

# Political Science 3443

## Political Parties

Dr. Todd Makse

Fall 2020

Class Meetings: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 1:00pm-1:50pm on Zoom

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00-3:30pm (on Zoom)

Office: SIPA 405; Phone: 305-348-8451; Email: [tmakse@fiu.edu](mailto:tmakse@fiu.edu)

(Note: for Fall 2020, I will rarely be in the office; contact via email is preferred)

TA Information: Mr. Patrick Villalonga; Email: [pvill015@fiu.edu](mailto:pvill015@fiu.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays 11:00am-12:00pm (on Zoom)

### Course Description:

The purpose of the course is to understand the workings of American political parties. Parties are often said to have three aspects: the party organization, the party in the electorate, and the party in government. We will examine each of these three meanings of the word “party” and consider how these institutions play an enduring, yet constantly evolving role in American politics. The class will encourage students both to consider the source of our knowledge about parties and to apply that knowledge to analyze events in American politics. To that end, we will read contemporary academic research on political parties while keeping an eye on media coverage of current events.

This class is **not** primarily a lecture-based class. Aside from introductory material in each section of the course, class sessions will involve large amounts of discussion and other interactive activities. Your mastery of class material will be demonstrated through short papers, memos, a presentation, and participation in class. It is essential to complete readings on time and come to class prepared to discuss the day’s major themes. You are expected to come into this class with an introductory-level knowledge of American politics (i.e., POS 2041 or the equivalent). If you have any concerns over the appropriateness of this class, please speak to me.

### Textbook

The required textbook for this course is:

*\*Party Politics in America*, 17<sup>th</sup> Edition, by Marjorie R. Hershey

Other readings are available on Canvas. One of the goals of this course is also to expose you to original academic research on political parties. Many of these journal articles have more technical sections that you can skim. There is a primer on Canvas that discusses how to approach these articles and separate the substance from the more technical aspects.

### Grading options:

Because of the challenges associated with Covid-19, there will be two grading options for taking this course. If you select “Option A,” you will be expected to attend Zoom sessions (with the video on), participate in active learning during breakout sessions, and submit two memos on behalf of your group. If you select “Option B,” attendance and participation will not be required, and you will not be assigned to a group for breakout sessions. However, you will need to complete the equivalent

work independently and submit a total of five memos. Students who select Option B will also complete two critical papers instead of one. You will select one of these options during the first week of class; except under extenuating circumstances, you won't be able to switch options mid-semester. Depending on which option you select, the grading components will be as follows:

	<b>Option A</b>	<b>Option B</b>
Reading quizzes	20%	20%
Presentation	30% (Presented by your group during class time with Q&A session)	30% (Recorded and submitted by your group outside of class)
Critical Paper(s)	20%	30% (15% each)
Participation	20%	N/A
Memos	10% (Two memo submissions)	20% (Five memo submissions)

For both grading options, the grading scale for final grades will be as follows:

93-100 A      90-92 A-      87-89 B+      83-86 B      80-82 B-  
77-79 C+      70-76 C      60-69 D      59 and below F

### **Grading criteria:**

*Reading Quizzes:* There will be ten reading quizzes, to be completed on Canvas. The quizzes are open-book, but **you must complete quizzes on your own**. Response patterns will be analyzed by error analysis software at the end of the semester, and evidence of collusion will be treated as academic misconduct. **Quizzes are due before class on the date listed on the syllabus**. Answer keys will be posted online the same day, so late quizzes will not be accepted. However, your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped and your final quiz grade will be curved ten points.

*Presentation:* At the end of the semester, you will be giving, in groups, a 15-minute presentation on political parties and the 2020 elections. Dates will be assigned in early October and complete instructions will be posted on Canvas at that time. Students who select Option A will present on Zoom during class time and will participate in a Q&A section. Students who select Option B will be assigned a group for the presentation and will submit a recording of their presentation.

*Critical Papers:* Early in the semester, you will choose one (Option A) or two (Option B) articles for which you are responsible for writing a critical paper. The assignment has two parts: a summary of the article and responses to a set of discussion questions. There will also be a required revisions stage of the assignment after you receive preliminary feedback. Full instructions can be found on Canvas. Option A students are also responsible for leading class discussion the day we discuss those articles. **Assignments should be submitted on Canvas; specific due dates depend on the article you are assigned**. Papers will be assessed via Turnitin.

*Memos:* There are two types of memo assignments in the class. Article Memos are completed after group discussion of one of the articles. Activity Memos are completed following group discussion of an activity during a breakout session. Option A students will submit one Article Memo and one

Activity Memo. Option B students will submit all five Activity memos and no Article memos. More information about completing each type of memo can be found on Canvas and the schedule of due dates will be available on Canvas by the second week of the semester.

*Participation (Option A students only):* If you select Option A, you must participate in class discussions on a regular basis. Quality of participation will be assessed holistically and graded on a letter scale. Any student who does not receive at least a B-minus participation grade will receive a five-point deduction from their final class grade (i.e., a B- is worth 16/20, while a C+ is worth 11/20).

*Attendance (Option A students only):* You have four “free” absences, no questions asked. Each additional absence (unless documented; see below) will result in a one-point deduction (out of 20) from your participation grade. Late arrivals will be treated as ½ of an absence.

## **Class Policies**

*Absences:* Absences are only considered documented if you provide documentation (within one week of the absence) of either: (a) obligations such as athletic, military, or university-sponsored program obligations; (b) a serious medical condition that requires hospitalization or is deemed contagious (with a doctor’s note specifying this). Absences for religious holidays will also be deemed excused absences; please inform me if you plan to miss any classes for this reason.

*Academic Misconduct:* Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, academic negligence or dishonesty. Plagiarism results when students neglect to acknowledge in footnotes, endnotes or other forms of documentation their use of the words and ideas of others. If you have questions about what constitutes proper citation, please speak to me. **Note: Completing reading quizzes collaboratively or sharing answers is also deemed academic misconduct.**

*Disability Accommodations:* Students with disabilities, as defined by law, have the right to receive appropriate accommodations if their disabilities make it difficult to perform academic tasks in the usual way or in the allotted time frame. However, in order to receive accommodation, students with disabilities must register with the Disability Resource Center. This office will keep the student's written request, notify faculty who have a student with a disability enrolled in his or her class, and indicate what arrangements should be made. Please contact the DRC at the start of the semester.

*Availability:* Feel free to contact me by email with any concerns about the class or course material. I will make every effort to respond to all messages within 24 hours. Please send emails through your FIU email and check both your FIU email and Canvas daily. If you wish to set up a Zoom call during office hours, please give me at least thirty minutes advance notice in case I am meeting with another student.

## Schedule for Class Topics, Readings and Quizzes

### August 24-September 2: Class Introduction (Quiz #1 due August 28)

\*Hershey, Ch. 1 and 2

### September 4-9: Party Organizations (Quiz #2 due September 4)

\*Hershey, Ch. 3 and 4

### September 7: No Class (Labor Day)

### September 11-16: Party Coalitions (Quiz #3 due September 11)

\*Hershey, Ch. 5

\*Douglas J. Ahler and Gaurav Sood. "Parties in Our Heads: Misperception about Party Composition and Their Consequences." *Journal of Politics* 80: 964-81.

### September 18-23: Party Identification (Quiz #4 due September 18)

\*Hershey, Ch. 6

### September 25-30: Affective Polarization (Quiz #5 due September 25)

\*Hershey, Ch. 7

\*Samara Klar, Yanna Krupnikov, and John Barry Ryan. 2018. "Affective Polarization or Partisan Disdain: Untangling a Dislike for the Opposing Party from a Dislike of Partisanship." *Political Behavior* 82: 379-90.

### October 2-7: Political Geography

\*No new readings

### October 9-14: Voter Turnout (Quiz #6 due October 9)

\*Hershey, Ch. 8

\*Alan Gerber et al. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102: 33-48.

### October 16-21: Election Law and Voting Reforms

\*No new readings

### October 23-28: Party Recruitment and Primaries (Quiz #7 due October 23)

\*Hershey, Ch. 9

\*Casey B.K. Dominguez. 2011. "Does The Party Matter? Endorsements in Congressional Primaries." *Political Research Quarterly* 64: 534-44

### October 30-November 4: Presidential Primaries (Quiz #8 due October 30)

\*Hershey, Ch. 10

### November 6-13: General Elections I (Quiz #9 due November 6)

\*Hershey, Ch. 11

\*Amber Wichowsky and Sarah E. Niebler. 2010. "Narrow Victories and Hard Games: Revisiting the Divisive Primary Hypothesis." *American Politics Research* 38: 1052-71.

**November 11: No Class (Veterans' Day)**

**November 16-23: General Elections II (Quiz #10 due November 16)**

\*Hershey, Ch. 12

\*Ryan Enos and Eitan Hersh. 2015. "Campaign Perceptions of Electoral Closeness: Uncertainty, Fear and Over-Confidence." *British Journal of Political Science* 47: 501-19.

**Presentations: November 25-December 4**