

POLA 4012: Third Parties in Am. Politics

Instructor

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Office Location

Norman Mayer 302

Office Hours

Tue & Thur, 11:00-12:15,

and by appointment.

Mask required.

Course Information for Fall 2021

CRN: 30622 (Section -01) / 30623 (Section -02)

Date & Time: Tuesday & Thursday 12:30 – 1:45 PM

Classroom: Norman Mayer 102

Course Overview

Political parties serve many functions in the American political system, yet for much of American history those functions have been served by two major parties. This suggests the question, “With the dominance of the two major parties, what role do third parties play in American politics?”

In this course we will investigate what political science can tell us about third parties: their history, motivations, campaigns, and impact on voters and electoral outcomes. We will also explore some practical issues involved in how third parties and their candidates campaign for office.

While focusing explicitly on third parties in American politics, this course will also address the role of political parties in general in the political system. In particular, it will highlight the role of institutional arrangements and popular opinion in creating obstacles to third party success.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the following learning outcomes: 1) establish a firm grounding in the theories of political party development and party system change in the United States; 2) develop a thorough understanding of the role third political parties play in the operation of modern American politics and government; and 3) develop analytical skills with which to analyze the strategic situations faced by third parties during times of campaigning and governing. These learning outcomes contribute to the following program outcomes: 1) demonstrate substantive knowledge and analytical competence in the understanding of political parties and party systems as well as their role in the politics and government of the United States through class discussion and satisfactory completion of all assignments and exams; and 2) develop an understanding of the history of minor political parties in the U.S. as well as the role of institutions and public opinion in shaping the behavior - and opportunities for success - of third parties in this country.

Required Texts

- Steven J. Rosenstone, Roy L. Behr, and Edward H. Lazarus, *Third Parties in America*. Second edition, 1996. Princeton University Press. 0-691-02613-0.

In addition to the text, there are several required readings located on Canvas, noted with an * in the course schedule. Logon to <https://tulane.instructure.com/>, click on the course link for Third Parties in American Politics, and on the left side of the page click on the link for Files.

Assignments

There will be four components to the grade in this course. There will be two exams. These will consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and/or essay questions; the exact format will be discussed before the midterm exam. Additionally, students will complete a research project as well as an essay that relates to the research project. Details on the research project will be provided on the second day of class, and the essay prompt will be distributed later in the semester. These components will contribute to the final course grade as follows:

Assignment	Date Due	Points
Midterm Exam	Oct. 26	30 Points
Final Exam	Dec. 16	40 Points
Project	due Dec. 7	20 Points
Essay	due Dec. 20	10 Points
TOTAL		100 TOTAL POINTS

Course Policies

- **Format:** The format for the course will vary. Some classes will primarily consist of lecture, though I will frequently interrupt lecture to call on students to answer questions and give opinions. Other classes will operate as a seminar, and on those days students should be ready to engage one another in discussion. Finally, some work days have been built into the syllabus so that we can collectively work on the course research project. In all circumstances students are encouraged to stop me for questions or comments.
- **Grading:** This course will be graded according to Tulane's plus/minus grading system. Grades will be available by seeing me before or after class or during office hours. I will not provide grades over email or by phone.

A	93-100	A-	90-92.99	B+	87-89.99
B	83-86.99	B-	80-82.99	C+	77-79.99
C	73-76.99	C-	70-72.99	D+	67-69.99
D	63-66.99	D-	60-62.99	F	59.99 and below

- **Expectations:** Students are expected to attend each class, to be on time, and to have all course materials read prior to the class in which they are discussed. Please turn off all electronic devices during class. Laptop computers are not permitted in class; please turn them off and put them away before class starts. All assignments must be completed for a student to pass the course. Requests for regrading any exam or assignment must be made no later than one week after it has been returned. No make-ups will be allowed except in very serious circumstances (I reserve the right to determine what is "very serious"). Course incompletes will only be allowed for circumstances in which the student is physically unable to complete the course; the student must otherwise be passing the course in order to be granted an incomplete.
- **Accommodations:** If you have any kind of special circumstances, such as a disability, illness, or handicap, or if you are involved with a university activity that requires you to miss class, let me know as soon as possible. This information is confidential. All students attending Tulane University with documented disabilities are eligible and encouraged to apply for services with the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility. Please see me or go to <https://accessibility.tulane.edu> for more information. Students needing accommodations must provide me a copy of the accommodation granted by the GCSA as soon as possible.

- **Academic Integrity:** As described in the Tulane University [Code of Academic Conduct](#), students are expected to uphold the honor and integrity of the academic process. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating on an exam (either providing answers to or receiving answers from another student), plagiarism (the use of another author's words or arguments without attribution), and unauthorized collaboration (working with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of any course requirement). If a student commits any violation of academic integrity, I will pursue disciplinary action as outlined in the Code of Academic Conduct.
- **Academic Freedom:** In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, particularly about political ideas, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. Students may disagree with each other at times, or with me. These differences can help enhance class discussion and create an atmosphere where students (and I) will be encouraged to think and learn. In any event, grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs expressed in class or in assignments.
- **Note regarding syllabus dates:** Please take into consideration the dates of exams and the due dates for essays when scheduling other activities, travel, etc. This applies especially to course requirements that occur immediately before or after holidays. Note also that the final exam date is set by the registrar. Students must take final exams on this date; exceptions can only be granted by the Dean of Newcomb Tulane College. Finally, please note the university-designated makeup dates: October 23, 24, and November 13, 14. These dates will be used for makeup classes in the event of a university closure.
- **Religious Accommodation Policy:** <https://registrar.tulane.edu/academic-calendar> (bottom of the page)
- **Title IX Policy / Support:** <https://allin.tulane.edu/>
- **Code of Student Conduct:** <https://conduct.tulane.edu/resources/code-student-conduct>
- **Compliance with COVID-19 Regulations:** <https://tulane.edu/covid-19/health-strategies>

Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Aug 24	Introduction to the course / Syllabus distribution	(none)
Aug 26	Introduction to the course research project	<u>video</u> (<u>optional video</u> , esp. at 25:40)
Sept 14	What is a political party	*Schlesinger Ch 1
Sept 16, 21	Party Systems	*Ware Chs 1, 5, 6
Sept 23	<i>No class – Fall Break</i>	(none)
Sept 28	Role of Third Parties	*Herrnson Ch 1
Sept 30	Third Parties of the Nineteenth Century	Rosenstone Ch 3
Oct 5	Third Parties of the Twentieth Century	Rosenstone Ch 4
Oct 7	Ross Perot and the Reform Party	Rosenstone Ch 9, *Green & Binning Ch 5
Oct 12, 19	Constraints on Third Parties	Rosenstone Ch 2
Oct 14	<i>Work day</i>	(none)
Oct 21	Decision to Run	Rosenstone Ch 7
Oct 26	MIDTERM EXAM	(none)
Oct 28, Nov 2	Third Party Campaigns	*Brox, *Collet Ch 6
Nov 4	<i>No class – (Virtually) Attend State of the Parties</i>	(none)
Nov 9	<i>Work day</i>	(none)
Nov 11, 16	Voting Behavior	Rosenstone Chs 5-6
Nov 18	<i>Work day</i>	(none)
Nov 23, 25	<i>No class – Thanksgiving</i>	(none)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Nov 30	New York / Electoral Fusion	*Spitzer Ch 7
Dec 2	<i>Work day</i>	(none)
Dec 7	Current Third Parties on the Left	*Lem Ch 2
	<i>Course research project due</i>	*Sekou Ch 4
Dec 9	Current Third Parties on the Right	*Devine Ch 1
		*Lynch Ch 3
Dec 14	The Case for a Multiparty System	*Lawson Ch 3
Dec 16	FINAL EXAM	(none)
Dec 20	Defense of the Two Party System	*Bibby Ch 4
	- ESSAY DUE	

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Essay Assignment

The purpose of this essay is to relate concepts from the course into an analysis of a recent third party (or independent) presidential campaign. Please address the following concepts in an essay of 5-7 pages. Your essay must be typed, double-spaced, with 12 point font and 1 inch margins. You need not include a bibliography, but you are responsible for citing non-original arguments (e.g. “This argument is usually associated with Rosenstone et al. (1996) and has structured much of the debate on the subject. However...”). The essay is due Tuesday, December 20 (or before!).

1. Pick a recent (but not 2020) third party or independent presidential campaign.
 - a. Hint: Perot 1992 would be easiest/you can rely mostly on course material.
 - b. Warning: Students in the writing intensive section cannot use the candidate they are profiling for their writing intensive assignment, even that candidates previous/historical campaigns.
2. Discuss that campaign’s successes and shortcomings vis-à-vis the constraints to third party success that we have discussed in class (both lecture and readings).
3. What reforms to the political might have improved that campaign’s performance?
 - a. Note: Be explicit about the ‘goal’ the third party campaign was trying to achieve; you need to relate the reforms to that goal.
 - b. Also address whether these reforms are possible given current obstacles (whether they be resistance by the two major parties, the difficulties of passing a Constitutional amendment, etc.).

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Writing Intensive Instructions

Those students in the writing intensive section have additional coursework to satisfy the writing intensive requirement / justify the fourth credit hour. This coursework will be a two-part research project on a recent third party campaign. Given this additional work, the grade for students in the writing intensive section will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Date Due	Points
Midterm Exam	Oct. 26	20 Points
Final Exam	Dec. 16	30 Points
Project	due Dec. 7	20 Points
Essay	due Dec. 20	10 Points
Writing Intensive Part 1	due Nov. 4	10 Points
Writing Intensive Part 2	due Dec. 14	10 Points
TOTAL		100 TOTAL POINTS

In this project you will explore the difficulties that third parties face when trying to run for elective office. To that end, your job is to write an extensive profile of one of the third party candidates running for president in 2020. You will learn about the third party in general as well as the candidate who represented the party on ballots last November. You will also learn about the difficulties faced by third parties in gaining access to the ballot and in communicating their message to voters. You will conclude your project with an assessment of the candidate's performance in the presidential election and the third party's prospects for success in the future.

Each essay should be 5-10 pages, typed, double-spaced, with 10 or 12 point font and 1 inch margins. You are responsible for citing non-original arguments and information. Please see me if you have any questions about citations or other aspects of the assignment.

Part 1 – Due November 4

- Party History
 - How long has the party existed? How/why was it started?
 - What is the party's organizational structure? Does it have state affiliates?
 - Has this party run candidates before (for any office)? Were any elected?
- Party Ideology
 - Discuss its platform/policies.
 - What are its positions on current issues?
 - Given its ideology, what is the party's relationship to the two major parties?
 - What kind of voter will be attracted to this party's positions? Repelled?
- Candidate
 - Who was the presidential nominee? Give some details of his/her biography. Did he/she have any previous political experience?
 - Discuss the party's nomination process.
 - Did other candidates run for the nomination?
 - Did this party run a candidate under its own name, or did this party endorse another party's candidate?
 - Briefly discuss the vice presidential nominee.
- Mechanics
 - Ballot access – in which states did this party/candidate appear on the November 2020 ballot?
 - What did the party/nominee have to do to get on the ballot?
 - Was the party already on the ballot based on previous success?
 - Or did the party/nominee have to gather signatures, pay fees, etc?
 - Was the party's candidate on the ballot under the party label, or as a write-in?
 - Was this third party joining forces with other candidates or parties?
 - Did this party run candidates for other offices in 2020?

Part 2 – Due December 14

- **Revise part 1 according to my comments and resubmit that part, along with part 2, as one document.**
- Campaign
 - Discuss the third party's strategy with respect to the 2020 election. What was the goal?
 - What message did the party/nominee try to communicate to voters?
 - Discuss the campaign organization – staff and structure.
 - Discuss the campaign's finances. Who donated to the campaign?
 - How did the campaign spend its money?
 - What forms of communication did the campaign use?
 - Was there an email list? What kind of information did the campaign distribute by email?
 - Did the campaign have a website, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or other social media presence? If so, what information was on those pages?
 - What kind of coverage did the campaign get from the news media?
 - Did the campaign engage in any advertising? If so, what form(s) did the campaign use and what were the messages?
- Support
 - Throughout the campaign, what level of support did the candidate/party get in public opinion polls (if any)?
 - Did any significant individuals or groups endorse the candidate/party?
 - Discuss the outcome of the election. How many votes did the party/candidate get nationally? What were the party/candidate's statewide vote totals?
 - To the extent that you can find information on these people, discuss the profile of voters who voted for this party/candidate. What did they "look like" (demographically)? What reasons did they have for supporting this party/candidate (rather than voting for a major party candidate, a different third party candidate, or abstaining)?
 - If the party ran candidates for other offices, how did they do?
- Analysis
 - Evaluate the party's/candidate's performance in the 2020 election. Did they accomplish their goals? Why or why not?
 - Did they communicate effectively with voters?
 - Did they influence the outcome of the election?
 - What are the party's prospects for the future?

Selection of Third Parties

1. Each student must have a different party
2. The party must have had candidates for president and vice president and (ideally) should have had ballot access in at least one state.
3. Choice of parties is first-come, first served.
4. No racist/nazi/otherwise inappropriate* parties may be selected.

*I reserve the right to determine the appropriateness of a party for this research project.

List of Third Parties (not exhaustive)

ALASKAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY	INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE DEMOCRATIC
AMERICAN INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL PARTY
AMERICAN INDEPENDENT PARTY	LIBERTARIAN PARTY
AMERICAN PARTY	PEACE AND FREEDOM
AMERICAN PEOPLE'S FREEDOM PARTY	PEOPLE'S PARTY
CITIZENS' PARTY	PROGRESSIVE PARTY
COMMUNIST PARTY	PROHIBITION PARTY
CONSERVATIVE PARTY	REFORM PARTY
CONSTITUTION PARTY	RIGHT TO LIFE
DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR	SOCIALIST EQUALITY PARTY
DESERT GREEN PARTY	SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY
FEDERALIST	SOCIALIST PARTY
GEORGE WALLACE PARTY	SOCIALIST PARTY U.S.A.
GREEN PARTY	SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
HUMAN RIGHTS PARTY	U.S. TAXPAYERS PARTY
INDEPENDENCE PARTY	VETERANS PARTY
INDEPENDENT AMERICAN PARTY	

See also:

- https://ballotpedia.org/List_of_political_parties_in_the_United_States
- <https://ballot-access.org/>
- <https://votesmart.org/political-parties>