PSC231W Money in Politics
Prof. L. Powell
Lechase 181
Tuesday 2-4:40
Office Hours: T-W 10:30-noon

We will examine two main questions: How much influence does money have in determining who seeks and who wins elective office? How much does money spent on contributions and lobbying influence government actions and policies?

Political scientists have reached no consensus on the answers to these questions. We will read the literature that debates these and closely related issues. Because many of the studies use quantitative methods, all students should have completed a basic statistics course. (This need not be a political science methods course.) Students should have a good basic understanding of American government.

The course will be a small seminar and will use a discussion format. Each student will be expected to read the assigned material before class, and to take turns summarizing and critiquing particular readings, as well as participating in class discussion.

Grades will be based on class discussion, on written and oral brief presentations on the readings and on a final research paper. The final research paper will constitute 60% of the grade and class presentations and discussions the remainder.

It is essential that every student do all the readings for each class and participate in class discussion. You should have a few questions for each of the readings for each class session. This will be part of the 40% of your grade that is based on class discussion and presentations.

Reading presentations: A student who is presenting a reading in class should write 1-2 single spaced pages summarizing and critiquing the reading. Explain the author's argument and evidence. In concluding, think of several critical questions about the reading. Points will be awarded for each reading presentation: written material 3 points = excellent, 2 points = solid, 1 point = needs improvement; oral presentation 2 points = excellent, 1 point = otherwise. The written material should be emailed to all class members by 10AM the day the reading is discussed. One point will be subtracted for each hour late. The readings will be divided equally among the seminar participants.

Each student will be responsible for learning how the campaign finance process works in one state. Each of you can then contribute detailed knowledge of one state to the class discussion. Most students will chose to write about some aspect of the campaign finance process in their state for their research paper, but you may propose other alternatives for the research paper. Readings: Most readings will be available on Blackboard or through the library databases. *The Influence of Campaign Contributions in State Legislatures* is available electronically on ebrary through the library and is at the bookstore.

Research papers: Each student will write a 15-20 page research paper. You may write about the campaign finance process in your state. Alternatively, you may write a review of the literature on one campaign finance topic. Or you could collect data and do your own original analysis in this area. Students should ok any topic with me. A university requirement for the W designation is that you turn in a portion of a draft for comments. (Minimum of 3 pages with some prose and the remainder outlined.) This will be due March 19th. Students will
present their research papers in the final 2 class sessions. The research papers should be emailed to all participants 24 hours before the class presentations begin April 23rd. The paper will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for each 4 hours late, and a letter grade if the oral presentation is missed. For any of the oral presentations, a documented excuse is necessary to avoid the penalty. The paper late penalty can't be avoided unless your excuse means that you could not have finished it earlier. In other words, don't wait until the last minute to write the reading presentations or the research paper.

Readings:

January 22nd  Why do we care about money? Discuss course setup. Describe how to choose states. Email me to choose states after 7 pm day of class — rank 3 choices.

January 29th

February 5th Federal regulation of presidential and congressional campaign finance.


How to find information on your state’s campaign finance. Good start: Follow the Money.

February 12th What do states do?

Begin to research your own state. Be prepared to discuss what you have found out about campaign finance in your state and to share ideas for locating information.


**February 26th** Who Gives & Why? How is money raised?


**March 5th** Effect of $S$ on election outcomes.


**March 19th** Effect of $S$ on policy


**March 26th** Investment Model.


Powell, Lynda. Chapter 3 and 4 in *The Influence of Campaign Contributions in State Legislatures*.

**April 2nd Money and Influence**


**April 9th Parties and Committees**


**April 16th Lobbying**


**April 16th Campaign Finance Regulation Revisited.**

Powell, Lynda. Conclusion in *The Influence of Campaign Contributions in State Legislatures*.


Ackerman, Bruce and Ian Ayers. 2002 Chapters 2 and 3 in *Voting with Dollars*. Yale University Press.

**Last 2 seminars for class presentations**

**April 23rd and April 30th**