voting Rights Act? (12/4)

Final Exam

The exam will cover the Power Point lectures and assigned readings for **Modules 4 & 5.** Look at the "Final Exam Guidelines" link on the "Modules" page for further details. The essay question will be available here too.

You will have **2 hours and 50 minutes** to complete the exam. Submission deadline is **Friday, December 11th.**