

Professor McAvoy

Political Science 329

Summer 2016

gemcavoy@uncg.edu

email:

American Interest Group Politics

Public participation is an important component of contemporary politics and policy making. This class critically engages students with theories and debates that surround concepts of participatory politics and its impact on policy and public opinion. We will be particularly concerned with the social and political context of group politics, focusing on basic questions such as: what conditions facilitate or hinder the emergence of interest groups? how are interest groups organized? why and how do people join these groups? how do activists choose tactics and strategies? and, how do group politics affect social and political change? In order to answer these questions in concrete terms, students will conduct research on political groups and provide presentations of their findings to the class.

Learning Objectives

Students will learn to:

Assess and evaluate existing theories about activism and political participation

Synthesize and organize information for oral and written presentation

Course Requirements

Students are required to complete:

- 1). A midterm examination (25%)
- 2.) Participation in group discussions and assignments (20%)

- 3). Quizzes (15%)
- 4.) Summary of an Interest Group (10%)
- 5). Final Examination (30%)

Required Texts

The following texts are available from the UNCG bookstore or on-line.

Berry, Jeffrey and Clyde Wilcox. 2009. *The Interest Group Society*, 5th edition. Longman Publishing.

Christopher Buckley, *Thank You for Smoking*. (The novel upon which the movie is based. This book is readily available at bookstores, libraries, and on-line book sellers, and the UNCG bookstore).

Goss, Kristin A. 2008. *Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Additional readings are available through Canvas.

Honor Code:

I expect all students in this course to abide by both the letter and spirit of the university's academic integrity policy. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted. The full text of the Academic Integrity Policy can be viewed at:
<http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Policy/HonorPolicy.html>.

A fundamental tenet of all educational institutions is academic honesty; academic work depends upon respect for and acknowledgment of the work and ideas of others. Misrepresenting

someone else's work as one's own is a serious offense in any academic setting and it will not be condoned.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for academic evaluation (e.g. papers, projects, examinations and assessments - whether online or in class); presenting, as one's own, the ideas, words or calculations of another for academic evaluation; doing unauthorized academic work for which another person will receive credit or be evaluated; and presenting the same or substantially the same papers or projects in two or more courses without the explicit permission of the instructors involved.

A student who knowingly assists another student in committing an act of academic misconduct shall be equally accountable for the violation, and shall be subject to the sanctions and other remedies described in The Student Code. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted.

Communication

Since this is an on-line course, we will obviously be communicating electronically. You should *always* use your UNCG email address or the email function in Canvas to communicate with me. The spam filters that the university uses will not block a UNCG email address, but it is quite common for it to capture email sent from other domains, even Gmail addresses.

I will try to answer your emails as quickly as possible. I do not check email after 8pm, so any emails sent after that time will not be answered until the following day.

Discussion Boards

We will be using the discussion boards to further develop your thinking about the course materials. The first couple of weeks all students will be asked to respond, but you may work with a partner or two and jointly submit your answers.

Deadlines

I have made most of the deadlines for assignments due before 8 pm. I know that some on-line courses make the deadlines at midnight and that suits some people's schedules. However, in my experience, problems often arise near deadlines and I can't help resolve these unless in the middle of the night. You will have plenty of advanced information about deadlines and it is up to you to organize and complete your coursework on time. Work turned in late will be penalized a half-grade per day.

Here are some tips that you should read in order to enhance the online class discussions:

Discussion Tips

Course Schedule

Section I. Introduction (May 12)

Part 1. Overview and Introduction (Modules Folder on Canvas).

Read the course syllabus and take a quiz on it.

***Complete the quiz by 8pm, Friday, May 13.**

Section II. Theories and Concepts (May 13)

Part 1. Roles Played by Interest Groups (Modules Folder on Canvas).

Read Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 1

Part 2. Read Federalist #10 (available on Canvas)

***Take Quiz #1 on Federalist 10 and Berry & Wilcox (Chapter 1) by Friday, May 13.**

***Post Answers to the Discussion Questions by 8 pm Monday May 16th.**

***Post Responses to the Discussion Questions by 8 pm Wednesday May 18th.**

Section III. The Interest Group System (May16-17)

Part 1. Review Discussion Questions for Section III (Modules Folder)

Study the Handout on Canvas, The Interest Group System (Modules Folder)

Read Section III in Modules folder

Read Berry and Wilcox, Chapters 2 & 3.

***Submit Answers to Discussion Questions by 8pm Friday, May 20th.**

Part 2. (May 20) Issue Networks

Barry and Wilcox, Chapter 9

Section IV. The Non-Formation of Groups (May 23-25)

Part 1. (May 23) Read Goss, Chapters 1 and 2.

***Take Quiz #2 on Goss Chapters 1 and 2 by 8pm, May 23.**

Part 2. (May 24) Read Goss, Chapters 3-5.

***Submit Answers to Discussion Questions for Chapters 2-5 by 8pm, Wednesday, May 25.**

Part 3. (May 25) Read Goss, Chapters 6-7.

Section V. The Lobbyist (May 26-27)

Read Overview of this Section in Modules Folder

Read Buckley, Chapters 1-13, May 26

Read Buckley, Chapters 14-30, May 27

Post answers to the discussion questions by 8pm, May 27; Responses by 8pm, May 30.

Section VI. Lobbying (May 30-31)

Read Overview of this Section in Modules Folder

Read Berry and Wilcox, Chapters 6 & 8.

Read "Lobbying Boom" (July 22, 2005) CQ Researcher, available through the UNCG library webpage.

Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball, and Leech. 2009. "Advocacy, Public Policy, and Policy Change," from *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. (Pages folder)

***Post answers to the discussion questions by 8, May 31. Responses due by 8pm June 1.**

***Midterm Exam, June 3-4**

Section VII. Lobbying the Legislature and the Courts (June 6-7)

Read Overview of this Section in Modules Folder

Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball, and Leech. 2009. "Does Money Buy Public Policy," from *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. (Canvas)

"Where Have All the Interest Groups Gone? An Analysis of Interest Group Participation in Presidential Nominations to the Supreme Court of the United States," Karen O'Connor, Alixandra B. Yanus, and Linda Mancillas Patterson, Chapter 13 in *Interest Group Politics*. Available from Canvas.

***Post answers to the discussion questions by 8pm, June 7. Responses due by 8 pm June 9.**

***Choose a group for your interest group summary and add it to the Google doc. Link will be provided.**

Section VIII. Political Action Committees (June 8-9)

Read Overview of this Section in the Modules Folder

Review "Types of Advocacy Groups" in the Modules folder.

Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 5

"A New Era of Interest Group Participation in Federal Elections," Paul S. Herrnson in Herrnson, Deering, and Wilcox, *Interest Groups Unleashed*. (Canvas)

"Interest Group Television Advertising in Presidential and Congressional Elections

Michael Franz in Cigler and Loomis, *Interest Group Politics*. (Canvas)

Watch Steven Colbert's segments on the formation of his Super PAC. Links in Canvas.

Review "Types of Advocacy Groups" in the Modules folder.

Look on opensecrets.org to choose a PAC that you think is interesting and post a brief description of its recent activities. **Complete this assignment by 8 pm, June 9.**

Section IX. Parties & Elections (June 10)

Read Overview of this Section in Modules Folder

Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 4

"Interest Group Money in the 2008 Federal Election ," Allan J. Cigler in Cigler and Loomis, *Interest Group Politics*. (Canvas)

"Campaign Finance Reform" (June 13, 2008) CQ Researcher available through the UNCG library webpage.

***Take quiz on campaigns and elections by 8pm, June 10.**

****Post Your Interest Group Summary by 8pm June 13.***

Section X. Religion and Politics (June 13-14)

Read Overview of this Section in the Modules Folder

"The Spirit Willing: Collective Identity and the Development of the Religious Right," John C. Green, in *Waves of Protest*. Available from Canvas.

Trends in Party Identification by Religious Groups (read the first 5 parts of this report, you will need to click through to get from one part to the next).

<http://www.pewforum.org/Politics-and-Elections/Trends-in-Party-Identification-of-Religious-Groups.aspx>

Watch the video "With God on Our Side."

***Post your answers to the questions related to the video by 8pm, June 14.**

Final Exam due Wednesday June 15 by 11:59pm.