

AMH3931/0180
Presidential Election of 2016 in Historical Perspective
Fall 2016

Instructor: Louise Newman, Associate Professor
MWF, period 6 (12:50-1:40) in Turlington 2349
Office: Keene Flint 212. Office hours, M, W 3-4pm and Fridays by appointment
lnewman@ufl.edu
<http://people.clas.ufl.edu/lnewman/>

Course Description

This course attempts to analyze the upcoming Presidential election of 2016 in relation to recent historical events and social developments. We begin with an examination of the political rhetoric of the two current presidential candidates -- Donald Trump (R) and Hillary Clinton (D), in an effort to examine how they use current events and recent historical memories to garner support for key policy and legislative initiatives.

The main premise of this course, which we will examine to see if it bears scrutiny, is that **politics and elections are better understood if we place them in historical perspective**—that is, if we can analyze how particular understandings of past and ongoing events affect current political views, of both the candidates and the electorate. Thus, this course also examines the impact that recent trends (deindustrialization, globalization, “free trade” agreements like NAFTA, military treaties such as NATO, and so forth) and national/international events (police killings of African Americans, citizens’ attacks on the police, the war against ISIS, BREXIS, etc.) are having on current political discussions.

We will be highly cognizant of the fact that the impact of the past on the present is mediated in many different ways—in other words, contemporary events take on very different meanings, **depending on how we place them in historical context**—whether that context is local and domestic, broader and international, recent or longer term. For example, how might we reassess U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria if we take into account the legacies of the Cold War and the Viet Nam War? Or the history of U.S. immigration, international trade agreements and global capitalism? US-Israeli-Palestinian relations? These are the kinds of questions this course will encourage students to explore.

This course will range broadly over the last sixty years or so—what historians refer to as the “post-War period,” extending as far back as the Cold War and Eisenhower’s leadership of the 1950s and coming up to the present. Students will have a major role in selecting topics for study, as the first intellectual challenge we will face in the early weeks of the course is to establish a common syllabus for weeks 9-12.

Course Objectives

- to improve students' understandings of the major issues informing the Presidential election of 2016—national security and treaty agreements, free trade and government regulation of the economy, immigration restriction, civil rights, gun control, racial violence, etc.
- to increase students' awareness of how the century-long history of the two major parties (Republican and Democratic parties) informs the current electoral cycle
- to provide a respectful environment in which students' can articulate their political beliefs and values, and to enable them to practice talking to one another in a civil manner

Required Readings, chosen by the instructor

Media

- ***New York Times (NYT)***; students at UF are eligible for a free online subscription.
We will be following *NYT* coverage on a daily basis—so subscribe and begin perusing the headlines every day.

Books (listed in the order in which they will be read)

- ***Presidential Elections 1789-2008***. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2010.
- **Richardson**, Heather Fox. *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party*. New York: Basic Books, 2014.
- **Others to be determined.**

Articles and chapter excerpts available through ARES/course reserves.

(Additional articles to be added as needed)

- **Dionne, Jr., E. J.** *Why the Right Went Wrong: Conservatism—From Goldwater to the Tea Party and Beyond*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016, 1-13.
- **Gould**, Lewis L. *The Republicans: A History of the Grand Old Party*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 3-6.
- **Lichtman**, Allan J. "Logic of the Keys." *Predicting the Next President: The Keys to the White House 2016*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2016, pp. 1-17.
- **Others to be determined.**

Important Note: Students will be choosing additional books and articles in the early weeks and these will be added to the "Required Readings" for the course for weeks 9-12.

Assignments

- Attendance and quizzes (200 pts)
- Assignment #1 due week 2 (100 pts)
- Assignment #2 due week 4 (100 pts)
- 2 Tests (100 pts each, 200 pts total)
- Presentation & paper, weeks 9-11 (200 pts)
- Final Project due Week 16 (200 pts)

Criteria for Grading

Overall letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Total Points	GPA Equivalent
A	950-1000	4.0
A-	900-950	3.67
B+	875-899	3.33
B	850-874	3.0
B-	800-849	2.67
C+	775-799	2.33
C	750-774	2.0
C-	700-749	1.67
D+	675-699	1.33
D	650-674	1.0
D-	600-649	0.67
E	<600	0

Policies and expectations

- **Format:** This course meets three times a week and will be conducted in a mixed lecture-workshop-seminar format.
- **Attendance:** Because so much of the course depends on in-class exercises, tests, discussions, and presentations, students' attendance at every scheduled class session is critical. 100 points are allocated to attendance. If you have one absence, you will receive 90 of these 100 points, 2 absences 80 points. If you are absent more than two times, then you will receive 0 points out of the 100 allocated for attendance, and additional penalties may be applied.
- **General Courtesy:** Please do not come late to class or leave early. If there are special circumstances that prevent you from being on time, or staying throughout the time period, please let the instructor know.
- **Late work** will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control. Please let the instructor know of any adverse circumstances that may affect your ability to complete assignments on time.

- **Special Accommodations:** Students needing special accommodations must register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc> **during the first week of the semester** and have that office communicate with the instructor.
- **Plagiarism** is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/studenthonorcode.php> Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Submitting all or part of someone else's work as if it is your own.
 - Failing to cite sources from which you have derived ideas, or citing them improperly, even if (especially if) you have paraphrased those ideas.
 - Borrowing verbatim text without using quotation marks and referencing the source. **You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.**
 - Making duplicate submissions of the same assignment-- that is, submitting work in one class that is also submitted in another class— unless you have approval from both instructors in advance.

Because of national and/or religious holidays, class will not meet on the following days.

- September 5 (Mon) Labor Day
- October 3 (Mon) Rosh Hashanah
- October 12 (Wed) Yom Kippur
- November 11 (Fri) Veteran's Day
- Nov 21, 23, 25 (Thanksgiving Break)

Weekly Schedule

i. Introduction

Week 1. **Historic Elections** (Aug 22, 24, 26)

M, W: Expanding one's Historical Perspective (no readings)

Is it true that Americans have short memories, and if so, how short is short? Identifying a generation's most important historical/political/social memories.

F: Discussion of electoral math

(Assignment 1, a 500-word essay discussing the most important issues of the 2016 election and offering a prediction of who will win and why, is due next Wed, Aug 31, in hard copy at the start of class.)

Week 2. **Just for fun, predicting the outcome** (Aug 29, 31, Sept 2)

M: Lichtman, "Logic of the Keys" in *Predicting the Next President*, pp. 1-17. PDF available from ARES; and Menafee-Libey, *Triumph of Campaign-Centered Politics* (ch 1); you may read this chapter using the "Inside the Book" feature on Amazon.com. Come to class prepared to discuss how Menafee-Libey's argument contradicts Lichtman's and also be ready to explain what you think matters most in this Presidential election (Expect to take a quiz in class.)

W: *Presidential Elections, 1789-2008*, 1-17, 205-261. (PDF of some of this material is on reserve, but students will need to purchase a copy of this book as we will make use of it frequently over the course of the semester.)

Assignment 1 due in hard copy at the start of class (100 pts)

Week 3. **What kind of Republican is Donald Trump?** (--, Sept 7, 9)

M: (Labor Day, no class). Use the long weekend to read Richardson's book, along with the two other excerpts.

W: Richardson, *To Make Men Free*.

Gould, *The Republicans*, 3-6.

Dionne, Jr., *Why the Right Went Wrong*, 1-13.

F: Discussion

Week 4. **What kind of Democrat is Hillary Clinton?** (Sept 12, 14, 16)

M: Readings to be determined.

(Wilson, FDR & Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, Carter & Bill Clinton)

W: Readings to be determined.
F: Assignment 2 due (100 pts)

II. Domestic/Global Perspectives & Legacies

Week 5. Legacy of the Cold War, Vietnam War and the social revolutions of the 1950s-70s (Sept 19, 21, 23)

Week 6. Religions and Politics in the Middle East (Sept 26, 28, 30) ¹

M: Scott Anderson's reporting on the recent history of the Middle East, from U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 (the removal of Saddam Hussein from power), through the Arab Spring of 2011 (political revolutions in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, etc.) to the present.
www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/08/11/magazine/isis-middle-east-arab-spring-fractured-lands.html?action=click&contentCollection=Olympics&module=Trending&version=Full®ion=Marginalia&pgtype=article

W: Lee, *Religion and Politics in the Middle East*

Week 7. National Security Concerns (--, Oct 5, 7)

M; No Class
W, F: Readings to be determined

Week 8. TEST 1 (--, Oct 12, 14).

III. Topics and Readings Selected by the Students-- Presentations (200 pts)

Week 9. Topic and readings to be determined (Oct 17, 19, 30)

Week 10. Topic and readings to be determined (Oct 24, 26, 28)

Week 11. Topic and readings to be determined (Oct 31, Nov 2, 4)

Week 12. Nov 8 is Election Day! (Nov 7, 9, --)

Week 13. TEST 2 (Nov 14, 16, 18)

¹ See Mark Mazzetti and Scott Shane, "A Saudi Iman, 2 Hijackers and Lingering 9/11 Mystery." *NYT*, June 17, 2016. Was there Saudi government involvement in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon? The official US line is that it was masterminded by Osama Bin Laden and carried out by Al Qaeda.

Week 14. Thanksgiving Break

IV. Conclusion

Week 15. Wrapping Up. (Nov 23, 30, Dec 2)

Week 16. Final Paper Due Dec 5 (200 pts) (Dec 5, Last day of Class)