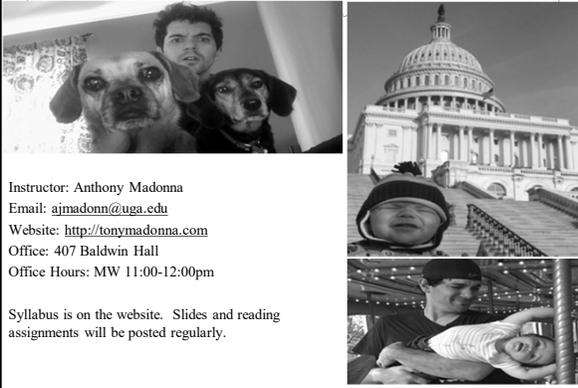


Introduction to Political Science

POLS 2000
The University of Georgia
Prof. Anthony Madonna
ajmadonn@uga.edu

Who Am I?



Instructor: Anthony Madonna
Email: ajmadonn@uga.edu
Website: <http://tonymadonna.com>
Office: 407 Baldwin Hall
Office Hours: MW 11:00-12:00pm

Syllabus is on the website. Slides and reading assignments will be posted regularly.

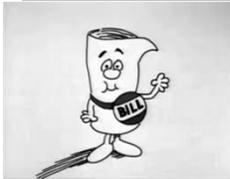
Course Description

This course is intended to provide students with a basic understanding of political science. Throughout the semester we will examine different topics of political science research as well as different approaches taken towards understanding those topics. The course involves an in-depth analysis of political actors and institutions. Common modes of scientific analysis in political science will be examined with an emphasis on research design, strategic behavior, rational choice theory and basic statistical techniques. A basic understanding of high school math is assumed.

Course Goals

The primary goals of this course are two-fold. First, students should be provided with a conceptual background and toolset that they can use to critically analyze what is written in the newspaper or said in the news today, tomorrow, and in the more distant future. Second, it is expected that upon completion of this course students will be able to both understand and conduct scholarly research.

Key Course Points...



Policy-making in the United States is slow, contentious and frustrating.

The institutions that govern the American law-making process are complex and important.

The historical motivations for choosing these institutions (and the policies they produce) are muddled.

Ignorance and apathy are rational.

Politicians will "overpromise." This is also rational.

In short, politics is complicated.



Policy-Making Is Slow

"Each year, from 1945 until 1957, Congress considered and failed to pass a civil rights bill. Congress finally passed limited Civil Rights Acts in 1957 and 1960, but they offered only moderate gains. As a result of the 1957 Act, the United States Commission on Civil Rights was formed to investigate, report on, and make recommendations to the President concerning civil rights issues."

Substantive civil rights legislation was finally achieved in 1964 and 1965.



Policy-Making Is Slow



Before the passage of the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act in 2007, significant lobbying legislation died in 1967, 1976, 1978, 1994.

Studies had long linked smoking to public health—even before the U.S. Public Health Service became involved in 1956. In 1964, the Surgeon General finally reported a definite correlation between smoking and cancer. It was not until 1984 (after numerous failures) that significant warning labels were required on cigarette packages.

Institutions are Important

The US is a federal system where members of the national legislature are elected from diverse geographic districts

The party system is weak and has comparatively little influence on the nominating process

The federal government is a separation of powers system where senators, house members, the executive, the courts system and bureaucrats share power.

In short, there are tons of checks in the system and the US system is more like Veep than House of Cards.



Institutions Are Important

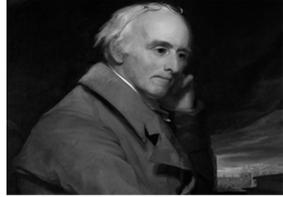


“I think we can stipulate once again for the umpteenth time that matters that have any level of controversy about it in the Senate will require 60 votes.” – *Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY)*

Institutional Design is Complicated

“The Founders” couldn’t foresee everything and were rarely in agreement.

“I shall continue to believe that ‘great men’ are a lie and that there is very little difference in that superstition which leads us to believe in what the world calls ‘great men’ and in that which leads us to believe in witches and conjurers.” – Benjamin Rush, to John Adams



Institutional Design is Complicated

The origins of the Senate filibuster...

Rule	Source	Consequence
Elimination of the Previous Question Motion	1806 Rules Codification	The Senate no longer had a formal method of ending debate by a simple majority.
Staggered Senate Terms	United States Constitution	The Senate is a “Continuing Body” and does not adopt new rules at the start of each Congress.
The Vice President’s Status as the President of the Senate	United States Constitution	Centralized chamber power could be wielded by a member that does not share the interests of the Senate majority.

Apathy and Ignorance are Rational

You don’t like politics? You don’t say...

It makes sense that people “defer.”

The Washington Post:

“Only 36 percent of Americans can actually name the three branches of government the Constitution created. Only 38 percent of Americans knew the Republican Party controls the U.S. House of Representatives, while 17 percent think Democrats are still in charge. The number of people who knew Republicans were in charge has dropped 17 percent since the last time [the pollster] asked, back in 2011, right after Republicans reclaimed control.

An identical number, 38 percent, know Democrats run the Senate, while 20 percent believe Republicans control the upper chamber. Only 27 percent knew it takes a two-thirds majority of the House and Senate to override a presidential veto.”



Overpromising is Rational

We need to do a better job understanding how politicians operate within this system.




- “Acceptable bullshit” caused by primaries, public opinion...
- Overpromising is rational
- Everyone is a hypocrite on rules, federalism, etc.
- Legislation is COMPLICATED. Bills will be long and compromises are necessary. Nobody gets everything that they want and most bills will have some negative consequences.
- There can be no heroes in American politics
- And there are no silver bullets for reforms

Overpromising is Rational

Vox — Presidents consistently overpromise and underdeliver. What they need to say to get elected far outpaces what they can actually do in office. President Obama is a perfect example. His 2008 campaign didn't just promise health-care reform, a stimulus bill, and financial regulation. It also promised a cap-and-trade bill to limit carbon emissions, comprehensive immigration reform, gun control, and much more. His presidency, he said, would be change American could believe in. But it's clear now that much of the change he promised isn't going to happen — in large part because he doesn't have the power to make it happen.

You would think voters in general and professional media pundits in particular would, by now, be wise to this pattern. But they're not. Each disappointment wounds anew. Each unchecked item on the to-do list is a surprise. Belief in the presidency seems to be entirely robust to the inability of any particular president to make good on their promises. And so the criticism is always the same: why can't the president be more like the Green Lantern?

According to Brendan Nyhan, the Dartmouth political scientist who coined the term, the Green Lantern Theory of the Presidency is "the belief that the president can achieve any political or policy objective if only he tries hard enough or uses the right tactics." In other words, the American president is functionally all-powerful, and whenever he can't get something done, it's because he's not trying hard enough, or not trying smart enough.

Nyhan further separates it into two variants: "the Reagan version of the Green Lantern Theory and the LBJ version of the Green Lantern Theory." The Reagan version, he says, holds that "if you only communicate well enough the public will rally to your side." The LBJ version says that "if the president only tried harder to win over congress they would vote through his legislative agenda." In both cases, Nyhan argues, "we've been sold a false bill of goods."



Politics is Complicated

Recognize that politics is complicated. So you can—and should—defer sometimes, but challenge yourself too.

- Understand that opinion leaders have differing motivations (often financial)
- Get out of the echo chamber, it makes you soft
- If you care about policy, you can't disengage after an election
- Not every issue needs to be part of something bigger. Sometimes "shit happens"
- At the same point, tragedies are often the result of politics. Expect policy debates after them
- Challenge information



"Politics is more complicated than physics." — Albert Einstein



"Shit Happens." — Abraham Lincoln

Politics is Complicated

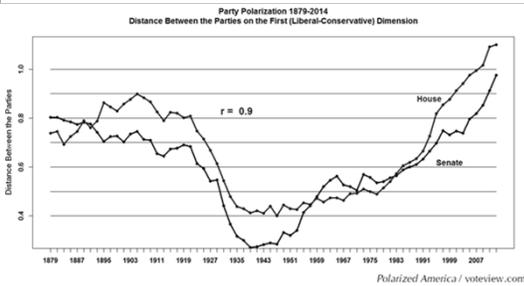


When people fail to recognize the complicated nature of politics, they do several things.

They withdraw from it and refuse to engage political issues. They surround themselves with like-minded individuals, and protect themselves and their views for new/different perspectives.

Simplifying issues and/or failing to engage drastically increases the likelihood politics will fail. And when politics fails, there are often dire consequences.

Politics is Complicated



We are reaching a critical point where political failure is increasingly likely.

Politics is Complicated...But it is Accessible

Living in age of cheap information: internet, cable television, newspapers. Information is available.

- One of the goals of this course is to provide students with the ability to understand, synthesize and conduct scholarly arguments.



What do you need to successfully engage American politics?

- Time, enthusiasm, thick skin
- It's ok to be wrong!

Realistically, What to Take Away



Five things I hope you will take away from this class:

- Read and understand political stories
 - Identify bullshit
- Identify and learn how to use good political science sources
- Improve your writing
- Be familiar with techniques used in upper-level classes
- Possess a basic understanding of political science and academia

Readings

The following book is required and available at the Campus Bookstore:

Van Belle, Douglas. 2015. *A Novel Approach to Politics*. 4th Ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Students will not only be expected to have done the reading assignments, but should also be aware of relevant news stories. As such, I recommend reading a daily newspaper – such as the New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com>) and/or the Washington Post (<http://www.washingtonpost.com>) - or at least checking cnn.com.

– Political blogs? Links on the course website.

CNN, Drudge Report, Politico, Roll Call, Political Wire, Politics1, Five Thirty Eight, The Monkey Cage, The Upshot, Vox

Readings



Additional readings will be posted on the course website. Many of these readings will be highly technical in nature. As such, students are not expected to understand *all* aspects of each paper. However, they will be held accountable for a basic understanding of the paper's theory and applications.

Grades

Your grade in this class will be assigned according to the following:

- **Class Attendance/Participation (10% of final grade):** One of the goals for this class is for students to become comfortable discussing political institutions, issues, events and research. Hence, they will be encouraged to attend and participate in course discussions. More than three absences will result in a lowering of a student's participation grade. A student's participation grade may also include several small quizzes or assignments.

News



A new HuffPost/YouGov poll finds that 71% of Americans now see the partial government shutdown as at least somewhat serious problem, a modest uptick from 62% last week and 61% at the beginning of the shutdown. The share who consider it very serious now stands at 42%, up from one-third last week. A new Reuters/Ipsos poll finds a 51% majority said President Trump "deserves most of the blame" for the shutdown, up four percentage points from two weeks earlier. About a third, 32%, blame congressional Democrats.

Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX), the top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, told Defense News that declaring a national emergency and using military dollars for President Trump's border wall would be "damaging" to military readiness. He added: "In short, I'm opposed to using defense dollars for non-defense purposes."



"Colorado entered a new era of Democratic political dominance Tuesday as Jared Polis was sworn in as the state's 43rd governor, promising to make the state's booming economy fairer and health care more affordable," the Denver Post reports. "Polis' longtime partner, Marlon Reis, and their two children stood with him for the ceremony on the west steps of the state Capitol. He took the oath at precisely noon, his left hand on a siddur, a Jewish prayer book." "In his first speech as governor, Polis celebrated the diversity of the state and recognized the historic moment: Polis is the first openly gay governor elected to lead a state. He also is Colorado's first Jewish governor."



After North Carolina congressional candidate Mark Harris (R) finished addressing Mecklenburg County Republicans, he tried to avoid questions from WSOC-TV by running out of a fire exit. After the bizarre exit, in a tweet to the reporter, Harris said he had to get home to watch the college football National Championship game.

Grades

- **Midterm Exams (40% of final grade):** Two midterm examinations (worth 20% each) will be given during the course. The dates are listed on the syllabus as Monday, **September 30th** and Wednesday, **November 13th**. These exams will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions. They may also feature several exercises where students will apply techniques discussed in class. The midterm examination will be non-cumulative. If a student is unable to take one of the exams on the scheduled date, they should contact the course instructor beforehand. Missed exams will only be excused for a documented illness (documentation must be provided by a physician) or a death in the family. If a student is excused from an exam, their final exam will be weighted accordingly.
- **Final Exam (20% of final grade):** The final exam is scheduled for Wednesday, **December 11th** from 8:00 to 11:00am in the regular classroom, Baldwin Hall 302. Like the midterms, it will feature a mix of multiple choice and short essay questions. It may also feature several exercises where students will apply techniques discussed in class. The final exam will be non-cumulative.

The Test - Matching



- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Tet Offensive _____ | a) The 1984 Detroit Tigers |
| 2. Alan Trammell _____ | b) Vietnam War |
| 3. Huey Lewis _____ | c) force and balance |
| 4. Newton _____ | d) The News |

The Test – Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following refers to an economic system where society controls the means of production?

- a) mercantalism
- b) capitalism
- c) imperialism
- d) socialism

2. This theorist argued that life in the state of nature was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

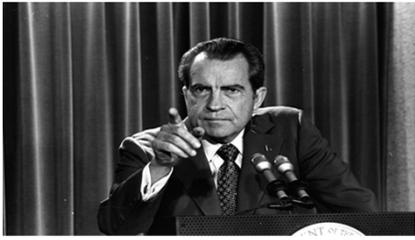
- a) John Locke
- b) Thomas Hobbes
- c) Adam Smith
- d) Steve Perry

The Test – Short Essay



1. Imagine the semester has just ended. It is 9:00 on a Friday night and you and some friends are at a party. Across the room you spot someone attractive. Your eyes meet. You walk over to them and introduce yourself. Your new friend then asks you to explain what an iron triangle is and how it works. What do you say?

Exams



DO NOT MISS AN EXAM DATE!

Grades

- **Research Paper (30% of final grade):** – Students will be expected to complete a research design proposal. The paper should be a maximum of 12 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, one inch margins, Times New Roman, 12 point font, Chicago style citations. Students will be allowed to choose the topic of their paper, provided it is related to political science. The instructor will be available during office hours and through e-mail for consultation. The paper should feature a review of the relevant scholarly literature, a well developed theory, and a detailed discussion of a potential test of that theory. The paper is due Monday, **December 2nd** at 5:00pm. *E-mailed papers will not be accepted.* Papers will be docked a full letter grade for each day they are late. A more detailed discussion of the paper project can be found here.

Final course grades will be assigned as follows: 100-93 = A, 90-92 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-, 60-69 = D, and 60-0. **Extra credit will not be given in this course.** A grade of a C or higher is necessary in order to be admitted as a Political Science major. The withdrawal date for this semester is May 29. Please speak with the instructor before withdrawing.

Cheating and Plagiarism



Will not be tolerated. Further information regarding academic honesty can be found at <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/>.

[INSERT ANGRY WIKIPEDIA RANT HERE]

Classroom/Section Behavior



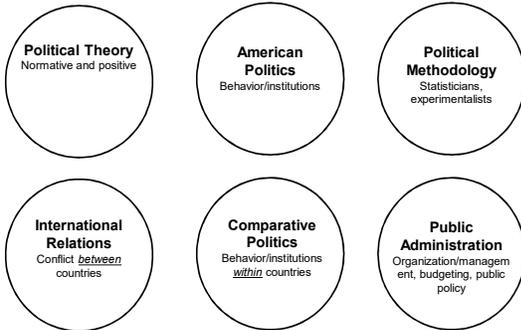
Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes cell phone usage, excessive talking and derogatory or offensive comments made during discussion. Students will be held responsible for all material discussed or assigned.

Classroom Behavior



Again – politics is complicated. Please be respectful of opposing viewpoints.

Political Science



What do you do with a Political Science Degree?

Assorted areas students have gone on to with a political science degree:

Political Theory

- Lobbying/NGO employment
- Law school
- Graduate school (MPA, MPP)

Journalism

International Relations

- Data analysis/management



Making the Best of Your Recruits

Stephen Pettigrew, ESPN/Fivethirtyeight: In most college towns, the unofficial start to next football season is National Signing Day. After months and even years of courting, athletic programs officially find out Wednesday which of recruits they've snagged, and which they've lost to rivals.

For those who care to listen, there's going to be a lot said about which schools nabbed the best recruiting class. But the pundits don't have the last word — wins and losses do. I looked at how well schools' recruiting classes translate into wins on the field and created a rating of how much each program underperforms or outperforms.

I built my data set using two sources. I used ratings created by Ken Massey, a statistician best known for his system of rating sports teams, to measure team success. The ratings take into account factors such as win-loss and strength of schedule, which allowed me to distinguish between two teams with an identical win-loss record. I then used recruiting data from Rivals to measure how well a team recruited in each year from 2002 to 2014. I made a simple statistical model to predict where a team would finish in the ratings and compared the prediction to its actual 2014 rating. The chart below shows how much better or worse each school [since 2005] compared with how its recruiting predicts that it would finish each year.

How Teams Have Fared Compared To Recruiting
Differences between actual Massey score and expected Massey score based on recruiting, average 2005-14

SCHOOLS	WORSE THAN EXPECTED			BETTER THAN EXPECTED		
	+40	+20	-20	-20	-40	-60
Wisconsin						
Oregon						
Missouri						
Oregon State						
Georgia Tech						
West Virginia						
Stanford						
Virginia Tech						
Northwestern						
TCU						
Oklahoma State						
Louisville						
Michigan State						
Ohio State						
Kansas State						
Penn State						
Raylor						
Wake Forest						
Texas Tech						
Arkansas						
Arizona State						
Alabama						
Boyon College						
LSU						
Vanderbilt						
Arkansas						
South Carolina						
Arizona						
Clemson						
Iowa						
Georgia						

General Tips to Succeed in College

1. [DISCLAIMER ABOUT ADVICE]
 - There isn't "one" way to do well in College.
 - Everyone who advises you is in some way biased — you might be wired a different way.
 - That being said....



2. Be prepared to work hard.
 - Everyone here is smart. Or at least smart enough...
 - Even if you are not graded on a curve, you are competing.

"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." -- Calvin Coolidge

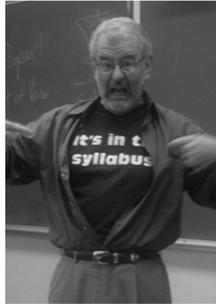
General Tips to Succeed in College



3. E-mail Etiquette...
 - Pick a PROFESSIONAL e-mail.
 - Address e-mails to faculty properly...
 - Sign your e-mails...
4. If you are not an early morning person, don't pretend...
 - You may not know your first year.
5. Introduce yourself to faculty and other students.
 - Attend office hours
 - Form a study group
 - But avoid "oversharing"...
 - Learn names!
6. Show up.
 - Seems obvious – but you'll be surprised.
 - It is extremely easy to do nothing.
 - On time.

General Tips to Succeed in College

6. Know classroom etiquette
 - Participate and be polite!
 - Cellphones should be off.
 - If you had a rough night, sit in the back.
7. Read the syllabus!
 - Reread the syllabus.
 - It's not an iTunes agreement.
8. Do the reading!
 - Or at least "skim" the reading.
 - Even if you don't think you have to...
9. Questions? Ask.
 - A tough prospect for good student...
 - Odds are that someone else is thinking the same things.
 - I don't always have a good handle on what students "know".



Become a Student of "College"

1. Scout your classes...
 - Tons of information online. There's no excuse for being "surprised".
 - Don't just pick classes that fit your schedule.
 - Faculty that teach at the best times...
2. Bite only what you can chew.
 - Too many classes – or too many difficult classes – has terrifying results.
 - Dropping/withdrawing is often the safe play. Know the withdrawal deadline.
3. It's a big campus, plan accordingly...
 - Don't schedule classes back to back if you can't get there.
4. Understand what faculty do...



Understand Faculty



1. Know the differences...
 - Graduates students, visiting, assistant professors, associates, full, etc...
2. Getting a job...
 - Applied to 62 jobs, 7 interviews, 3 offers...
 - No geographic connection to the area.
3. Research...
 - The bulk of my time pre-tenure...
 - "A mile deep and an inch wide"
 - Conferences – Or "four fun-packed days at a New Orleans Budget Lodge."
 - Publishing: It's horrific.
 - Interested?!? Ask!
4. Teaching...
 - 2-2.
 - Outside the classroom: meetings, e-mails, etc...
5. Service...
 - Committees, committees and more committees

Tests

1. Does the book have a website?
 - If so – check it out.
 - Practice quizzes, test bank questions, etc...
2. Listen to the Professor on test day!
 - If I give you a "hint" number 8 is "A" – it's actually A.
3. Check and double-check.
 - Don't make silly mistakes.
4. Leave nothing blank.
 - Bull#\$%^ is an important life skill.
 - "C" is a hell of a guess.
5. Questions?
 - Please, please ask!
 - Worst case scenario I tell you to "go to hell."
 - Before and after the test...



Other General Tips...



1. Study Abroad!
 - It's worth the money.
2. Yes. You have to buy the book.
 - Or at least you should.
3. Minimize debt.
 - If you don't need the credit card, don't take it.
4. CURO.
 - Differentiate yourself if you are thinking graduate school.
5. Not every class you take has to be vocational.
 - And it may end up vocational.
6. Challenge yourself. It's harder after college.
 - It's easy to insulate here.
7. Book "bucket list".
8. Be careful with what you post online.
 - It will be taken out of context.
9. Slow down.
 - It's ok to take a year.

Re-reading is inefficient. Here are 8 tips for studying smarter.

Vox - The way most students study makes no sense. That's the conclusion of Washington University in St. Louis psychologists Henry Roediger and Mark McDaniel — who've spent a combined 80 years studying learning and memory, and recently distilled their findings with novelist Peter Brown in the book *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. The majority of students study by re-reading notes and textbooks — but the psychologists' research, both in lab experiments and of actual students in classes, shows this is a terrible way to learn material. Using active learning strategies — like flashcards, diagramming, and quizzing yourself — is much more effective, as is spacing out studying over time and mixing different topics together.



McDaniel spoke with me about the eight key tips he'd share with students and teachers from his body of research.

- 1) Don't just re-read your notes and readings
- 2) Ask yourself lots of questions
- 3) Connect new information to something you already know
- 4) Draw out the information in a visual form
- 5) Use flashcards
- 6) Don't cram — space out your studying
- 7) Teachers should space out and mix up their lessons too
- 8) There's no such thing as a "math person"

Conclusion



Questions?

Concerns?

Angry Rants?
