

**POLS 101 (Section 1): American Politics and Public Policy**  
**Occidental College**  
**Updated August 27, 2025**

Fall Semester, 2025  
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9:35-10:30 AM  
Room: Johnson 104

**Instructor:** Dr. Isaac Hale (he/him)  
**Email:** [halei@oxy.edu](mailto:halei@oxy.edu)  
**Office Hours:** Monday: 8:00-9:00 AM  
Wednesday & Friday: 12:45-1:45 PM  
**Office:** Johnson Hall 308

## **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the study of public policy, government, and politics in the United States. Throughout the semester, we will explore the founding of American government, the structures of our political system, the institutions that comprise government in the United States, contemporary public policy issues, and the political behavior of American citizens, interest groups, and political parties.

This introduction course cannot cover every facet of the entire subfield of American Politics – that is simply too much to ask in a single semester. If this class piques your interest, you are highly encouraged to seek out additional upper division American Politics courses which will provide more detailed explorations of specific topics in the sub-field. Instead, this class will attempt to provide a broad overview of the main concepts and research areas that dominate American Politics.

This class seeks to address a core question: does the American political system embody the ideals of a representative democracy? Our exploration of this inquiry will lead us to investigate how **citizen behavior** and **political institutions** perform in the context of American government. We will begin the course by observing how James Madison's "republic" provides a theoretical underpinning for democratic representation in the American political system. Next, we will focus on how individual citizens form political attitudes and make political choices. Emphasis will be placed on how these actual processes do or do not comport with the Madisonian framework. Finally, we will examine American political institutions, including political parties, electoral systems, the presidency, Congress, and the judiciary. We will consider how each of these institutions does or does not fit into Madison's ideal democratic framework and assess the health of each institution in the context of our modern democracy.

Participation will be a large portion of your grade, and you cannot expect to succeed without reading all the assigned material and coming to class. With that being said, this is an introductory course, and there is no expectation that you have taken any previous political science courses. Do not be shy to speak up, even if you are not certain about something. There is no penalty for engaging in debate or questioning what I am telling you – in fact, both are heavily encouraged!

One final note – this course is meant to be fun! While the material in this class will take a broad perspective on American politics, our discussions should be extremely relevant to current political events. If there is something happening in the news that is relevant to our class, I will be sure to allocate time to discuss it.

Major legislation, elections, scandals, news stories, and policy debates are all fair game! Whether you're a political junkie or new to the subject, this course will equip you to critically analyze U.S. politics.

## Course Objectives

The student learning outcomes for this course are as follows:

- Gain a nuanced understanding of the Madisonian design of national American institutions and assess whether modern institutions comport with this ideal
- Engage with advanced models of policymaking
- Acquire tools to assess the quality of representation in the United States
- Explore the origins and evolution of the two-party system
- Interrogate the quality of American democracy, both historically and in the present day
- Learn about potential reforms to American political institutions, and how such reforms might affect political outcomes
- Apply knowledge from the class to contemporary political events, including the second Trump administration
- Complete quizzes and a final exam that demonstrate a mastery of the topics covered in this course

## Required Texts

There is one required text for this course. The first edition is out of date (American politics have changed dramatically since 1989!), so please make sure you get the second edition.

- Walter J. Stone and James A. McCann. 2021. *Republic at Risk: An Introduction to American Politics*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

You may access all other readings through Canvas portal for this class or via hyperlinks in the syllabus.

## Core Program Requirements

POLS 101 fulfills a U.S. Diversity (CPUD) core program requirement.

## Class Expectations

### ***Credit Hour Policy***

POLS 101 is a 4-unit course. On average, you should expect to spend at least twelve (12) hours a week (including in-class time) on this course.

### ***Lecture Slides***

Slides will be used in class on most days. Slides will be posted to Canvas following the class session.

### ***Online Access***

All readings and documents for this course (except the textbook) can be accessed through the Canvas website or via hyperlinks in the syllabus schedule. Messages will be sent by me via Canvas, so make sure you have email notifications for Canvas messages activated.

### ***Email***

I welcome questions and comments by email. When you email me, you should compose your email as you would any piece of professional correspondence. I typically respond within 24 hours on weekdays.

### ***Laptops and Other Electronics***

Generally speaking, laptops are not allowed in class. [Numerous studies confirm that](#) students who take notes by hand retain more information over time and that laptop bans improve student engagement in smaller classes. It is also far less distracting to others when there is not constant typing and visual distraction going on during a lecture/discussion. As such, laptops, phones, and other electronic devices are not allowed in class.

If you have a documented learning disability that is helped by typing your notes, contact me and I will be happy to consider an exception. Furthermore, if you have a very compelling reason why you strongly prefer to take notes during lecture with a laptop, you may write me an email letting me know, and we can discuss the matter individually. Any laptops approved for use in-class must not be used for web surfing during class.

You may bring an e-reader, tablet, or another “lie-flat” device to access readings in class. You may not use it for tasks such as surfing the web or email. You are encouraged to bring printouts or e-reader copies of the readings to class.

### ***Desk Name Tag (yes, this is required)***

To facilitate discussion, I ask that you place a name tag on the desk in front of you in class each day. Although attendance will not be taken, showing up to class with your desk name tag will greatly affect your participation grade. I will bring nametag supplies on the first day of class.

## **Grading**

Grading for this course will be calculated as follows:

Quizzes (best 9 out of 11)	63%
Final Exam	27%
<u>Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

The final letter grade will be assigned according to the standard table:

93-100: A	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+
90-92: A-	83-86: B	73-76: C	60-66: D
	80-82: B-	70-72: C-	00-59: F

If you are 0.5 points or less from the next letter grade at the end of the course, the grade submitted to the registrar will be rounded up to the next letter grade. You will not be able to see this rounding on Canvas.

All graded items listed above are detailed in the sections that follow.

## **Quizzes**

Ten short answer/multiple choice quizzes will be administered over the course of the semester. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped. Quizzes will take place at the beginning of class on Mondays.

**There will be a quiz every week EXCEPT:**

- Week 1, the first week of class
- Week 2, Labor Day
- Week 8, fall break
- Week 15, the last week of class

**Everything is fair game!** Quizzes may cover two kinds of information:

- 1) Material from the assigned readings, even if we do not discuss it in class.
- 2) Material discussed in class, even if it is not covered in the readings.

Since you may miss or drop two quizzes, no make-up quizzes will be offered. For the same reason there is no need to inform me if you will miss a quiz. All quizzes will be graded out of 7 points. Each quiz (not including the two dropped quizzes) will be worth 7% of your final grade.

## **Final Exam**

The final exam will consist of multiple choice, short identifications, and essays. The exam will assess three things: (1) your knowledge about the specific topics we have covered; (2) your ability to think critically about the concepts and themes explored in the class; and (3) your ability to apply these concepts to modern and historical examples in American politics. The exam will cover both the readings and information presented during lectures.

The final exam will cover the entire class and will be given during exam week. A study guide will be provided in advance of the exam. You must bring a blank blue book to the final exam.

## **Participation**

Your participation grade will be based on the overall effort you put into the class, including the effort you put into your assignments, your attendance in class (and having a desk tag!), and your participation in discussions. Come to class, participate in class discussions, earn a good participation grade, and get more out of the class. It's a win-win. You are also encouraged to bring up news stories, relevant examples, and "dank" politics memes.

## **Extra Credit Meme**

You may earn extra credit by creating and submitting a meme related to course content. The extra credit is worth up to half a point on your final grade (e.g., raising an 89.5% final grade to a 90%). In order to receive full credit, the meme must be used correctly (don't trust AI)! I suggest using <https://knowyourmeme.com> to make sure you are using your meme correctly. You can create memes using meme generators such as <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>. Your meme will be shared in class, so be creative (and keep it appropriate)!

- The meme is due Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 PM

## **Grade Appeals**

If you are not satisfied with the grade you receive on an assignment, please take the following steps:

- 1) Review any comments/feedback I have provided. Check your Canvas submission.

- 2) If you still have questions, come to my office hours, or contact me by email.
- 3) If you still believe the grade you received is in error, submit a one-paragraph written request for a regrade by email. If the request is approved, your work will receive a completely new evaluation by me. Your score may increase, decrease, or stay the same.

## Disabilities

Occidental College (Oxy) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and other applicable state and federal law prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

- All accommodation requests including academic, housing (ESA & Service Animal) and temporary accommodations are managed by the Disability Services Office. It is a student's responsibility to request accommodations via the [Disability Services](#) website. For information about additional accommodations and support services, students can email [accessibility@oxy.edu](mailto:accessibility@oxy.edu).
- Oxy's Psychological Testing Program: We offer low cost psychological testing for students who qualify. Any student who thinks they may have a learning, or psychological disability may contact Disability Services at [accessibility@oxy.edu](mailto:accessibility@oxy.edu) to learn more about psychological testing.
- Academic Success Coaching: Disability Services offers Academic Success Coaching for all students who struggle with organization, time management, etc. Please contact [accessibility@oxy.edu](mailto:accessibility@oxy.edu) for more information.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic Integrity is a shared community value. It is built around trust and respect between members of the Occidental Community and embodies a commitment to honesty and integrity in every aspect of one's academic life.

All members of the Occidental community are committed to uphold the highest degree of academic integrity. Unless stipulated otherwise, the academic work done for all assignments is expected to be the student's own; students are expected to give proper credit to the ideas and work of others.

Generally speaking, you must cite the person at the end of the sentence in which you use another person's idea. When you use a specific phrase, you must put that phrase in quotation marks and cite the original author at the end of the sentence in which you use the phrase. If you wish to submit a piece of writing that you have used in another class, you must receive my permission before doing so.

Good writing is good thinking. Figuring out which words best express your ideas is central to the writing process. As such, I do not allow AI to be used in your writing for this class. This includes (but is not limited) to translation sites, ChatGPT, Deepseek, Gemini, Apple Rewrite, and/or any platform that "generates" language and/or ideas. Any generative AI use for writing assignments in this class is a violation of the College's Academic Integrity Policy. Instead of AI tools, utilize Oxy's writing support services for help with drafts and revisions.

Signing the Academic Integrity Commitment at the beginning of every semester represents a student's affirmation to uphold the shared values of honesty and integrity. When signing the Integrity Commitment

associated with work in a course, students are affirming that they have not cheated, plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified information; nor assisted others in these actions.

Refer to [Student Handbook](#) for the framing of the commitment, definitions of Academic Ethics, and Process for alleged violations of the commitment.

## Support Services

A number of services are available here at Occidental College to make sure that you excel in your academically and socially. There are a number of opportunities for **academic support**. Please visit the following website at <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/student-success> to see the variety of services offered, including writing support, tutoring, research assistance, language tutoring, and academic coaching. The Emmons Wellness Center provides **medical services and counseling**. Visit their website for information on specific services provided: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/resources-support/emmons-wellness-center>

## Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience

Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes that conflict with the identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/resources-support/orsl/academic-accommodations>

## Sexual Harassment and Assault Resources

In the event that you write or speak about having experienced discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected characteristic or sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of sexual and/or gender-based harassment), as a designated Responsible Employee, I must inform the Civil Rights & Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about resources and support services at Oxy, as well as reporting options both on and off-campus. You have no obligation to respond to the Civil Rights & Title IX Office or to meet with them to discuss support services and reporting options.

If you do not want the Civil Rights & Title IX Office contacted, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with:

- Oxy's Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE ([survivoradvocate@oxy.edu](mailto:survivoradvocate@oxy.edu))
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life ([myoung@oxy.edu](mailto:myoung@oxy.edu))
- Oxy 24/7 Confidential Hotline (323-341-4141)

The College's civil rights policies, along with additional resources, can be found at: <https://www.oxy.edu/civil-rights-title-ix>. If you would like to contact the Civil Rights & Title IX Office directly, you may email Civil Rights & Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at [afulcher@oxy.edu](mailto:afulcher@oxy.edu) or call 323-259-1338.

## Weekly Topics & Readings

The list below indicates reading assignments and class topics. All readings are in the textbook, available on Canvas, or hyperlinked below. You should do each day's readings before that day's class. I will generally keep us on schedule but note that discussions may bleed over from one class to the next.

Date	Topic	Readings Due
Week 1		
Wed, Aug 27	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the syllabus</li> <li>Textbook, Introduction: "Self-Interest as the Problem and Solution"</li> </ul>
Fri, Aug 29	Laying the Groundwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook, Chapter 1: "Some Enduring Questions and Relevant Concepts"</li> <li><a href="#">The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union</a>. 1777.</li> <li>Paul Musgrave. 2021. "<a href="#">Political Scientists Turned a Blind Eye to America's Democratic Failures</a>." <i>Foreign Policy</i>.</li> </ul>
Week 2		
Mon, Sep 1	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labor Day</li> </ul>
Wed, Sep 3	The Problem of Human Nature: Self-Interest, Factions, & Collective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James Madison. 1787. "Federalist 10." In textbook appendix.</li> <li>James Madison. 1788. "Federalist 51." In textbook appendix.</li> <li>Textbook, Chapter 2: "Big Answers, Bigger Questions: Madison's Theory of the Republic"</li> </ul>
Fri, Sep 4	Madison's Theory: Self-interest and Ambition as the Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Steven Taylor, Matthew Shugart, Arend Lijphart, and Bernard Grofman. 2014. "Political Engineering and the US Constitution." In <i>A Different Democracy</i>. Yale University Press</li> </ul>
Week 3		
Mon, Sep 8	The Structure of Congressional Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UK Parliament. 2012. "<a href="#">US Elections – How do they work?</a>" <i>YouTube</i>.</li> <li>CGP Grey. 2011. "<a href="#">Gerrymandering Explained</a>." <i>YouTube</i>.</li> <li>Harry Enten. 2018. "<a href="#">Ending Gerrymandering Won't Fix What Ails America</a>." In <i>FiveThirtyEight: The Gerrymandering Project</i>.</li> </ul>
Wed, Sep 10	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professor Hale will be presenting at the 2025 meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA) in Vancouver.</li> </ul>
Fri, Sep 12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note that there is extra reading for Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>



Week 4		
Mon, Sep 15	Biased Representation in Congress: Whose Voice Gets Heard?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laura Bronner &amp; Nathaniel Rakich. 2021. "<a href="#">Advantage, GOP.</a>" <i>FiveThirtyEight</i></li> <li>• Adam Liptak. 2013. "<a href="#">Smaller States Find Outsize Clout Growing in Senate.</a>" <i>The New York Times</i>.</li> <li>• Podcast, <i>Interesting Times with Ross Douthat</i>. Episode: "<a href="#">Abolish the Senate. End the Electoral College. Pack the Court.</a>"</li> </ul>
Wed, Sep 17	Citizen Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbook, Chapter 3: "Citizen Participation in Politics: An Interest in Self-Interest?"</li> </ul>
Fri, Sep 19	Citizen Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbook, Chapter 5: "Interest Group &amp; Pluralist Theory"</li> </ul>
Week 5		
Mon, Sep 22	Biased Pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justin Elliott &amp; Paul Kiel. 2019. "<a href="#">Inside TurboTax's 20-Year Fight to Stop Americans From Filing Their Taxes for Free.</a>" <i>ProPublica</i></li> <li>• CANVAS: E.E. Schattschneider. 1960. "The Scope &amp; Bias of the Pressure System." In <i>The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America</i>. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart &amp; Winston</li> </ul>
Wed, Sep 24	Biased Pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Anzia. 2019. "<a href="#">Most research finds little evidence that interest groups influence US politics, but that's because it's focused on the federal government.</a>" <i>LSE USAPP</i> blog.</li> <li>• CANVAS: Martin Gilens &amp; Benjamin Page. 2014. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 12(3): 564-581.</li> </ul>
Fri, Sep 26	Public Opinion, Vote Choice, and Cognitive Shortcuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbook, Chapter 4: "Who's in Charge Here? Voting Choice in Elections"</li> </ul>
Week 6		
Mon, Sep 29	Public Opinion, Vote Choice, and Cognitive Shortcuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CANVAS: Michael Schudson. 2000. "America's Ignorant Voters." <i>The Wilson Quarterly</i> 36(3): 16-22.</li> </ul>
Wed, Oct 1	Public Opinion, Vote Choice, and Cognitive Shortcuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CANVAS: Christopher Achen &amp; Larry Bartels. 2016. "Democracy for realists: Holding up a mirror to the electorate." <i>Juncture</i>. 22(4), 269-275.</li> </ul>
Fri Oct 3	Representation in the "Textbook" Congress: the Electoral Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CANVAS: Mayhew, David. 1974. "The Electoral Connection and the Congress." In Terry Sullivan &amp; Matthew Sullivan eds., <i>Congress: Structure and Policy</i>. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. 1987.</li> </ul>



Week 7		
Mon, Oct 6	Parties as Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook, Chapter 6: “Political Parties: An Alternative to the Republic?”</li> </ul>
Wed, Oct 8	Parties as Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Morris Fiorina. 2014. “The (Re) Nationalization of Congressional Elections.” <i>A Hoover Institution Essay on Contemporary American Politics</i>.</li> <li>Julia Azari. 2016. <a href="#">“Weak parties and strong partisanship are a bad combination.”</a> <i>Vox</i>.</li> </ul>
Fri, Oct 10	A Brief History of the US Party System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Samuel Kernell, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, Lynn Vavreck, &amp; Timothy R. Johnson. “Chapter 12: Political Parties.” In <i>The Logic of American Politics</i>. <b>Read pages 507-530</b></li> </ul>
Week 8		
Mon, Oct 13	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fall Break</li> </ul>
Wed, Oct 15	The Legislative Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Samuel Kernell, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, Lynn Vavreck, &amp; Timothy R. Johnson. “Chapter 6: Congress.” In <i>The Logic of American Politics</i>. <b>Read pages 231-266</b></li> </ul>
Fri, Oct 17	The Legislative Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Samuel Kernell, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, Lynn Vavreck, &amp; Timothy R. Johnson. “Chapter 6: Congress.” In <i>The Logic of American Politics</i>. <b>Read pages 266-293</b></li> </ul>
Week 9		
Mon, Oct 20	The Pivotal Politics Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook, Chapter 7: “A Pivotal Politics Model of the Policy Process”</li> </ul>
Wed, Oct 22	The Pivotal Politics Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook, Chapter 7: “A Pivotal Politics Model of the Policy Process”</li> </ul>
Fri, Oct 24	The President: Unitary Executive or “Persuader-in-Chief”?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article II of the <a href="#">Constitution of the United States</a>. 1788.</li> <li>Textbook, Chapter 9: “Presidential Leadership: Beyond Self-Interest?”</li> </ul>

Week 10		
Mon, Oct 27	Presidential Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drew DeSilver. 2016. <a href="#">“Trump’s victory another example of how Electoral College wins are bigger than popular vote ones.”</a> <i>Pew Research Center</i>.</li> <li>• Tim Lau. 2021. <a href="#">“The Electoral College, Explained.”</a> <i>Brennan Center for Justice</i>.</li> </ul>
Wed, Oct 29	Presidential Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walter Berns. 1996. <a href="#">“Third Party Candidates Face a High Hurdle in the Electoral College.”</a> <i>American Enterprise Institute</i>.</li> <li>• Andrew Gelman and Pierre-Antoine Kremp. 2016. <a href="#">“The Electoral College magnifies the power of white voters.”</a> <i>Vox</i>.</li> <li>• Amy Walter. 2022. <a href="#">“The Republican Electoral College Advantage.”</a> <i>The Cook Political Report</i>.</li> </ul>
Fri, Oct 31	The 2024 Election & the Modern Presidency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jacob Knutson. 2025. <a href="#">“What Is Unitary Executive Theory? How is Trump Using It to Push His Agenda?”</a> <i>Democracy Docket</i></li> <li>• Adam Bonica. 2025. <a href="#">“How to Dismantle a Democracy, Legally.”</a> <i>On Data and Democracy</i>.</li> <li>• Elizabeth Goitein. 2017. <a href="#">“The Dangerous Powers Obama Left in Trump’s Hands.”</a> <i>Fortune</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Alternate link here</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 11		
Mon, Nov 3	The Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of the United States Attorneys. <a href="#">“Introduction To The Federal Court System.”</a> <i>U.S. Department of Justice</i>.</li> <li>• Brian Leiter. 2017. <a href="#">“Let’s start telling the truth about what the Supreme Court does.”</a> <i>The Washington Post</i></li> <li>• Ian Millhiser. 2022. <a href="#">“The case against the Supreme Court of the United States.”</a> <i>Vox</i>.</li> </ul>
Wed, Nov 5	The Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Podcast, 5-4. Episode: <a href="#">“The Shadow Docket with Steve Vladeck”</a></li> <li>• Sam Baker. 2025. <a href="#">“Trump wins big on the Supreme Court's "shadow docket.””</a> <i>Axios</i>.</li> </ul>
Fri, Nov 7	The Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adam Liptak, Abbie VanSickle, and Alicia Parlapiano. 2025. <a href="#">“A Triumphant Supreme Court Term for Trump, Fueled by Emergency Rulings.”</a> <i>The New York Times</i>.</li> <li>• Daniel Epps and Ganesh Sitaraman. 2018. <a href="#">“How to save the Supreme Court.”</a> <i>Vox</i></li> <li>• Steve Vladeck. 2025. <a href="#">“The Inconsistent Court Strikes Again.”</a> <i>One First</i>.</li> </ul>

Week 12		
Mon, Nov 10	Race & Realignment in the American Party System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clare Malone. 2020. <a href="#">“The Republican Choice.”</a> <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>.</li> </ul>
Wed, Nov 12	Race & Realignment in the American Party System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Sides. 2024. <a href="#">“How to think about the “racial realignment” in U.S. politics.”</a> <i>Good Authority</i>.</li> </ul>
Fri, Nov 14	Trends in the Two-party System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee Drutman. 2017. <a href="#">“Political Divisions in 2016 and Beyond: Tensions Between and Within the Two Parties.”</a> Voter Study Group.</li> </ul>
Week 13		
Mon, Nov 17	Trends in the Two-party System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Lilliana Mason. “Mass Political Behavior and Party Incentives.” In <i>More Than Red and Blue: Political Parties and American Democracy</i>. American Political Science Association and Protect Democracy.</li> </ul>
Wed, Nov 19	Is the American Political System Broken?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CANVAS: Paul Pierson &amp; Eric Schickler. 2022. “Polarization and the Durability of Madisonian Checks and Balances.” In <i>Democratic Resilience: Can the United States Withstand Rising Polarization?</i> Cambridge University Press.</li> </ul>
Fri, Nov 21	Reform Needed? Potential Reforms from Comparative Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steven Taylor. February 1, 2021. <a href="#">“Our Political Reality.”</a> <i>Outside the Beltway</i> blog.</li> <li>Steven Taylor. August 16, 2020. <a href="#">“Reforms: the Possible, the Improbable, and the Unpossible.”</a> <i>Outside the Beltway</i> blog.</li> <li><i>Optional</i>: extra credit meme due at midnight</li> </ul>

Week 14		
Mon, Nov 24	Reform Needed? Potential Reforms from Comparative Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee Drutman. June 16, 2021. <a href="#">“Why the Two-Party System is Effing Up U.S. Democracy.”</a> <i>FiveThirtyEight</i>.</li> <li>• Lee Drutman. September 8, 2021. <a href="#">“Quiz: If America Had Six Parties, Which Would You Belong To?”</a> <i>The New York Times</i>.</li> </ul>
Wed, Nov 26	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanksgiving break</li> </ul>
Fri, Nov 28		
Week 15		
Mon, Dec 1	<b>IN CLASS: American Politics Jeopardy &amp; Snacks!</b>	
DATE TBA	<b>IN CLASS: Final Exam</b>	