Political Science 210
Interest Groups and Political Movements
Spring 2018, Johns Hall 109

Professor Guth
Johns Hall 111T; Ext. 3330; Jim.Guth@furman.edu
Office Hours: MWF, 10:00-11:15 a.m., or by appointment.

Required Texts:
- Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life*
- Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*

Class communications will be conducted through Moodle (and your Furman email account). So be sure to check your email and Moodle every day.

**REQUIREMENTS:** This course in American politics focuses on the civic and political roles of organized groups, associations and political movements. It will be taught in a discussion format, with an emphasis on class consideration of the texts and of contemporary organizational politics. You must read assigned items for each class day in order to participate meaningfully. You are responsible for the reading whether or not it is discussed in class. There will often be brief quizzes at the beginning of class to test your reading. In answering quizzes, you may use any written notes taken on the assignment (but not the text itself).

To incorporate current events into our discussions, you must also read the *New York Times* each day. You will compile a *New York Times Notebook*, summarizing and commenting on one article related to interest group or political movement politics each day. Your entry should provide a precis of the article, and then comment on its relationship to the texts, class lectures or discussion. On most class days, the instructor will begin class by calling at random on two or three students to report on a recent article they found interesting or instructive. Your *New York Times Notebook* should be compiled in a single electronic file, to be turned in at the end of the term for evaluation, but the notebook may be “called in” at any time (to encourage you to keep up to date!)

**EXAMS:** There will be three hour exams, on the days listed below. These will cover materials in each section of the class, but will not be cumulative. A sample test will be provided before the first exam. If you miss an exam due to death or serious illness in the family, or due to your own illness, you must arrange a make-up. All such absences must be excused by the Associate Dean’s office or by a doctor. If you miss an exam without valid excuse, you will receive an "F" on that exam. If you know you must be absent to participate in official University events, such as athletic or debate competition, you must take the exam in advance of the absence. If you have an accommodation, you must inform me as soon as possible to make arrangements for exams and other assignments (see further information below).

**EVENT REQUIREMENT:** Not all learning about American politics occurs in the classroom. A wide variety of events relevant to interest group politics takes place on campus every term. You are required to attend six such events and write brief reaction papers (2-3

1
pages) on each, focusing on their relationship to class materials and discussions. The instructor will announce eligible events when available. These may be speakers, films, or other meetings. There will be ample options (in terms of time, content, and political leaning). In special cases, the entire class may be asked to attend an event. Failure to complete this requirement will result in an “F” for the course.

As much as possible, we’ll try to incorporate these events into our class discussions, so be prepared to report on the events you attend. Your willingness and ability to do so will constitute part of your participation grade. **Note: You have three class days off to compensate you for the time spent meeting this course requirement (see schedule below).**

**GRADES:** Each exam counts 25%, for a total of 75% of the final grade. The last 25% will be based on attendance, preparation, reaction papers, your *New York Times Notebook*, performance on quizzes, class discussion and participation. As a reminder of the standards for grading, here is the descriptions of letter grades from the *Furman University Catalog*:

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**Grading scale for this class:**

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**OTHER INFORMATION:** Peer Tutors are available free of charge for many classes and may be requested by dropping by CAS (LIB 002) or online here: [www.furman.edu/CAS](http://www.furman.edu/CAS). Tutors are typically recommended by faculty and have performed well in the class. Professional Academic Assistance Staff in CAS can provide students assistance with time management, study skills, and organizational skills. The Writing and ESL Specialist provides professional writing support as well as support for students whose primary language is not English. **Accommodation Requests:** The Student Office for Accessibility Resources is committed to helping qualified students with disabilities achieve their academic goals by providing reasonable academic accommodations under appropriate circumstances. If you have a disability and anticipate the need for an accommodation in order to participate in this class, please register with the Student Office for Accessibility Resources. They will assist you in getting the resources you
may need to participate fully in this class. You can contact the SOAR office at 864.294.2320 or at soar@furman.edu. Find more information and request accommodations at the SOAR webpage.

**ETHICAL CONDUCT:** Your presence in class signifies that you accept the basic rules of academic honesty discussed at www.furman.edu/integrity. You must not engage in plagiarism or cheating in any form. Such conduct will not be tolerated. You will be required to state on each exam that you have not committed academic dishonesty. The penalty for violation is a grade of “F” on the assignment or exam.

Another aspect of ethical behavior involves **electronic devices.** Your learning and that of others is impeded by their classroom use. **You must not use laptops, cell phones, or other electronic devices in the classroom at any time. Nor may you leave the room during class to use them. All such devices must be turned off and “stowed” before you enter class.** All the experimental evidence on classroom learning shows that such devices are detriments to meaningful class involvement. And please note that all the psychological research on learning shows that taking notes manually is much more conducive to learning than using a laptop or tablet for that purpose.

**Class Schedule**

**Section 1. The Historical Basis of “Organized” Democracy** (January 8- February 2)

**READ: Skocpol, Diminished Democracy.**

In this section of the course, we will be looking at the historical development of organizations and associations in American life during the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} century and the impact that development had on modern democracy. This book, now more than a decade old, was a provocative contribution to arguments about the decline of “civic democracy” in the U.S., written by a distinguished sociologist/political scientist with clear sympathies for the left. We will consider her arguments, while looking for confirming evidence (or its absence) in our daily observation of American social and political life through the *New York Times* and other publications.

- **January 8.** The Study of Interest Groups in American Politics
- **January 10.** (Continued),
- **January 12.** Discussion of chapter 1.
- **January 15.** MLK holiday (no class).
- **January 17.** Discussion of chapter 2.
- **January 19.** Discussion of chapter 3.
- **January 22.** Discussion of chapter 4.
- **January 24.** Discussion of chapter 5.
- **January 26.** Discussion of chapter 6.
- **January 29.** Discussion of chapter 7.
- **January 31.** Wrapping it up.

***February 2.*** First Hour exam.
Section 2. Associational and Interest Group Life in Contemporary America (February 5-March 16)

READ: Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.

This book is one of the most famous written by any political scientist in recent decades. It stimulated an enormous public debate on the health of American democracy, one that extended from the White House (where Bill Clinton organized a seminar led by Professor Putnam) to academic conferences and college classes all over the country. *Bowling Alone* produced a massive outpouring of research by scholars hoping to confirm or refute Putnam’s contentions and was the opening salvo in a series of ongoing research projects by Putnam and his team.

February 5.  Discussion of chapter 1; “The Story Behind.”
February 7.  Discussion of chapters 2-4.
February 23. Discussion of chapters 21-22
February 28. Discussion of Appendices 1, 2, and 3.
March 2.  **No Class (Event Compensation Day)**
March 12, 14.  Summing it up: Reactions to Putnam.

***March 16.  **Second Hour Exam***

Section 3. Organizational Politics in 21st Century America (March 19-April 23)


**March 23.  **No Class (Event Compensation Day)**
March 26.  Discussion of chapters 4 and 5.
**March 30, April 2**  **No Class (Holidays)**
April 4.  Discussion of chapters 7 and 8.
**April 6.  **No Class (Event Compensation Day)**
April 11.  Discussion of chapters 10 and 11.
April 13.  Discussion of chapter 12.
April 18.  Discussion of chapters 15 and 16.
April 20.  Discussion of chapter 17.
April 23.  Summing it up.

***April 28.  **Third Hour Exam (12-2:30 p.m.)***