Instructor: Dr. Tony Bartl
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Class Time: TR 2pm-3:15pm
Office: RAS 215; (325) 486-6107
Classroom: RAS 110
Office Hours: MW 9-11am; TR 1-2pm

A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning Government and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power, or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to human passions, have in turn divided mankind into parties.

- James Madison

Neither of the two principal parties is of one mind with itself. Each tolerates all sorts of difference of creed and variety of aim within its own ranks ... They are like armies without officers, engaged on a campaign which has no great cause at its back. Their names and traditions, not their hopes and policy, keep them together.

- Woodrow Wilson

I must say no to you, and let me give you my reasons. It's true I have a lot of friends in politics, but they wouldn't be so friendly if they knew my business was drugs instead of gambling which they consider a harmless vice.

- Vito Corleone

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned . . .

- William Butler Yeats

Course Description: This course will investigate the purpose, function, and operation of political parties in the American system of government. The approach to this investigation will be theoretical, constitutional, and historical. We will begin the most basic form of questioning in political theory (indeed, of all philosophy and science rightly understood), “What is . . . ?” -- “What are political parties?” It turns out that this question is connected to the regime question--which is the most basic question of political science. That question was largely settled in this country with the adoption of the Constitution. The next question, therefore, becomes: “What is the place and character of parties in our constitutional system?” And then: “How has their function and character changed over time?” Many subordinate questions follow from these.
Required Texts

- Two pdf Course Packets (CP1 and CP2) of reading materials, available on Blackboard.
- William L. Rierdon, *Plunkett of Tammany Hall*

Recommended Texts

- Courser, et al., *Parchment Barriers: Political Polarization and the Limits of Constitutional Order*, University Press of Kansas

Course Requirements

Final Grades will be calculated as follows:

*Exams* – 40%

*Blogs* – 50%

*Participation* – 10%

**Grading Scale:**

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\begin{align*}
100-90 = A & \quad 89-87 = B+ & \quad 86-80 = B & \quad 79-77 = C+ \\
76-70 = C & \quad 69-60 = D & \quad 59-0 = F
\end{align*}
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*Exams:* There will be two exams, one at the mid-term and one at the end of the course. You will need Bluebooks for both of these exams. They will consist of two parts, 1.) Identifications and 2.) Essay Questions. They will be evenly weighted when calculating final grades. The Midterm Exam is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 7. The Final Exam will be Tuesday, May 7, from 1-3pm.

*Blogs:* The idea behind these Blogs is to grapple with some problem or question in the reading for the week. Putting it into writing will help you think through the problems and the responses are intended to further help you hone your investigation. The class is divided up into Blog Groups. Every week each student will write a 600 word Blog Entry on some topic derived from the reading material for that week. Entries must be posted on Blackboard prior to class each Tuesday. Two 300-word Blog Responses to your journal partners’ entries for that week are due on Thursday. This requirement amounts to a total of 1200 words per student each week. **No late work will be accepted or given credit.**

These should not be summaries. Everyone should already know what the reading says. Your job is to show that you are struggling to understand what it means and how it relates to the subject of the class as a whole and to important questions of ethical and political importance.

*Participation:* Students are expected to do all the assigned reading. Active participation in class discussion is required for a good participation grade. This may take the form of helpful comments or questions that demonstrate the student’s grappling with the reading material in a serious way. As part of this grade, up to 10 surprise quizzes may be given at any time throughout the semester.
**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is defined as being in class on time and remaining in the classroom until class is over. Students will be allowed 6 absences before their grade will be penalized. After 6 absences, a student’s final grade will be dropped one full letter grade. Students with 10 absences or more will receive a failing grade for the course. NOTE: These are minimum attendance requirements. Students expecting to receive a good grade for the course will plan to be in class every day, on time. Coming late to class is disrespectful and distracting. Anyone not in their seats when I take attendance will be considered absent.

**Electronic Devices:** Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops is strictly prohibited. If you possess such devices and carry them with you to class, they should not be seen or heard by anyone, including (especially) yourself. Using your cell phone in class is a good way to have all your participation points taken away. Flagrant violators of this rule will be asked to leave and counted absent.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have particular learning needs that are documented with the university’s Student Life Office, please contact me so arrangements for testing can be made in advance. If not yet documented, please contact them at: Rm 112 University Center, (325) 942-2126, Student.Life@angelo.edu

**Honor Code:** This class has a zero tolerance policy for any and all Honor Code infractions. Cheating, plagiarism, and other violations of the honor code will not be tolerated. See ASU’s policies at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf