

SYLLABUS
HONR 203B: The U.S. Experience
Loyola University Chicago
Fall 2020

MWF 9:30 – 10:20 am

Instructor

Dr. Eric Hansen

Email: ehansen4@luc.edu

Office Location: Coffey Hall 326B

Virtual Office Hours: Mondays 1-4 pm, or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

“This childish bickering between the Democrats and Republicans is disgraceful... Sad to say, our political parties are not uniting our country but are tearing it apart. I bet other countries see the United States as a laughingstock.”

-Letter to the Editor, The Morning Call [Allentown, PA], 6/18/18

Many Americans express a deep skepticism of partisan politics, but parties are a necessary and enduring feature of American democracy. In this class, we will examine the U.S. Experience through the lens of political parties. We begin by studying why parties form and how they function, comparing the American party system to party systems in other nations. Then we examine how partisan divides in government both create and reflect social divisions in the mass public. Next, we survey the history of U.S. parties, including their role in the early years of the republic, the Jacksonian Era, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Progressive Era, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights Movement. We conclude discussing visions for engaged citizenship that might help us work across historical and contemporary partisan divides.

Students enrolled in this class will be able to:

- 1) Understand the role of parties in American politics and culture
- 2) Analyze U.S. parties through comparison with historical and foreign party systems
- 3) Contextualize modern political events in the broader scope of U.S. history
- 4) Develop a greater sense of the responsibilities of democratic citizenship

Course Structure

This class will be entirely online with both synchronous and asynchronous components. All coursework will be due on a regular, weekly schedule. A week’s schedule will include the following components, unless I instruct students otherwise:

- **Weekly Reading Assignments.** All assigned reading should be completed by the Monday of the week it is listed. A full reading calendar is provided at the end of this syllabus.

- **Weekly Response Papers.** Students must complete and submit for a grade a series of short answer responses to the week’s reading assignments. These will be due weekly on Mondays at 5 pm.
- **Online Lecture Materials.** No later than 5 pm Friday of the previous week, I will have posted a series of video or audio lectures, video links, or other material for students to review on their own time. These materials will constitute the asynchronous “lecture” component of the class. (There will be no synchronous lectures in this class.) Students should finish reviewing these materials no later than their weekly small group discussion time each week.
- **Small Group Discussions.** In the first week of class, I will assign all students to one of three small groups or “sections.” Throughout the rest of the semester, I will meet with each small group once a week at a regular time for 50 minutes. Most students will join a section that meets at the assigned class time on either Wednesdays or Fridays., though one section will meet at an agreed-upon time outside normal class hours. Discussion will focus on the week’s reading assignments and lecture materials. Your small group discussion will be your only synchronous meeting for the class each week.

Required Texts

Allen, Danielle. 2004. *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [NOTE: A free e-copy of this book is available online at the LUC Library website.]

Junger, Sebastian. 2016. *Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging*. New York: Twelve.

Royko, Mike. 1971. *Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co.

Optional Texts [Excerpts assigned for class reading will be posted on Sakai]

Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Aldrich, John. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

de Tocqueville, Alexis. 1835 [1988]. *Democracy in America*. Trans. George Lawrence. New York: HarperPerennial.

Fiorina, Morris P., with Samuel J. Abrams. 2009. *Disconnect: The Breakdown of Representation in American Politics*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Ishiyama, John T. 2012. *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Jones, Robert P. 2016. *The End of White Christian America*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Key, V.O., Jr. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. New York: Knopf.

Lee, Frances. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Levendusky, Matthew. 2009. *The Partisan Sort*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mason, Lilliana. 2018. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Richardson, Heather Cox. 2001. *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Grades

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale. I reserve the right to make adjustments to individual grades based on overall performance in the course and/or extenuating circumstances. There will be only one opportunity to earn extra credit—I will provide details during the course of the semester.

Letter Grade	Percentage Score
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	60-66.99
F	59.99 or below

The proportion of each assignment as part of the overall grade is as follows:

Small Group Participation: 20%

Weekly Response Worksheets: 50%

Midterm Exam: 15%

Final Exam: 15%

Small Group Participation

Participation is worth 20% of your overall course grade. Opportunities for participation will occur in weekly small group discussions (or “sections”), explained in the “Course Structure” section near the top of the syllabus. Though there is no formal attendance requirement, attendance is an integral part of discussions. You can’t join the conversation if you don’t show up! If you cannot attend your small group discussion for a justifiable reason (e.g. illness

requiring medical treatment, family emergency, etc.), please email me ahead of time. Grades are assigned according to the following scheme:

100%: Regular attendance, daily or near-daily contributions to discussion

90%: Regular attendance, occasional contributions to discussion

80%: Intermittent attendance, occasional to rare contributions, lack of attention

70%: Rare attendance, rare contributions, lack of attention or disruptive behavior

60% or lower: I don't recognize your face.

A Note on Punctuality

I will begin class promptly at our designated meeting time. Students should arrive five minutes before class begins in order to find a seat and make any preparations of materials before class starts. Getting to class ahead of time is also a courtesy to other students, who may become distracted by late arrivers. Students who must routinely arrive late due to circumstances outside their control (for example, a class immediately before mine on the opposite side of campus) should inform me at the beginning of the semester.

Weekly Response Worksheets

Each week, I will post a series of short answer questions for students to complete in response to the week's assigned readings. Unless otherwise instructed, worksheets will be due each Monday at 5 pm. Small group discussions will focus in part on responses to these worksheets.

Exams

The midterm and final exams are each worth 15% of the course grade. They will contain a mixture of short answer and essay questions. I will not offer the final exam at any time besides the time listed below unless the student has petitioned their dean's office for a change in exam time.

Communication, Office Hours, Question about Grades

Please direct all communication with me outside class or office hours through my campus email account, which can be found in the header of this syllabus. I check my campus email account several times daily and will try to reply to student emails as quickly as possible. That being said, students should not necessarily expect me to reply immediately to emails sent to me at the last minute. I may not be able to reply to questions about course material the morning of an exam or provide resources for an assignment the night before it is to be turned in.

My office hours exist solely for you to visit me with questions about this class. If you can't make those times, email me to schedule a more convenient appointment time. Email is only for brief communications. If you have long and complicated questions, come to my office hours. I will not send grades over email—check Sakai for the latest updates. After I have graded and returned your assignments, there is a 24-hour moratorium before I will answer questions about that assignment.

Technology Use

Because this class is online, use of technology is clearly required for participation. I strongly encourage students to limit their distractions during synchronous, small group discussions.

Research is fairly clear that (a) retention of information from class is significantly reduced when students shift their attention between what's happening in the classroom and what's happening elsewhere on the internet, and (b) humans are terrible at multitasking, even if they think they're good at it. I have preserved my usual language from in-person classes below in italics as a reference point for my expectations for responsible technology use during class time.

“I will not allow the use of computers, tablets, or other electronic devices during class. There may be some days when I will ask you to bring a computer with you (if there is an online activity, for example). Most of class time will involve lecture or discussion of articles and concepts related to the course—this can be accomplished without computers. The use of cell phones or other mobile communication devices is strictly prohibited during class, except in the event of an emergency. Cell phones minimally should be put on silent but preferably should be turned off. Students discovered using their phones during class time will be asked to turn off their phones and place them out of reach.”

Student Accessibility

Loyola University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with Students Accessibility Center (SAC), located in Sullivan Center, Suite 117. Students should provide me with an accommodation notification from SAC, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with me individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. For more information or further assistance, please call (773) 508-3700 or visit <http://www.luc.edu/sac>.

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for adhering to university policy on academic honesty by avoiding acts of plagiarism or cheating. Students can find more information about what constitutes plagiarism at the Writing Center's website: (<http://www.luc.edu/writing/studentresources/onlineresources>). Consult the College of Arts and Sciences' statement to learn more about college policy: (<http://www.luc.edu/cas/advising/academicintegritystatement>). I reserve the right to exercise case-by-case discretion in assigning penalties for acts of academic dishonesty. Generally speaking, however, students should expect to receive a score of “0” on any assignment or exam where they are observed plagiarizing, cheating, or passing off someone else's ideas as their own. If more than one instance occurs during the semester, offending students should expect to fail my course. I report all acts of academic dishonesty to the Dean of College of Arts and Science's office.

Readings

Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments in preparation for class. Students should read carefully and be ready to discuss the material, as discussions based around these readings will form the basis of the participation grade. I reserve the right to make changes to the reading list and will inform students well in advance of any changes.

Unless otherwise noted on the calendar, readings should be completed no later than Monday of each week. Students are responsible for the material from all assigned readings for the midterm and final exams. Except for assignments from required texts (see above), all articles/chapters will

be posted on Sakai. Students may not share course materials with others outside of the class without my written permission.

Week of...	Theme/Topic	Readings
Aug. 24	Today's Political Parties	Course syllabus (<i>complete below by 8/26—no response paper</i>) Grossman and Hopkins Ahler and Sood (skim)
Aug. 31	What Do Parties Do?	Cohen et al. Lee, pp. 1-12
Sep. 7	Why Do We Have Parties?	Aldrich, Ch. 1 Bawn et al.
Sep. 14	How Do U.S. Parties Compare to Parties Abroad?	Ishiyama, Ch. 7
Sep. 21	Programs vs. Patronage	<i>Boss</i> , Royko (in its entirety)
Sep. 28	Identity vs. Ideology	Mason Ch. 1 Levendusky, Ch. 1 Achen & Bartels, Ch. 10
Oct. 5	The Roots of Identity and Ideology	<i>Tribe</i> (in its entirety)
Oct. 12	Midterm Exam + The Founding	Midterm Exam on Monday, 10/12 (<i>complete by 10/14 – no response paper</i>) Federalist 10 Washington's Farewell Address
Oct. 19	The Emergence of Mass Parties, 1800-1860	Aldrich, Ch. 4-5 Tocqueville pp. 174-195 <i>Optional: "When Congress Was Armed and Dangerous," New York Times</i>
Oct. 26	The Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Solid South, 1860-1965	Writings of Frederick Douglass -- Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln -- Letter to Private Dalzell Richardson, Ch. 6 Key, Ch. 1 & 14

		<i>Optional: “What a White Supremacist Coup Looks Like,” The New Yorker</i>
Nov. 2	Economic Conflict, 1896-1940	Achen & Bartels, pp. 177-191, 200-205 William Jennings Bryan “Cross of Gold” Speech Essays by Jane Addams --Problems of Municipal Administration --The Progressive’s Dilemma: The New Party -- <i>Optional: If Men Were Seeking the Franchise</i>
Nov. 9	Realignments, 1932- 2020	Miller & Schofield, pp. 245-249, 254-259 Jones, Ch. 3 Fiorina & Abrams, Ch. 5
Nov.16	Civil Rights and the “New Constitution”	Allen, Part I Kerner Commission Report Summary <i>Optional: “Rage, Riots, and Ruin,” Chicago Tribune</i>
Nov. 23	<i>No classes – Thanksgiving Week</i>	
Nov. 30	Citizenship and Democracy	Allen, Part II - III <i>Optional, Epilogue</i>
Dec. 12	Final Exam – 1 pm	

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be informed through email and verbally in class, and a new syllabus document will be posted on Sakai.