This seminar will introduce you to the literature in American politics. There is an enormous literature in this field, and it is growing all of the time. Our focus in this course will be on class articles and books, combined with more recent seminal pieces. Inevitably we will sacrifice depth for breadth. Nonetheless, if we can get through this reading list, you will have an excellent foundation. You should finish the course with a comprehensive understanding of past research and a good idea of the directions in which that research is now moving.

You should do all the readings for each week’s assignments and be prepared to discuss them in class. Grades will be based on 2 critical essays on the readings (5-10 pages), in-class presentations, and general class discussion. The specific assignments will be detailed in class.

Most of the articles are available from JSTOR on the library web site. Books are on course reserve at Rush Rhees Library. Many of these are classics you may wish to purchase. The least expensive way to purchase them is on the web. We encourage you to use your favorite bookstore search engine to purchase items you would like to own. Some of the books are out of print and can only be obtained used.

January 20: Introduction

No Reading

January 25: Representation

United States Constitution, with Amendments.

Federalist Papers: 10, 35, 48, 51, 52, 57, 63.


February 1: Electoral Connection


*February 8: Congress as an Institution: The Committee System*


February 15: Congress as an Institution: Leaders, Parties, and Rules


February 22: The Presidency


*March 1: Voting in Elections


*March 8: Public Opinion


March 22: Parties


March 29: Interest Groups


April 5: Bureaucracy


*April 12: Agenda Setting.*


**April 19: Citizen Participation**


**April 26: Race and Gender**


**May 3: State and Local Politics**


