

Political Science
Y324 Women and American Politics

Spring 2005

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Office: CM219
Office Hours: T – 8:30- 9:00 a.m.
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POLS web address: <http://www.ipfw.edu/pols/>

Course Description

This course examines the evolution of women's political involvement in the United States. This course approaches gender differences from a political science perspective and responds to the growing research on gender differences by political scientists. It will explore, in particular, the historical background of women in politics, women as voters, women as candidates for office, and women as officeholders. Finally, the course investigates the impact of public policy on women's lives and the impact of changes in women's lives on public policy.

Women and American Politics is a cross-listed Women's Studies course. As such, this course will attempt to incorporate, when appropriate and possible given the subject matter and material available, the Women's Studies course goals. The goals are as follows:

1. To analyze academic disciplines from a feminist and antiracist perspective.
2. To encourage original scholarship and research about women that takes into consideration gender, race, class and sexual orientation.
3. To integrate self-exploration with academic skills.
4. To provide a nonauthoritarian learning environment which values students' ideas and encourages an open exchange of information and opinion.
5. To promote an individual and critical approach to learning.
6. To promote knowledge of the diversity of women's experiences.

Course Policies

Students are expected to take or turn in (in the case of take-home tests) all examinations on their scheduled examination dates. Consequently, it is the general policy of this course **not** to allow extensions or makeups. Exceptions to the policy will be made only under appropriate and unusual circumstances. Makeup examinations and acceptance of late examinations are the instructor's prerogative. Only one extension or makeup will be given to any student, and the makeup may be different in format. In order to be considered for an extension or makeup, a student must **directly contact** the instructor **prior** to the due date. It is also the student's responsibility to follow up with the

instructor on any arrangements concerning an extension or makeup.

Students are expected **to read all assigned material prior to discussion of the material in class and be prepared to discuss these readings in class.** The instructor may play devil's advocate to stimulate discussion. Because we will be discussing controversial material, it is imperative that everyone be respectful of one another and one another's views, no matter how much one disagrees. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. (This includes communications devices—cell phones, pagers, beepers, etc.)

Class attendance is strongly recommended since the exams and the written projects will be based on lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings. Class participation, including written assignments, cannot be made up. If you miss a class, contact someone who has attended. Announcements pertinent to the course will frequently be made in class and students will be held responsible for knowing these announcements. **Both reading assignments and examination dates will be announced in class in order to ensure flexibility for maximum student learning.** Reading assignments and/or course requirements and evaluation of student performance may be altered during the course of the semester. Students are also expected to keep up with current events.

Cheating, plagiarism, or even facilitating academic dishonesty are serious offenses that may lead to failure on an assignment, failure for a course, or, in serious cases, suspension or expulsion from the university. Collaborative work on papers is considered cheating. You may study together, discuss paper topics together, but do your own thinking. **Significant duplication or near duplication** can constitute cheating. (See IPFW Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct) Finally, taping of classes is generally not permitted.

All WOST majors are encouraged to turn in duplicate copies of papers and/or projects to allow for inclusion in their WOST portfolio housed in CM272.

If you have or acquire a disability and would like to find out what special services and accommodations may be available to you, contact Services for Students with Disabilities in WU 113 (481-6657, voice/TTY).

Evaluation of Student Performance

The course meets twice a week for lecture and discussion. Course requirements include a final examination, an intermediate examination, a written class project, and class participation, which includes not only attendance and discussion but may include completion of small written or oral assignments. Please bear in mind some individuals are more comfortable speaking in class than others. This is to be expected, and, therefore, a few well-placed comments are just as valuable as general talkativeness. Participation accounts for quality as well as quantity of responses. However, consistent failure to attend or consistent unwillingness to respond meaningfully (in other words, a response based on having read the assignments) may result in a failing grade. Evaluation of student performance will be based on these requirements. The intermediate examination will count 30% of the course grade, the written class project will count 25% of the course grade, the final examination will count 35% of the course grade, and the instructor's evaluation of class attendance, participation and performance will count 10% of the course grade.

Required Books:

Harrison, B., *Women in American Politics: An Introduction*

Witt, L., Paget, K., and Matthews, G., *Running as a Woman, Gender and Power in American Politics*
TBA means additional readings to be announced later in class.

Other required readings will be given to you in the form of handouts or placed on reserve in the library.

Course Outline:

I. Introduction to Women and American Politics

Required Reading (RR): *Women in American Politics: An Introduction* (hereafter *Women in American Politics*), ch. 1, pp. 3-10

II. Women's Political History and the Struggle for Political Rights

A. The Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

RR:

Women in American Politics, ch. 1, pp. 11-13

Barber, D. and Kellerman, B., eds., *Women Leaders in American Politics*, Readings 1-3

B. The Women's Rights Movement and Suffrage

RR:

Women in American Politics, ch. 1, pp. 13-18

Barber, D. and Kellerman, B., eds., *Women Leaders in American Politics*, Reading 17
TBA

C. Post-Suffrage and the Modern Women's Movement

RR: *Women in American Politics*, ch. 1, pp. 18-26

III. Public Opinion, Political Socialization, and Voting

RR: *Women in American Politics*, ch. 2 and ch. 6, pp. 121-136

www.cawp.rutgers.edu (Center for American Women and Politics), click on Facts and Findings to the following:

1. Sex Differences in Voter Turnout
2. Young Women and Politics
3. Gender Gap Persists in the 2004 Election
4. The Gender Gap and the 2004 Women's Vote: Setting the Record Straight

IV. Women and Group Participation

A. Women in Interest Groups

RR: *Women in American Politics*, ch. 3

B. Women in Political Parties, ch. 5, pp. 96-109, 113-115

V. Women as Candidates

RR: *Running as a Woman*, chs. 1-9 and 12

Clift, E. and Brazaitis, T., *Madam President*, ch. 5

Women in American Politics, ch. 4 and ch. 6, pp. 136-140

VI. Women and Political Wives

VII. Women as Officeholders

A.

The Legislative Branch

RR: *Women in American Politics*, ch. 7

Thomas, S. and Wilcox, C., *Women and Elective Office*, chs. 6, 9, and 11-13

Carroll, S. *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, ch. 9

B.

The Executive Branch

RR: *Women in American Politics*, ch. 8

Clift, E. and Brazaitis, T., *Madam President*, ch. 10

Whitaker, L. D., *Women in Politics*, 3rd ed., pps. 149-166 and 221-247

Carroll, S., *The Impact of Women in Public Office*, ch. 6

C.

The Judicial Branch

RR: *Women in American Politics*, ch. 9

TBA

VIII. Women and Politics—Final Observations