POS 3173

Southern Politics

Spring 2024

Instructor: Jonathan Knuckey

Course Overview

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 changes with respect to race relations and economic development.** Thus, the South provides a compelling case study of the effects and consequences of these changes on political structures, attitudes and behavior as well as illustrating the need for further progress. Indeed, in many respects studying race in southern politics from an historical perspective can shed light on a discussion of race and racism in contemporary politics.

- **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. This is going to be especially relevant given the upcoming 2024 elections!

Although our focus will primarily be 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.** While Republicans have dominated elections in the South, recent elections suggest that demographic changes may be making parts of the South more favorable territory for the Democrats.

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. 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. Or maybe you might be running for political office somewhere in the South yourself one day!

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

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 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, Howard Phillips Hall 302L

Office hours: Tuesday, 12.00 noon to 3pm; Wednesday, 3.00-4.30pm. I am also happy to meet outside of these times if it conflicts with your schedule. If you want to use Zoom to meet, use the following Zoom link: **https://ucf.zoom.us/j/6720872288**

I really encourage you to use office hours to not only ask anything about the course material, but also any potential research ideas you might have or if you just want to talk about future educational, career plans or even politics in general!

Email: Use email in Webcourses for all course-related questions. If you write me Monday through Friday I should get back to you within 24 hours.

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 or an exam, 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").

Textbook

Seth C. McKee, *The Dynamics of Southern Politics: Causes and Consequences.*

In addition to our textbook there will be chapters assigned from other books. These are noted on the course schedule -- see below where you can access them.

Please keep up to date with assigned readings. Exams will cover material from our assigned

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

- **First midterm exam:** *Monday, February 12th (regular class time)*
- **Second midterm exam:** *Wednesday, March 27th (regular class time)*
- **Final exam:** *Wednesday, April 24th (7.00am-9.50am -- note the early start!)*

Midterm Exams Format

Both midterm 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)

- Three short written answer questions -- each answer being around 300 words or a solid paragraph or two in length (10 points each = 30 points).
- You will have our normal class time of 80 minutes to complete each midterm exam.

Final Exam Format

Non-cumulative section:

- 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).

Comprehensive Essay section:

- Two extended essay questions (50 points each = 100 points). Essay length will be around 500 words per question, so about 1,000 words total.

The essay questions will afford you the opportunity to thoughtfully integrate themes covered throughout the semester. I will provide you with the essay questions to you prior to the exam so you will know how to study and prepare for these questions.

You will have 2 hours & 50 minutes to complete the final exam

Exam Policies

- All exams will be taken in our classroom.
- All exams are closed notes/books.
- Exam questions will come from both assigned readings and lectures; in other words, just about anything we discuss or read is fair game for testing. The second exam will also include questions from the "Eyes on the Prize" documentary series.
- You must take each exam. Failure to take any exam will result in an automatic "F" for the overall grade.

Refer to "Exam Guidelines" on "Modules" tab on the left for further details on each exam. At the start of the semester, only the first exam guideline will initially be shown.

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.

Group Chats

Group chats -- via GroupMe, Whats App, etc. -- are increasingly common and can be used positively for collaboration and connection with your peers. That is a positive thing. However, they can also be used for nefarious purposes such as sharing answers and other forms of cheating.

Recently I've unfortunately had to deal with instances where students are reporting other students for sharing information via the class group chat. **Any students on a group chat where cheating is occurring will all be included in any disciplinary action that results from content shared on the chat.** This includes, but is not limited to

How can this be avoided, you ask? Well it's pretty easy to avoid: Do your own work, don't cut corners and **ask me** if you think you need help.

A Note About Artificial Intelligence (AI)

While the ever-changing (and exciting!) new developments with AI will find their place in our workforces and personal lives, in the realm of education and learning, this kind of technology does not belong. This is because the use of AI robs us all of the opportunity to learn from our experiences and from each other, to play with our creative freedoms, to problem-solve, and to contribute our ideas in authentic ways that will prepare you for a competitive workplace.

In a nutshell, **college is a place for critical thinking and learning.** AI simply cannot do that thinking learning for us. Therefore, any AI-generated or inspired by AI submissions are not permitted and will be treated as academic misconduct.

Attendance

This is fairly straightforward: arrive on time and stay for the 80 minute duration of our class. Some points on attendance:

- I will pass the attendance roll at the beginning of class and this will be the official record of your attendance. On the very rare occasion you are late to class, please enter the classroom as quietly and with as minimal disruption as possible and make sure you sign the class roll at the end. Any student who is more than 15 minutes late to class can still come to class but will not be counted present for the attendance bonus (see below).

- If you must leave class for any reason and are unable to return it is courteous to let me know why -- without going into specific details -- as soon as is feasible. If you leave class and don't return without notifying me then you will not be counted present for the attendance bonus (see below).

- Constant tardiness will quickly get my attention and a written warning. I reserve the right to reduce an overall grade by one letter grade and not apply the exceptional attendance bonus (see below) when tardiness continues to be evident after this warning,

- **Attendance Bonus.** This will be the only extra credit grading opportunity. If you have no more than **two absences** during the semester you will be eligible for **3 points** added to your overall grade.

Start of Semester Meetings with Students

I would like to meet with each of you for a brief chat via Zoom during the first two weeks of the semester. Please make your appointment by going to **Calendar** in **Webcourses**, select our course (POS 3173) and then click on **Find Appointments.**

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.

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.

Your final grade will be weighted as follows:

- First midterm exam: 20%
- Second midterm exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 40%
- Assignments: 20%

Grade boundaries are as follows:

A, 90%+

B+, 86-89.9%

B, 80-85.9%

C+, 76-79.9%

C, 70-75.9%

D, 60-69.9%

F, 59% and below.

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 (89.9%, 85.9%, etc., etc.), I'll take the overall performance of a student throughout the semester into account when deciding whether to round up, i.e., has all work been submitted throughout the semester, and has there been an attempt to answer all questions on a quiz or assignment.

Apart from the attendance bonus, ***there is no extra credit for this class.***

All work in this course will be graded by me, not a Graduate Teaching Assistant. If you have any questions about grades after receiving my feedback then please don't hesitate to touch base with me directly.

Grade grievance policies are outlined under the **UCF Golden Rule.**

Work Due Dates/Late Submission

Assignment due dates/time

There are a number of assignments given throughout the semester. Due dates can be found in the Course Schedule below.

All work will be due at midnight on the due date.

"After Hours" Submission Policy

Please note the following policy for late submission of work:

- Work submitted ***after midnight up to 9.00am the following day*** will be considered "late" but as it falls in the automatic grace period for submission of work will still receive full credit.
- Work submitted ***after 9.00am up to midnight the following da****y* will be considered "late" and receive half credit.
- *No work will be accepted for credit after this.*

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.

Even with an after hours submission policy, some students occasionally still want longer to complete an assignment. Such extensions will not be granted, unless they genuinely are unexpected or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the students. Basically, it is an extremely high bar!

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

- *"My computer is broken...."*
- *"My computer was stolen...."*
- *"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..."*
- *"I was on holiday..."*
- *"It was my birthday so I thought you would give me an extension..."*
- *"I didn't understand the assignment..."*
- *"I forgot what time zone I lived..."*

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's 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 and avoid procrastination—do whatever it takes!

Tip: The wise student will aim to complete an assignment the day before it is due, as that provides a cushion for anything that might come up that is unexpected.

Make-up Exams

Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to take an exam on the scheduled day must provide me with original and verifiable documentation in advance to arrange a make-up exam.

Other extenuating circumstances that may result in you being unable to take an exam -- including but not limited to illness and needing to be out of town because of an emergency involving an *immediate* family member -- will be considered as grounds to take a make-up exam, again necessitating original and verifiable documentation.

An exam cannot be taken prior to the regularly scheduled exam day.

Vacations and other non-emergency reasons for being out of town for missing an exam are **not** eligible reasons for a make-up exam being granted.

Religious Observance

You must notify me in advance if you intend to absent from class or are unable to submit an assignment for a religious observance.

Accessibility Statement

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

Title IX

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options
at **https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.**

Campus Safety

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at **https://centralflorida-prod.modolabs.net/student/safety/index.**
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see **https://ehs.ucf.edu/automated-external-defibrillator-aed-locations**.
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to **https://www.getrave.com/login/ucf** and logging in. On the "My Account" tab, fill out the information, including e-mail address and cell phone number.
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (**https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk**).

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 schedule shows the topic and assigned reading for each day. It's wise to stay up to date on readings so as to avoid reading a lot the night before an exam!

All assignments including due dates are shown in **red font.** All assignment will be due at midnight on the date shown.

Week 1

Monday, January 8th: Course Introduction

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 1

Wednesday, January 10th: Where is the South? What is the South? Why Study Southern Politics? (Part I)

Required reading: **Jeanette Keith. *The South: A Concise History, Volume* 1, "Did Liberty Grow From Slavery?"**

Friday, January 12th: Assignment due - Identifying famous southerners.

Note: this assignment will be used to document student engagement in the course during the first week of class.

Week 2

Monday, January 15th: No class in observance of the *Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday*

Tuesday, January 16th: **Assignment due -** ***In the Heat of the Night.***

Wednesday, **January 17th:** Where is the South? What is the South? Why Study Southern Politics? (Part II)

Required reading: **John Shelton Reed, "Southerners as an American Ethnic Group."**

Week 3

Monday, January 22nd: The Road to the South's Secession & War (Part I)

Required reading: **Jeanette Keith. *The South: A Concise History, Volume* 1, "Defending 'Our Way of Life': Southern Politics to 1860"** (pp. 99-120, but you can really skim the material up to the section on "The Missouri Crisis").

Wednesday, **January 24th** The Road to Secession & War (Part II)

Required reading: **Jeanette Keith. *The South: A Concise History, Volume* 1, "Defending 'Our Way of Life': Southern Politics to 1860."** (pp. 120-140)

Week 4

Monday, January 29th: Southern Politics in the Reconstruction Era (Part I)

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 2 (pp. 7-23)

Wednesday, **January 31st:** Southern Politics in the Reconstruction Era (Part II)

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 2 (pp.23-32)

Week 5

Monday, February 5th: Creating the "Solid South."

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 3 (pp. 33-43)

Wednesday, **February 7th:** The Politics of the One-Party "Solid South."

Required reading: **Richard Scher, "Race, Democrats and Old Style Southern Politics"** (read from pp. 65-76, you can skim the material prior to p. 65).

Week 6

Monday, February 12th: *First Exam*

Refer to the first exam guidelines (on the Modules tab) for details on format and study tips.

The exam is closed book and will be taken in our classroom.

Wednesday, February 14th: The New Deal Era and the Beginning of the Economic Transformation of the South

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 3 (pp. 43-49)

Week 7

Monday, February 19th: World War II and Its Effect on the South's Economy & Race Relations

Required reading: **Jeanette Keith, *The South: A Concise History, Volume 1*, "The South & the Nation: 1930-1946."**

Wednesday, **February 21st:** The Dixiecrats & the First Cracks in the "Solid South."

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 3 (pp. 49-58)

***Thursday, February 22th: Assignment due on Eyes of the Prize* documentary - Episode 1, "Awakenings"**

Week 8

Monday, February 26th: The Civil Rights Movement; The Rise of "Massive Resistance;" The Emergence of Republican Voting in the South

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 4 (pp. 59-64)

***Tuesday, February 27th: Assignment due on Eyes of the Prize* documentary - Episode 2, "Fighting Back."**

Wednesday, **February 28th:** The Politics of Civil Rights in the 1960s; The Two Party South (Part I)

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 4 (pp. 64-70)

***Thursday, February 29nd: Assignment due on Eyes of the Prize* documentary - Episode 3, "Ain't Scared of Your Jails."**

***Sunday, March 3rd: Assignment due on Eyes of the Prize* documentary - Episode 4, "No Easy Walk."**

Week 9

Monday, March 4th: The Politics of Civil Rights in the 1960s; The Two Party South (Part II)

No assigned reading

Wednesday, **March 6th:** *No Class - I will be attending a conference in Charleston, SC. So, work on upcoming Eyes on the Prize assignments.*

***Wednesday, March 6th: Assignment due on Eyes of the Prize* documentary - Episode 5, "Mississippi: Is this America?"**

***Sunday, March 10th: Assignment due on Eyes of the Prize* documentary - Episode 6, "Bridge to Freedom"**

Week 10

Monday, **March 11th:** The 1965 Voting Rights Act; The Collapse of the "Solid South"

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 4 (pp. 70-77)

Wednesday, March 13th: Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement -- Its Effect and Legacy for the South & the Nation

No assigned reading

Spring Break

Week 11

Monday, March 25th: *Review for second exam*

Wednesday, March 27th: *Second Exam*

Refer to the second exam guidelines (on the Modules tab) for details on format and study tips.

The exam is closed book and will be taken in our classroom.

Week 12

Monday, April 1st: Nixon, the "Southern Strategy" & the Republican Advantage in Presidential Elections

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 4 (pp. 77-82)

Wednesday, April 3rd: Reagan & the Realignment of Southern Whites

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 4 (pp. 82-92)

Week 13

Monday, April 8th: The Republican South (Part I)

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 5

Wednesday, April 10th: The Republican South (Part II)

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 9

Week 14

Monday, April 15th: The South's Changing Electorate, Demographic Change and the "Newest" Southern Politics

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 10

Wednesday, April 17th: The Past, Present & Future of Southern Politics (Part I)

Required reading: The Dynamics of Southern Politics, chapter 12

Week 15

Monday, April 22nd: The Past, Present & Future of Southern Politics (Part II)

Required reading: H. Gibbs Knotts, **"Five Southern States That Could Change American Politics."**

Final Exam: Wednesday, April 24th (7.00am-9.50am -- please note the early start time!)

Refer to the final exam guidelines (on the Modules tab) for details on format, topics and study tips. The two comprehensive essay questions will also appear here too.

The exam is closed book and will be taken in our classroom.