

The full title of this course is Presidential Elections, Gridlock and Policy Strategy. We will devote approximately half the course to understanding the short-term and long-term trends that led to the election of Donald Trump. The long term trends have been visible at least since Richard Nixon's election and many of our readings will complement analyses of the 2016 election with a longer term perspective. *One of the research paper options* will explicitly offer students the opportunity to engage in a comparison of the short and long term causes. *A second option* will offer students the opportunity to focus even more deeply on analyses of the white working class voters who are widely recognized as the target of Trump's populist rhetoric and the reason for his electoral success in states that were previous Democratic Party strongholds.

The second major theme of the course involves policy strategy, not in Washington which is hamstrung by gridlock, but in the states. Our focus will be on states as policy laboratories, states as innovators vis a vis unpopular policies of the federal government, and states as preemptors of policy innovation by cities that are dissatisfied with both the federal and state policy status quo. Questions of federalism, policy entrepreneurialism, and democratic representation will be central to our discussions and readings. Students will be encouraged to engage in a comparative research project on policies that pit states against the federal government, cities against their states, or a combination.

Finally, because our readings about the 2016 election will be so rich and will not be limited solely to working class white voters, students may seek approval for a research project that is rooted in specific course readings and discussions and that yields a bibliography and data that are readily available for a term paper.

Option 1 will involve a comparison of *The Politics of Resentment* (course text) with Edsall & Edsall's, *Chain Reaction*, Rieder's *Canarsie*, and a third text to be determined. The student will compare the course text to two or three of these books.

Option 2 will involve a comparison of *The Politics of Resentment* with two or three of the following: Vance's *Hillbilly elegy*, Mann's *Welcome to the homeland*, or Hochschild's *Strangers in their own land*.

In Option 3 the student will pick issues that pit innovative state governments against the status quo federal government or innovative cities against states, or a combination. The same policy can be examined in multiple states/cities or multiple policies can be compared.

Option 4 is both self-explanatory and the one that requires office hour and email discussion and evaluation.

Grading: In a class of such small numbers, class participation is crucial. As well, because all of the research papers will be evaluated on how well they engage with the course materials, engagement with the readings is imperative. Class participation, oral presentations, and brief assignments that may be added after the start of the term will constitute 50 percent of the grade. The research paper of 20 pages or more will comprise the other 50% of the grade.

WEEK ONE

BROAD BRUSH STROKES OF THE COURSE

A. MacGillis, "Revenge of the Forgotten Class" publica.org

N. Cohn, "The Obama-Trump voters are real. Here's what they think." NYT 8/15/17.

"How states and localities are filling the gaps left by Washington's gridlock," Washington Post.

"Bill to further limit abortions in PA passes Senate committee." Philly.com

M. Gordon et al., "Understanding HB2" Charlotte Observer (3/26/16).

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article68401147.html>

FEDERALISM: State Laboratories or Gridlock's Vacuum?

The Assignment due on Monday draws from this week's readings, so check it out so you can perhaps save yourself some effort.

"Lawmakers strike back against voter-approved ballot measures" Stateline Legislative Review 2017

"California wants strict auto emission rules." NYT 5/23/07.

"States rise up against Washington," TheHill.com

"Thwarted in Washington, the Koch network racks up conservative victories in the states." Washington Post

G. Moncrief & P. Squire, *Why States Matter* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), chs. 1-2.

PREEMPTION ... of democracy?

“Cities clash with state governments over social and environmental policies,” Wall Street Journal July 7, 2016.

“Age gap fuels city-state clashes,” *Stateline* (7/12/16).

A. Greenblatt, “Arkansas cities pass LGBT protections that defy state’s new discrimination law.” *Governing.com* 5/11/15.

A. Blinder, “When a state balks at a city’s minimum wage.” NYT 2/21/16.

“Iowa’s G.O.P. statehouse shows the locals who’s boss.” NYT 2/21/17.

L. Riverstone-Newell, “The Rise of State Preemption Laws in Response to Local Policy Innovation.” *Publius* (2017).

WEEK TWO

ASSIGNMENT due Monday at 6 pm by email PDF attachment: “Show me the curiosity!”

Do some further digging on media coverage of Federal-State-Local conflict on a policy that is mentioned in the readings from last week using database tools (such as Lexus-Nexus Academic, which allows narrowing to particular sources or a very broad search). Reference Librarians such as Danya Leebaw are specialists in instructing students on use of these databases, which are crucial for bibliographic development. Turn in a typed, double-spaced, 3-page Investigative Report that draws upon at least three articles that are listed in the report.

G. Moncrief & P. Squire, *Why States Matter*, chs. 3 and 5.

Focus on the idea of states as policy laboratories for innovation and both institutional and partisan checks within the states.

G. Moncrief & P. Squire, *Why States Matter*, chs. 4-6.

Recall the context of earlier mention of ALEC. Does professionalization make the legislature more susceptible to ALEC influence? What is the impact of term limits? Why has the voice of the people, through the referenda and initiative, become more significant in states since the 2000 redistricting?

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped: The 2016 election the broke all the rules* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), chs. 1-2.

- white working class and the correlated discussions of socio-economic and demographic indicators
- if the long term trend of the white working class has been support of the GOP, then only some areas will show significant change from McCain '08 and Romney '12. Where do we see increases for Trump from these past benchmarks?
- What is "the no-third-term tendency?"
- What is the GOP bias from the Electoral College?
- Don't skip the footnotes to materials that pique your interest or surprise you. Be a scholar, follow it up, and send me a synopsis of what you learned.
- What would be the structure of a research project based on Figures 2.5 and 2.6? What would be the structure of a research project on Clinton's gains over Obama?
- What is meant by the claim that Hispanics and Blacks are "distributed inefficiently?"

WEEK THREE

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped*, chs. 3-4

- What does Table 3.1 tells us about Presidential coattails? What does Table 3.1 suggest as an interesting research project for 2016?
- What is the prognosis for Democrats in the 2018 Senate elections? 2018 House elections?
- The courts and redistricting ...?
- MN districts that are promising for campaign work ... ?
- What explains the Coffman, Comstock and Curbelo outcomes? And Nolan?

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped*, chs. 5-6

- What variables might explain turnout changes in elections? Think about past courses and present readings.
- Why might it be sensible to change the nomination rules to give greater weight to states that voted for the party previously?
- What is the predictive power of turnout levels in partisan presidential primaries for general election outcomes? Would this be an interesting research topic?

- Is a party well-served by circling its wagons in the primaries, saving money by avoiding divisive intramural contests, and focusing on the other party's candidate?

REVIEW AND CUSHION DAY

WEEK FOUR

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped*, ch. 7

Civic Engagement Fund, "Breaking Away: Exploring the third party millennial "protest" vote of 2016." (powerpoint).

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped*, chs. 9 & 13

- What explanatory variables do these two articles offer us for the Trump election? How do they square with earlier discussions of the white working class?
- What built in limits of Republican domestic populism seem to emerge during the campaign?
- Are there other sources of resentment besides racial that our course has identified as characterizing the white working class?

A. Abramowitz & R. Teixeira, "The decline of the white working class and the rise of mass upper-middle class." *Political Science Quarterly* 124:3 (2009).

WEEK FIVE

K. J. Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* (U. of Chicago Press, 2016).

As we read this book, at the end of each chapter you should take stock of the following:

- What makes this resentment specifically rural, rather than a class phenomenon?
- Is this really a cultural argument, or is this an economic narrative obscured by cultural labels?
- Is rural resentment distinctively different than racial resentment?
- Why do people prefer less government when they might benefit from more government regulation and greater government redistribution through social benefits?
- Have rural voters been duped by Republican rhetoric against big government and taxes (by a corporate elite)?

Wednesday:

Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment*, ch. 3.

If you have midterms next week, push further ahead in this book now!

Friday:

Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment*, ch. 4.

WEEK SIX

MIDTERM BREAK

Wednesday:

Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment*, ch. 5-6

Friday:

Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment*, ch. 7-8

WEEK SEVEN

THIS IS ANOTHER WEEK FOR YOU TO BE MAKING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON YOUR FINAL PROJECT. WE WILL HAVE CLASS ALL THREE DAYS BUT THERE WILL BE NO READINGS for Monday and Wednesday.

Monday: The Bureaucracy under divided government

Wednesday: Policymaking strategies at the Federal Level

Friday:

E, Chemerinsky, J. Forman, A. Hopper, & S. Kamin, "Cooperative Federalism and Marijuana Regulation," *UCLA Law Review* (2015).

WEEK EIGHT

WE WILL HAVE STUDENT PRESENTATIONS ON RESEARCH PROJECTS ON MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. FRIDAY we will have a set of assigned readings for discussion.

Monday: TBA

Wednesday: TBA

Friday:

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped*, chs. 8 & 14

- Why are these two chapters paired?
- What factors emerge to explain the surprising level of support that Donald Trump received among Latinx voters? Be specific with data.
- Why might you disagree with the critique of sampling among Latinx voters offered in ch. 8?
- What is the “emerging Democratic majority” thesis, in your own words? Say more than demographics is destiny. What would the expectation be for educational attainment in the future vs. the present among whites?

WEEK NINE

MORE STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Monday: TBA

Wednesday: TBA

Friday:

L. Sabato, K. Kondik & G. Skelley, eds., *Trumped*, chs. 10-12. Three chapters, final opportunity for stellar class participation.

WEEK TEN

TBA