

**POSC 245**  
**Political Parties and Interest Groups**  
**Wednesdays 1:30 – 4:30**  
**Denny 212**

**Professor:** Kathleen Marchetti  
**Email:** [marchetk@dickinson.edu](mailto:marchetk@dickinson.edu)  
**Office:** Denny Hall Room 12  
**Office Hours:** 1:30 – 3:30 Tuesday  
1:00 – 2:00 Thursday (and by appointment)  
Doodle Poll for Office Hours: <https://doodle.com/poll/8akbhqpxc4yp56nw>

**Writing Associate:** Alexis Rodis, [rodisa@dickinson.edu](mailto:rodisa@dickinson.edu)  
**Social Science Library Liaison:** Anna Kozlowska, [kozlowsa@dickinson.edu](mailto:kozlowsa@dickinson.edu)

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Party polarization and interest groups have been blamed for nearly everything wrong with American politics. Political actors from media pundits to elected officials to the general public decry the influence of “special interests” in politics, the advantage enjoyed by “establishment” candidates in elections; and the policy gridlock that occurs because of interest group influence and party polarization.

But, are these characterizations all there is to know about groups and parties? Moreover, are they accurate? Many, including myself, would argue that interest groups and political parties are critical to the understanding and functioning of American politics. This semester we will look beyond simplistic characterizations and assertions in our study of the roles, characteristics, and activities of parties and groups in American politics.

We will explore why we have political parties and groups in America and what we expect of them in a democracy. We will examine the sociodemographic groups that comprise the two major parties and whether and how parties remain relevant to individuals. We will discuss whether political parties and interest groups offer a voice for various interests, as well as whether some interests are better represented than others in government and public policy.

We will examine why “third” parties in the U.S. have difficulty gaining enough strength to become viable competitors to the Republican and Democratic parties. We will consider popular claims about increasing partisan polarization, and take a close look at how the actions of the media, parties, and political elites have affected the policy process. Specifically, we will examine the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010) and consider how that ruling and other related Court decisions have shaped the role of organized interests in electoral politics. Relatedly, we will consider the influence of organized interests in politics and how lobbyists interact with government officials.

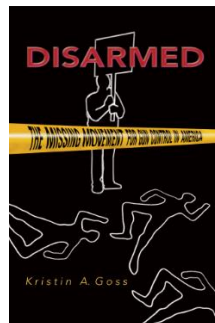
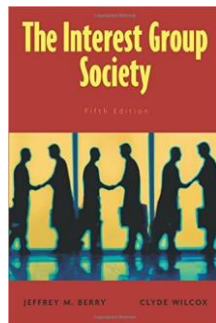
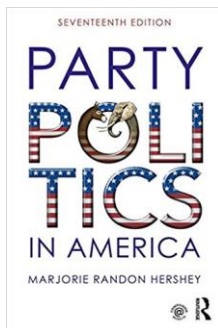
The objective of this course is to think critically about political parties and groups in America in

order to better understand why these organizations exist in their present form, how they affect democratic governance and decision making, and how they shape (and are shaped by) political outcomes and public policy.

## Required Books

There are three required books, available from the Bookstore. All readings not from the books will be available on our course Moodle page.

- 1) Hershey, Marjorie Randon. 2017. *Party Politics in America, 17<sup>th</sup> edition*. Routledge Publishing.
- 2) Berry, Jeffrey and Clyde Wilcox. 2009. *The Interest Group Society, 5<sup>th</sup> edition*. Pearson Publishing.
- 3) Goss, Kristin. 2006. *Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America*. Princeton University Press.



## Learning Goals

This class has three substantive learning goals:

- 1) You will gain substantive knowledge related to the topics listed above.
- 2) You will engage with literature in political science, raising interesting questions and connecting readings to one another in a sophisticated way.
- 3) You will research and understand how parties and interest groups function in today's American political environment.

## Writing in the Discipline (WID) Goals

You will also be able to:

- 1) Identify and demonstrate discipline-specific writing conventions

- The three short paper assignments will provide opportunities to synthesize course materials and develop unique arguments/assertions about questions posed
- 2) Understand that writing is a recursive process and develop an effective writing process
- Peer review sessions and meetings with the W.A. support this learning goal

### Grades and Assignments

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Paper 1	100	February 14, 2018 11:55pm
Midterm Exam	100	March 7, 2018 (in class)
Paper 2	100	April 4, 2018 11:55pm
Paper 3	100	Seniors: May 11, 2018 5:00 pm Non-seniors: May 15, 2018 5:00 pm
Peer Review Sessions	30 (10 pts. Each)	
One meeting with W.A.	7	
Reading Reflections	33 (11 total, 3 pts. each)	
Attendance/Participation/	50	
<b>Total</b>	<b>520</b>	

### Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	≥487	≥ 93.5%
A-	466 – 486	89.5% - 93%
B+	450 – 465	86.5% - 89%
B	429 - 449	82.5-86%
B-	414 – 428	79.5 -82%
C+	398 – 413	76.5 -79%
C	377 – 397	72.5 -76%
C-	362 – 376	69.5-72%
D+	346 – 361	66.5-69%
D	310 – 345	59.5-66%
F	≤ 309	≤ 59%

## Short Papers

- Each paper will be approximately 5 – 6 pages double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Paper prompts will be distributed and discussed in class at least two weeks prior to the due date. If you submit a paper late without permission for a deadline extension, your grade will decrease a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., from an A to an A-; an A- to a B+) for every day that it is late.

## Midterm Exam

- This will be an in-class exam consisting of multiple choice/true false and short essay questions. It will be designed to be completed in ~ 1.5 hours (i.e., it will not go the entire 3 hour class period). More information about the midterm exam will be discussed in class prior to the exam.

## Brief Reading Reflections

- Since this class meets one time per week, each class session will be primarily focused on discussion of the readings for that day. In preparation for class, write a brief reflection on the readings that includes the following: 1) quotes and passages that caught your interest and attention as you read and 2) reasons why you found these quotes meaningful – what they made you think, what new insights you formed, etc. REFLECTIONS ARE DUE ON MOODLE BY 8:00AM THE DAY OF CLASS. These reflections will help guide discussion for that day's class so come to class prepared to discuss your reflection. You should plan to devote around 1-2 paragraphs of writing to each reading reflection. Each reading reflection is worth 3 (1 =marginally complete, 2 =partially complete, 3 = fully complete) points.

## Peer Review and Sessions with Writing Associate

- Our Writing Associate will be Alxis Rodis ([rodisa@dickinson.edu](mailto:rodisa@dickinson.edu)). Alxis will support you as you develop your writing process through the various writing assignments in the course. She will facilitate peer review, offer feedback on your drafts, and attend several classes to assist with writing instruction. Her purpose is to help you develop the good habits of effective writers, which will then serve as a strong foundation for your entire academic experience. You are expected to read and respond to any relevant emails from Alxis over the course of the semester.

Your interactions with Alxis as part of the writing process will comprise part of your final grade for the course. Specifically, in groups of four, you will participate in three peer review sessions outside of class during the semester. After each peer review session, Alxis will complete a report about your progress and let me know if you attended the peer review session, if you brought a complete rough draft, and if you participated in the session you attended. Each peer review session will be worth 10 points and is factored into your grades for the three paper assignments.

In addition to the peer review sessions, you should plan to schedule one 30 minute one-on-one meeting with Alxis to discuss your writing at any point in the semester. You can discuss with Alxis any part of the writing process during these meetings (e.g., brainstorming topics, completing a paper outline, revising a draft, things to improve on in the next writing assignment). You will coordinate directly with Alxis to schedule these meetings and she will keep track of who she met with and when. Each meeting with Alxis is worth 9 points and are included as part of your Attendance/Participation grade.

### **Attendance/Participation**

- Since this class meets only once per week, we must maximize our limited time together! Each class you will engage in a variety of activities ranging from short writing reflections, small and large group discussions, note-taking during lecture, viewing and discussing films, and analysis of the readings for that day. When we discuss course readings, you should be prepared to answer the following questions about each reading:

- 1) What are the author's main research questions?
- 2) What data did the author use to answer these questions?
- 3) What methods did the author use to analyze these data?
- 4) What are their primary findings and "take home" points?

Early in the semester we will discuss how to read and assess social scientific writing. If it becomes apparent that people are not reading closely, I will have to implement the dreaded pop quiz. The good news is that it's easy to avoid these – complete the readings, think about them, and come to class with reactions and questions. It is absolutely fine if you don't understand everything about the readings, particularly the methodology. Discussing and answering questions about the reading is what class is for!

It's very important that you attend every class session over the course of the semester. However, I understand that things come up so you can miss one class meeting without an effect on your grade (this is equivalent to missing a week's worth of class). Any additional absences will negatively affect your grade.

In addition to completing the readings and attending class, you can do the following to maximize your participation grade:

- ✓ Participate openly and regularly in discussions
- ✓ Ask questions when you have them – no matter how big or small!
- ✓ Feel free to consider and question, but never disrespect, others' contributions
- ✓ Try not to interrupt or monopolize the conversation
- ✓ Help create discussion openings by which other students may participate
- ✓ Stay on topic

*NOTE: If you have difficulty speaking in public or for some other reason do not feel comfortable participating in the manner described above please speak with me within the first few days of class.*

## **Technology**

Students comprehend and retain class material to a deeper extent if they take notes by hand and I encourage you to do so in this class. Laptops for note-taking is by permission only. Cell phones can be very distracting to your peers and to the professor, so please refrain from using them in class. If you need to send a text or make a call under special circumstances, please step outside the room.

## **Office hours and Email**

Office hours are a great chance to ask questions or raise concerns you have about lectures, assignments, readings, or political science in general. If you can't make office hours, we can discuss setting up an appointment for another time during the week. Please sign up for office hours via the Doodle poll: <https://doodle.com/poll/8akbhqpxc4yp56nw>

If you need to contact me outside of class, the best way to reach me is via email ([marchetk@dickinson.edu](mailto:marchetk@dickinson.edu)). You may email me with questions or concerns, and I will do my best to respond to you within 24 hours if your email is received Monday-Friday. Emails received over the weekend may take up to 48 hours for a response. I will conduct course-related business via email, so please be sure to regularly check your official Dickinson College email account. Note that I will not summarize lectures, discussions, readings, or missed classes via email – it is best to come speak with me during office hours about any class content.

## COURSE SCHEDULE<sup>1</sup>

### Week 1: January 24

**Course Introduction; Why parties? Why interest groups? For what and whose purposes do these organizations exist in the American political system? What roles, if any, *should* parties and groups serve in a representative democracy?**

1. James Madison, *Federalist* No. 10:  
<https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10>

### Week 2: January 31

**\*Paper 1 Assignment discussed in class. W.A. will schedule peer review sessions.**

**Why parties? Why interest groups? (Contd.)**

1. Hershey: Introduction to Part I (pgs. 1-3) and Chapter 1 “What are Political Parties?”
2. Berry and Wilcox: Chapter 1 “Madison’s Dilemma” and Chapter 4 “The Party Connection”

### Week 3: February 7

**\*Peer review sessions for Paper 1 out of class**

**Reading and Conducting Political Science Research-- How do you measure and analyze concepts? How do you read regression results? How do you analyze a journal article?**

1. **MOODLE-** Carlson, James M. and Mark S. Hyde. 2003. Chapter 5 “Reviewing Previous Research” In *Doing Empirical Political Research*, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. Pp. 96-123.
2. **MOODLE-** Carlson, James M. and Mark S. Hyde. 2003. Chapter 6 “Assessing Relationships: Association or Causality?” In *Doing Empirical Political Research*, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. Pp. 125-139
3. Read Abstract, Section 1, Section 2, Section 4: “p-values and significance tests” portion only, Section 10 in EGAP: Experiments in Governance and Politics. 2015. “10 Things to Know About Reading a Regression Table.” <http://egap.org/resources/guides/10-things-to-know-about-reading-a-regression-table/>

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<sup>1</sup> Readings and schedule subject to change

## **Week 4: February 14**

### **\*Paper 1 Due**

**How strong are the links between individual citizens and political parties? Who are the so-called Independents and how independent are they?**

1. Hershey Chapter 6: "Party Identification"
2. Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist, & Eric Schickler. 2002. "Chapter 1: Introduction." In *Partisan Hearts & Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Pp. 1-23.:  
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/dickinson/reader.action?docID=10170806&ppg=14>
3. **MOODLE**: Petrocik, John Richard. 2009. "Measuring Party Support: Leaners are not Independents." *Electoral Studies* Vol. 28, 4: 562-572.
4. "Democratic, Republican Identification Near Historical Lows"  
[http://www.gallup.com/poll/188096/democratic-republican-identification-near-historical-lows.aspx?g\\_source=independent&g\\_medium=search&g\\_campaign=tiles](http://www.gallup.com/poll/188096/democratic-republican-identification-near-historical-lows.aspx?g_source=independent&g_medium=search&g_campaign=tiles)

## **Week 5: February 21**

**Are there differences between the socioeconomic and racial groups that lend support to the two major parties? How have the demographic bases of the parties changed over time?**

1. Hershey Chapter 7 "Party Coalitions and Party Change" (pp. 139-152).
2. **MOODLE**- Frymer, Paul. [1999] 2010. *Uneasy Alliances: Race and Party Competition in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Chapters 1 and 2.
3. "A Deep Dive Into Party Affiliation" <http://www.people-press.org/2015/04/07/a-deep-dive-into-party-affiliation/>

## **Week 6: February 28**

**Why has the U.S. long been a two-party rather than a multi-party system? Why hasn't public dissatisfaction with the Democrats and Republicans resulted in a new, alternative political party?**

1. Hershey Chapter 2: "The American Two-Party System"
2. Rapoport, Ronald B. 2010. "Winning Isn't Everything: Third Parties and the American



Two-Party System.” In *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups*, eds. L. Sandy Maisel and Jeffrey M. Berry. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 222-242.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/dickinson/reader.action?docID=10530649&ppg=241>

3. “Americans' Desire for Third Party Persists This Election Year”

[http://www.gallup.com/poll/195920/americans-desire-third-party-persists-election-year.aspx?g\\_source=party&g\\_medium=search&g\\_campaign=tiles](http://www.gallup.com/poll/195920/americans-desire-third-party-persists-election-year.aspx?g_source=party&g_medium=search&g_campaign=tiles)

### **Week 7: March 7**

### **Midterm Exam in Class**

### **Week 8: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

### **Week 9: March 21**

\*Paper 2 Assignment discussed in class. W.A. will schedule peer review sessions

**How effective are political parties in articulating and offering a voice for various interests? Are some interests privileged over others in the major parties?**

In class: “Democrats and the new politics of abortion”: <http://www.pbs.org/shows/606/>

1. **MOODLE:** Swers, Michelle L. 2002. “Transforming the Agenda: Analyzing Gender Differences in Women’s Issue Bill Sponsorship.” In *Women Transforming Congress*, ed. Cindy Simon Rosenthal. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 260-283.
2. **MOODLE:** Sanbonmatsu, Kira and Kathleen Dolan. “Do Gender Stereotypes Transcend Party?” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (Sep., 2009), pp. 485-494
3. “In Election’s Wake, Partisans Assess the State of Their Parties” <http://www.people-press.org/2016/12/20/in-elections-wake-partisans-assess-the-state-of-their-parties/>

### **Week 10: March 28**

\*Hold Paper 2 Peer Review Sessions

**What is lobbying? How do organizational advocates work to protect or advance their policy goals? Under what conditions are advocates likely to be successful?**

1. Berry and Wilcox, Chapter 6 “Lobbyists”
2. Edsall, Thomas B. 2013. “The Unlobbyists.” *New York Times*. 31 December. 12 January, 2014. <http://nyti.ms/1amAtnt>

3. **MOODLE-** Hojnacki, Marie and David C. Kimball. 1998. "Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby in Congress." *American Political Science Review*. 92:775-90.
4. **MOODLE-** Leech, Beth L., Frank R. Baumgartner, Timothy M. La Pira, and Nicholas A. Semanko. 2005. "Drawing Lobbyists to Washington: Government Activity and the Demand for Advocacy." *Political Research Quarterly* 58(1): 19-30.

### **Week 11: April 4**

**\*Paper 2 Due\***

**Interest Group Influence - What are organized interests trying to accomplish when they "lobby"? What types of activities will they engage in to protect and defend their interests? Do organizations' goals for advocacy vary?**

1. **MOODLE-** Baumgartner, Frank R., Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 10 and 11.
2. **MOODLE-** Yackee, Jason Webb and Susan Webb Yackee. 2006. "A Bias Towards Business? Assessing Interest Group Influence on the U.S. Bureaucracy." *Journal of Politics*. 68:128-139.
3. **MOODLE** - [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/06/10/business-doesnt-always-get-its-way/?utm\\_term=.a8924d82c6e5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/06/10/business-doesnt-always-get-its-way/?utm_term=.a8924d82c6e5)

### **Week 12: April 11**

Guest Speaker – Readings TBD

### **Week 13: April 18**

**\*Paper 3 Assignment discussed in class. W.A. will schedule peer review sessions over next two weeks.**

**Despite a history of public opinion favoring gun control, the United States has not enacted significant gun control legislation at the national level. What explains the incongruence between public opinion and policy in this case? Relatedly, why is there little to no sustained, wide spread activism opposing the National Rifle Association?**

Kristin Goss. 2006. *Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America*

1. Chapter 1: The Gun Control (Participation) Paradox (p. 1 – 30)
2. Chapter 4: Personalizing Benefits: Issue Frames and Political Participation (p. 105 – 144)
3. Chapter 5: Changing the Calculation: Policy Incrementalism and Political participation (p. 145 – 175)
4. Chapter 6 (skim): Mobilizing around Modest Measures: Three Cases (p. 176 – 190)
5. Chapter 7: Conclusion: Politics, Participation, and Public Goods (p. 190 – 200)

### **Week 14: April 25**

**\*Hold Paper 3 Peer Review Sessions**

**Why are some interests better represented than others? In what ways do differences in mobilization shape the composition of the interest group community? Whose interests and what types of interests are represented?**

1. Berry and Wilcox: Chapter 3 “Mobilization and Organization”
2. **MOODLE** - Schlozman, Kay L. 2010. “Who Sings in the Heavenly Chorus? The Shape of the Organized Interest System.” In *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups*, eds. L. Sandy Maisel and Jeffrey M. Berry. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 425-450.
3. Lipton, Eric and Brooke Williams. 2016. “How Think Tanks Amplify Corporate America’s Influence.” *The New York Times*. 7 August. 21 August, 2016. <http://nyti.ms/2bbV4U1>.
4. **MOODLE** - Lowery, David, Frank Baumgartner, Joost Berkhout, Jeffrey Berry, Darren Halpin, Marie Hojnacki, Heike Kluver, Beate Kohler-Koch, Jeremy Richardson, Kay Lehman Schlozman. 2015. “Images of an Unbiased Interest System.” *Journal of European Public Policy* Vol. 22, No. 8, 1212 –1231.

### **Week 15: May 2**

**\*Hold Paper 3 Peer Review Sessions**

**How have the players and their activities changed since the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Citizens United*?**

1. Berry and Wilcox, Chapter 5 “Interest Groups in Campaigns”

2. Hershey. 2015. Chapter 12. “Financing the Campaigns”
3. **MOODLE-** Werner, Timothy. 2010. “The Sound, the Fury, and the Nonevent: Business Power and Market Reactions to the Citizens United Decision.” *American Politics Research*, 39: 118.
4. **MOODLE-** La Raja, Raymond and Brian Schaffner. 2014. “The effects of campaign finance spending bans on electoral outcomes: Evidence from the states about the potential impact of *Citizens United v. FEC*.” *Electoral Studies*, 33: 102–114

\*Paper 3 Due Dates

Seniors: Due May 11, 2018, 5:00pm

Non-seniors: Due May 15, 2018, 5:00pm

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### **Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an equal opportunity to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would impact your educational experience in this class, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to schedule a meeting with Director Marni Jones. She will confidentially discuss your needs, review your documentation, and determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to [www.dickinson.edu/ODS](http://www.dickinson.edu/ODS), email [DisabilityServices@dickinson.edu](mailto:DisabilityServices@dickinson.edu), call (717) 245-1734, or go to ODS in 106 Dana Hall.

If you’ve already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can meet to review your Accommodation Letter and complete your “Blue Form” Implementation Plan. If you will need test proctoring from ODS, remember that you will need to provide them with at least one week's notice.

### **Academic Integrity**

Note that the College’s policy on academic integrity governs this course. Please review this policy via the following links: [Community Standards](#), [Academic Misconduct](#) and [Social Misconduct](#). Faculty are required by Dickinson College policy to report any academic misconduct including evidence of plagiarism, even if accidental. Please consult with the writing center if you have any questions about proper citation formats.

### **Classroom Recording**

This class, including lectures, classroom discussions and laboratory sessions, may be audio recorded as an accommodation granted by the Office of Disability Services (ODS). If this is the

case, the course instructor will inform all members of the class. The course instructor may, for pedagogical and/or assessment purposes, require that you be audio or video recorded during specific course activities. If such activities are a part of this course, this syllabus will indicate the purposes for recording, when recording will occur, how recordings will be used and how long they will be retained. In addition, the instructor will clearly announce to all participants when the recording is starting and when it ends. Audio or video recording of any lecture, classroom discussion, or laboratory session in this course other than for the above purposes is strictly prohibited and may be a violation of Pennsylvania's Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance law (18 Pa. C.S. Section 5701 et seq).

## **RESOURCES**

The Writing Center: Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson's trained writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor's preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, edit your writing- among other things. You can walk in or call and make an appointment at 717-245-1620. For more information about hours and procedures visit the web: <http://www.dickinson.edu/resources/writing-program/content/Writing-Center/>

The Multilingual Writing Center supports the mission of the foreign language departments to develop students' critical thinking skills and fluency in writing. The MWC assists writers of all levels and abilities who are working on essays written in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, or Spanish. Trained tutors and Overseas Assistants will work one-on-one with writers on a variety of concerns, including developing ideas; understanding genres; organizing material; crafting sentences; analyzing and correcting patterns of error; and building vocabulary.

The Multilingual Writing Center is located on the lower level of Waidner-Spahr Library. Hours of operation are: Sunday 2:30pm - 10:30pm and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 6:30pm - 10:30pm. MWC is closed on Friday and Saturday. It is best to call ahead for an appointment, during the hours of operation - 245-1767.