

Women & Politics
PSC 345
(cross-listed as a GS class)
University of Southern Alabama-Spring 2015

Class times: 1010-1100, Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Class location: Humanities 212
Contact Info: Dr. Schulze, 414-8024, cschulze@southalabama.edu
Office location: Humanities A-216
Office hours: 1100-1300, Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Note: Preferred mode of contact is email. Use email to also document any agreements and/or accommodations that may be needed as the semester progresses.

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students with a critical examination of gender in the political system. Still too often political scientists have equated gender with biological sex, downplaying the variety of ways in which gender issues shape American politics. The central premise of this course is that politics cannot be fully understood without including gender as an analytic construct. From the founding to the present, politics and government reflect ideological judgments about who gets what, when, and how. As such, government has legitimized only certain individuals as political actors, certain identities as politically relevant, certain relationships as important, and certain practices as the means by which one might change political status. This course sets out to discover how gender “matters” in U.S. politics.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester you should be able to:

- Understand basic theories about sex and gender as they apply to U.S. politics.
- Identify how the portrayal of women within American society impacts the manner in which they are treated in the political system as participants and as political actors.
- Demonstrate an understanding of women’s historical experience within the political system and how social institutions (like media) perpetuate gender stereotypes.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the intersection between gender and race in politics
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically and raise relevant questions when reading written material that address women and political science.
- Articulate the policy implications of having more women in positions of political power.

Requirements and Grading:

Exams

All exams will cover the assigned text book chapters, readings, and lectures that precede the exam date. All exams require you to write essays.

The grade for a missed exam will be recorded as a zero. If you have *advance warning* of a situation that will cause you to miss an examination or that will interfere with your turning in an assignment in a timely manner, you must discuss it with me *in advance*.

As per University regulations, the final examination must be given on the date and time listed on the final examination schedule.

Quizzes

A quiz may be given at *any time* during any class period -- immediately after a lecture, at the beginning or end of a class, etc. Quizzes will only be administered during class and therefore will not be eligible for “make-ups.” Given that your lowest quiz score will be dropped, no exceptions will be granted (Please don’t ask. It’s embarrassing. Make sure that you understand this syllabus before contacting me with questions/requests).

Please note that your receipt of this syllabus indicates that you understand and accept its contents. Any and all questions about the syllabus must be addressed in the **first** week either during class-time, via email communication, and/or my office hours.

Course website and discussion forums

The course Sakai-hosted website will be used throughout the semester. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with the website in the first week. You will find such material as the syllabus, readings, study guides for the exams, and other helpful resources.

You will be required to interact with your classmates via the discussion forum. There will be 3 graded forums for which you will be expected to post, at minimum, 4 posts (at least 3 posts need to be on separate days). In other words, Sakai needs to be accessed at least twice a week (only a general guideline... "accessing" means using/reading web content) in order to succeed in this course. *Any technical issues need to be resolved immediately and with a Sakai administrator.*

Final Paper

The final research paper should be considered an ongoing research project. Full details will be provided in class and online. While you may utilize the assigned reading for your literature review, *you will have to conduct your own research as well.* This will not be something you can complete the last week of the semester.

Attendance and Participation

Every member of the class is expected to read the assigned *before* each course meeting. Every member of the class is expected to attend each course meeting. Attendance will be taken during the first ten minutes of each class meeting. If you miss a class, it is *your* responsibility to get class notes from a classmate and *your* responsibility to obtain information about any assignments that have been given during class. You may miss **no more than 3 classes** without penalty to your attendance/participation grade. If you miss more than three class meetings, your attendance/participation grade for these days will be recorded as a zero. Since it is your choice how you use these three allowed absences, no excuses or doctor's notes are necessary.

For your reference... Things you **shouldn't** say to me if you missed class: What can I do to make up for the quiz? What did we cover that day? Did I miss anything important? When can I meet with you to make-up what I missed?

Final grading

A	90-100%	3 Exams:	60%
B	80-89%	Attendance:	4%
C	70-79%	Discussion Forums:	6%
D	60-69%	Quizzes:	10%
F	0-59%	Final Research Paper:	20%

Email correspondence:

I will occasionally send you e-mail at your USA e-mail address. Make sure you check your email about once a week or let the Computer Resource Center forward your USA e-mail to your other address. I cannot send you email to other email addresses. Use proper email etiquette.

Required reading material:

We will use the following book, available at the bookstore: *Women and Politics: Paths to Power and Political Influence* By: Dolan, Deckman, and Swers (2nd edition)

However, keep in mind that there are also four additional, and testable, readings assigned in class and posted on Sakai.

The following provides you with a schedule of assigned readings and due dates. This schedule is *tentative* as each class progresses at a different rate. All (if any) changes will be announced on Sakai and in class.

Tentative course outline (subject to change with 48-hour notice)	Discussion Topics	Assignments and readings
Introduction to the study of gender in political science Week 1 (Jan 12--)	Introduction to the course Background of the women's social movement(s), feminism(s)	Read Chapters 1-2 (up until pg 39). Get on Sakai
The gender gap Week 2	Are women different? Why would that matter?	Chapter 3 Forum posting?
Women running for political office Week 3	Why women run, why they don't... Special issues faced by candidates	Finish Chapters 2 & 5
Women legislators Weeks 4-5	Descriptive versus substantive representation (final paper discussed)	Ch 7 & Reading #1, Forum 1 due
Review and Exam 1-Week 6		
Methodological approaches Week 7	Overview of current approaches in political science	Reading #2
Women as leaders Weeks 8-10	Women with executive power, paths to power, & policy impacts	Ch 8 & Reading #3
Women in the courts Weeks 11-12 Last day to drop—April 3	Women's impact on the courts as judges and feminist activism in the legal realm	Chs 9 & 4, Part 1 of final paper is & Forum 2 due
Review and Exam 2-Week 12		
Women and local politics Week 13	Historical overview and current representation	Ch. 6 Part 2 due
Women and bureaucracy (TBD) Week 14	Women in non-political positions of power	Reading #4 Forum 3 is due
Last week of classes Week 15	Review for final exam and paper presentations	Final Paper due: April 30
May 4, Final Exam, 1030-1230		

The fine print

Academic Dishonesty

I expect that students are well acquainted with the USA policy for academic dishonesty. For more information on plagiarism and other related issues to proper classroom conduct, consult your student handbook, *The Lowdown* (<http://www.southalabama.edu/univlib/sauer/plagiarism.html>).

Ignorance is no defense for dishonesty which includes, but is not limited to, lying, cheating, stealing, and using unauthorized materials on any quiz or exam. USA provides a number of resources (like the Writing Center) which I expect you to utilize if you require additional assistance (arguably, everyone does). At the very least you are expected to use *Smthinking* as well as *Turnitin* (both services will be available to you via the course website). USA holds you to a high standard of academic integrity. If you are unsure of what these standards are, I suggest you read the University's **Student Academic Conduct Policy** found in *The Lowdown* and at the following website: <http://www.southalabama.edu/lowdown/09-10/usapolicies0910.pdf>. Also found at that website is **U.S.A.'s Academic Disruption Policy**. Disruptive behavior is defined in *The Lowdown* as, "behavior a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the conduct of an activity" (130).

Students with disabilities

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. If you have a specific disability that qualifies you for academic accommodations, please notify the instructor/professor and provide certification from Special Student Services. (OSSS is located in Room 270 of the Student Center (460-7212).

Email communication

I will occasionally send you e-mail at your USA e-mail address and will request that you communicate with me via email to set appointments, let me know of absences, etc. Make sure you check your email frequently or let the Computer Resource Center forward your USA e-mail to your other address. I cannot send you email to other email addresses.