Course Description: This course is a survey of the development of the party system from the founding of the republic to the present, together with an examination of party processes, party machines, pressure groups, party finances, the electorate, nominating techniques, political campaigns, and elections. These topics will be explored through lecture, group discussions, and written assignments. Credit Hours: 3. Prerequisite: POL 261.

Course Objectives: Specific course objectives include:
- Students will gain factual knowledge and information regarding concepts related to political parties and interest groups in America
- Students will learn fundamental principles and theories in the area of political parties and interest groups
- Students will increase analytical, critical thinking, and communication skills

Textbooks & Required Materials:
Additional readings will be handed out in class, posted on the course Blackboard website, or placed on reserve in Newton Gresham Library.

Exams and Grading: Your grade for this course will be determined by your performance in class and on 15 take-home/in-class assignments, three exams, and one 5-7 page paper, as follows:

- Class Participation (Attendance & Engagement) 15 pts
- Take-home & In-Class Assignments (15@4 points each) 60 pts
- Paper (Due dates vary, see below) 100 pts
- Exam #1 (Thursday, October 4th) 100 pts
- Exam #2 (Tuesday, December 4th) 100 pts
- Final Exam (As scheduled by University) 25 pts

Assignments. The take-home/in-class assignments are posted on the course Blackboard website or will be handed out in class. You must be present in class (or have a documented excused absence) to earn credit for these assignments. Each assignment is worth a maximum of 4 points (A=4 points; B=3 points; C=2 points; D=1 point; F=0 points). You are expected to complete 17 of these assignments and turn them in at the beginning of the appropriate class meetings. No late assignments will be accepted. You will receive a grade of zero (0) for each assignment you fail to complete. Your lowest two scores will be dropped from the grade calculation.

Exams. Exams are in-class, closed book, closed notes. The exams will require you to answer several short answer questions and/or at least one longer essay question. You are expected to take the exams at the scheduled times. If you must miss an exam for some legitimate reason, you must contact me before the date of the exam if at all possible. Requests to take a make-up exam will require some documentation or other evidence attesting to your circumstances. If you fail to contact me within 24 hours of the date of the missed exam, you automatically forfeit the opportunity to take a makeup exam, and your grade for the exam will be recorded as zero (0).
Paper. You must complete one of the following 5-7 page papers:

Paper #1 (Due Date: Thursday, September 6th): Attracting and Maintaining Interest Group Members
Paper #2 (Due Date: Thursday, September 20th): America’s Two Party System in Comparison
Paper #3 (Due Date: Thursday, November 1st): Organized Interests in Presidential Nominations
Paper #4 (Due Date: Tuesday, November 27th): Organized Interests in the Policymaking Process

By the end of the second week of classes (Friday, August 31st), you must let me know which paper you will be completing (by signing up in class or contacting me via e-mail). Anyone not selecting a paper will be assigned one. You MUST complete the paper you select (or are assigned), and may not turn more than the one required paper. More detailed information on this assignment is posted on the course Blackboard website and will be handed out in class.

Course grades will be calculated according to the following scale: A = 360 points or more; B = 320 to 359.999 points; C = 280 to 319.999 points; D = 240 to 279.999 points; F = less than 240 points.

Instructor Evaluations: Students will be given the opportunity to complete a course/instructor evaluation form near the end of the semester.

Attendance Policy: Regular and punctual class attendance is expected of each student at Sam Houston State University. Because class attendance and course grade are demonstrably and positively related, I expect students to attend all class sessions of this course. Regular attendance is important because we will cover information in class that is not found in the texts. Attendance will be taken in every class meeting. If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to become informed on what was covered in class. Please get class notes from a fellow student. It is not my policy to give out my lecture notes.

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty.

Americans with Disabilities Act: SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.pdf.

Religious Holidays: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. “Religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/861001.pdf.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: Students are expected to abide by the Classroom Rules of Conduct as outlined by the Dean of Students: http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Note: This schedule and the reading assignments are tentative. Changes will be announced in class.

I. INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZED INTERESTS

August 23 (Thursday): The Role of Interest Groups in Society
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 1

Madison, James. Federalist No. 10: The Utility of the Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection. (available on Blackboard)

de Tocqueville, Alexis. Democracy in America. Book 1, Chapter 12. (available on Blackboard)

August 28 (Tuesday): Growth in Interest Group Activity
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 2


August 30 (Thursday): Interest Group Bias?
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 10


September 4 (Tuesday): Interest Group Origin and Maintenance
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 3


September 6 (Thursday): Definition and Origin of Political Parties
Hershey, Chapter 1


PAPER #1 DUE: ATTRACTING & MAINTAINING INTEREST GROUP MEMBERS
September 11 (Tuesday): America’s Two-Party System
Hershey, Chapter 2


September 13 (Thursday): Video – “A Third Choice” (57 Minutes)
No readings

September 18 (Tuesday): Modern Developments in Political Parties
Hershey, Chapter 16


September 20 (Thursday): National Party Organizations
Hershey, Chapter 4


September 25 (Tuesday): State and Local Party Organizations
Hershey, Chapter 3


September 27 (Thursday): Responsible Parties?
Hershey, Chapter 15


October 2 (Tuesday): Party Activists
Hershey, Chapter 5


October 4 (Thursday): EXAM #1

October 9 (Tuesday): Interaction of Interest Groups & Parties
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 4

October 10 (Wednesday): NO PENALTY DROP DEADLINE****

II. GETTING ELECTED:
ORGANIZED INTERESTS IN ELECTIONS

October 11 (Thursday): Party in the Electorate - Development & Persistence of Party Identification
Hershey, Chapter 6


October 16 (Tuesday): Party in the Electorate – Realignment & Dealignment
Hershey, Chapter 7


October 18 (Thursday): Party in the Electorate – Voter Turnout
Hershey, Chapter 8


October 23 (Tuesday): Choosing Candidates
Hershey, Chapter 9

October 25 (Thursday): Presidential Nominations
Hershey, Chapter 10

October 30 (Tuesday): Video – “Chicago, 1968” (58 Minutes)
No readings

November 1 (Thursday): Interest Groups in Elections
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 5

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**PAPER #3 DUE: ORGANIZED INTERESTS IN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS**

November 6 (Tuesday): The General Election
Hershey, Chapter 11

November 8 (Thursday): Financing the Campaign
Hershey, Chapter 12
III. MAKING POLICY:
ORGANIZED INTERESTS IN GOVERNMENT

November 13 (Tuesday): Organized Interests in the Legislative Branch
Hershey, Chapter 13

Berry and Wilcox, Ch. 6 and Ch. 8, pp. 131-134; 145-148


November 15 (Thursday): Movie – “The Great Health Care Debate” (57 Minutes)
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 9

November 20 (Tuesday): Grassroots Lobbying
Berry & Wilcox, Chapter 7


November 22 (Thursday): NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

November 27 (Tuesday): Organized Interests in the Executive Branch
Hershey, Chapter 14, pp. 270-279

Berry and Wilcox, Ch. 8, pp. 135-140


PAPER #4 DUE: ORGANIZED INTERESTS & POLICY
November 29 (Thursday): Organized Interests in the Judicial Branch
   Hershey, Chapter 14, pp. 279-285
   Berry and Wilcox, Ch. 8, pp. 140-145.


December 4 (Tuesday): EXAM #2

December 6 (Thursday): Review for Final Exam

Week of December 8-13:
   FINAL EXAM AT DAY & TIME SCHEDULED BY UNIVERSITY
   (http://www.shsu.edu/students/finalexam.html)