This seminar is an overview of key topics in the study of American politics and is designed to help graduate students prepare for the American Politics Comprehensive Exam.

Students are expected to arrive in class prepared to offer opinions on all materials listed as required for that week. In addition to this, I have added a set of recommended readings which add additional depth and framing to the topic and are relevant for the successful completion of the comprehensive exam. As part of the classroom dialog, we will offer additional depth on the other non-bolded materials and provide framing and further questions for discussion, but the primary burden for digesting the material will be on the class participants – the expectation is that you will have read all the required materials extremely carefully before each class.

Each week students are expected to write a 4 page response paper to a crucial aspect of the readings. We will send out sample questions the week before to give you ideas for essay topics. This practice will prepare you to successfully complete the various sections of the qualifying exam. No late work will be accepted, but you will be permitted to skip one week’s assignment (or the lowest grade will be dropped). A final exam will directly simulate the experience of taking the American politics qualifying exam. Exams will be handed out at the end of class on March (TBD) and must be returned no later than 5 PM on Friday, March (TBD). Be sure to check your schedules to avoid any conflicts with your final exam.

The Reading Material: Underlined books have been placed on reserve at the library and ordered at the Co-op. All other materials can be accessed via Google scholar and the library.

WEEK ONE (January 8): American Political Culture and Development

Required:

- **Lipset, S. M. 1996. American Exceptionalism. Chapters 1-6.**

Recommended:

- The U.S. Constitution. 1778
- P. Bacharach and M. Baratz. 1963. Two faces of Power
• S. Huntington. 1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies*
• E. E. Schattsneider. 1975. *The Semi-sovereign People*
• R. Hofstadter. 1974. *The American Political Tradition*
• T. Lowi. 1979. *The End of Liberalism*
• J. Gaventa. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness*
• S. Skowronek. 1982. *Building a New American State*
• E. Foner. 1984. *Why is there no Socialism in the U.S?*
• R. Bensel. 1990. *Yankee Leviathan*
• T. Skocpol. 1992. *Protecting Mothers and Soldiers*
• R. Smith. 1997. *Civic Ideals*

**WEEK TWO (January 15): Federalism, State, and Local Politics**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

- J. Mollenkopf. 1983. *The Contested City*
- Katznelson. 1981. *City Trenches*
- John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch. 2007. *Urban Fortunes*

**WEEK THREE (January 22): Political Participation**
Required:


Recommended:

- Raymond E. Wolfinger and Steven J. Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes*
- D. Stokes. 1963. *Spatial Models of Party Competition*
- Donald Green and Alan Gerber. 2004. *Get out the Vote! How to Increase Voter Turnout.*

**WEEK FOUR (January 29): American Public Opinion**

Required:

• Achen, Chris. 1975. “Mass Political Attitudes and the Survey Response.” The
American Political Science Review.
Role of Core Beliefs and Values.” American Journal of Political Science

Recommended:
• W. Lippmann. 1922. Public Opinion
• R. E. Lane. 1962. Political Ideology: Why the Common Man Believes What He
  Does
• D. Stokes. 1963. Spatial Models of Party Competition
• M. Olson. 1965. The Logic of Collective Action
• S. Verba, N. Nie, I. Kim. 1978. Participation and Political Equality
• J. Hoschild. 1981. What’s Fair?
  Democracy
• H. McClosky. 1983. Dimensions of Tolerance
• H. McClosky and Zaller. 1984. American Ethos
• Carmines & Stimson. 1989. Issue Evolution: Race & Transformation of
  American Politics
• E. Carmines and J. Kuklinski. 1990. “Incentives, Opportunities and the Logic of
  Public Opinion in American Political Representation,” in J.A. Ferejohn and J.
  Kuklinski, eds., Information and Democratic Processes
• S. Iyengar. 1991. Is Anyone Responsible?
  TV,” in AJPS
• Lupia and McCubbins. 1998. The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn
  What They Need to Know?

WEEK FIVE (February 5): Vote Choice

Required:
  American Political Science Review
• D. Green, B. Palmquist, and E. Schickler. 2004. Partisan Hearts and Minds,
  Chapters 2, 3 and 4
• Oliver, J. Eric. 2012. Local Elections and the Politics of Small Scale
  Democracy, Chapters 4,5.
Recommended:

- J. Brehm 1993. *The Phantom Respondents*
- Gelman and G. King. 1993. “Why are American Presidential Campaign Polls so Variable when Votes are so Predictable,” in *BJPS*
- D. Kinder and Kiewiet. 1981. “Sociotropic Politics: An American Case,” in *BJPS*

**WEEK SIX (February 12): Class & Race Politics**

Required:


Recommended:

- b. hooks. 1984. *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*
• W. Wilson. 1990. The Truly Disadvantaged
• D. Roediger. 1991. The Wages of Whiteness
• K. Tate. 1993. From Protest to Politics
• P. Sniderman and T. Piazza. 1993. The Scar of Race
• S. M. Okin. 1994. “Gender Inequality and Cultural Differences,” in Political Theory
• Martin Gilens. 2000. Why Americans Hate Welfare
• J. Hoschild. 1996. Facing Up to the American Dream
• D. Kinder and L. Sanders. 1996. Divided by Color
• D. Roberts. 1997. Killing the Black Body
• P. Hill Collins. 1998. Fighting Words
• P. Gilroy. 2000. Against Race
• C. Kim. 2000. Bitter Fruit
• M. Nobles. 2000. Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics
• M. Dawson. 2001. Black Visions
• G. Loury. 2001. The Reality of Racial Inequality
• T. Mendelberg. 2001. The Race Card

WEEK SEVEN (February 19): CONGRESS
Required:
• D. Arnold. 1990. The Logic of Congressional Action, Chaps. 3-4.
• K. Kreihbel. 1991. Information and Legislative Organization, Chap 3-5

Recommended:
• M. Fiorina. 1974. Representatives, Roll Calls, and Constituencies
• R. Fenno. 1978. Home Style
• R. Hall. 1987. “Participation and Purpose in Committee Decision Making,” in APSR
• K. Kreihbel. 1995. “Cosponsors and Wafflers from A to Z,” in AJPS
• D. Rhode. 1991. Parties and Leaders in the Post-Reform House
• R. Kiewiet and M. McCubbins. 1996. The Logic of Delegation
• K. Krehbiel. 1998. Pivotal Politics
• E. Shickler. 2001. Disjointed Pluralism

WEEK EIGHT (February 26): CONGRESSIONAL PARTIES

Required:
• Gary W. Cox and Matthew D. McCubbins. 1993. Legislative Leviathan

Recommended:
- J. Sundquist. 1983. Dynamics of the Party System
- Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus. 1984 (2nd ed. 1996). *Third Parties in America*
- D. Mayhew. 1991. *Divided We Govern*
- Barbara Sinclair, “Do Parties Matter?,” CSDP
- V.O. Key. 1964. *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*
- J. Gerring. 2001. *Party Ideologies in America*

**WEEK NINE (March 5): The Presidency**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
- Graham. 1969. “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” in APSR
- J. Barber. 1972. *The Presidential Character*
- T. Lowi. 1985. *The Personal President*
- S. Hess. 1988. *Organizing the Presidency*
- J. Bond and R. Fleisher. 1990. The President in the Legislative Arena
• H.C. Mansfield. 1993. *Taming the Prince*
• S. Kernell. 1993. *Going Public*
• C.O. Jones. 1994. *The Presidency in a Separated System*
• S. Skowronek. 1997. *The Politics Presidents Make*

**WEEK TEN (March 12): Bureaucracy**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
• M. McCubbins and T. Schwartz. 1984. “Congressional Oversight Overlooked,” *AJPS*
• Daniel P. Carpenter. 2001. Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy, Chapter 1, 2 and 7.
• A. Downs. 1967. *Inside Bureaucracy*
• W. Niskanen. 1971. *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*
• H. Helco. 1977. *A Government of Strangers*
• M. Lipsky. 1980. *Street Level Bureaucracy*
• G. Miller. 1992. *Managerial Dilemmas*
• Perrow. 1993. *Complex Organizations*
• K. Bawn. 1995. “Political Control verses Expertise,” in APSR