

Political Science 416
Professor Benjamin Marquez
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Fall Semester 2020
403 North Hall
263-2389

Community Power and Grassroots Politics

COURSE GUIDE DESCRIPTION: Political Power; Social Movements. Race, ethnicity, identity and religion as political factors; cultural pluralism, politics, and urban politics.

REQUISITES: Sophomore Standing

DESIGNATION & ATTRIBUTES:

- Breadth - Social Science
- Level - Intermediate
- L&S Credit - Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S
- Not repeatable for Credit

INSTRUCTIONAL MODE, MEETINGS, CREDITS: Face-to-face course, 3 credits. This class meets for two 75-minute class period each week over the fall/spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, etc.) for about 3 hours out of classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

This course is for students who are interested in the study of community activism and the exercise of power at the local level. It will give students the opportunity to read major works on the topic and become part of scholarly debates over the role of citizen based political organizations and social movements. Topics covered in this class include the origins of social movements, political power, fundraising, multi-racial coalitions, identity politics, and environmental justice. Course content consists of lectures and discussions. The major project is a research paper analyzing some aspect of local political organizing or social movement organizations.

Course Objectives

The fundamental objective of the course is to provide the student with an analytical framework for understanding the exercise of power in the United States. It will explore the ways that grassroots organizing can alter existing power relationships and the obstacles local organizers face when creating political organizations and engaging in coalition building. Special attention will be paid to multi-cultural issues that are central to 21st century American politics. Our exploration of these questions in the lectures, section discussions, and readings should help prepare course participants for the policy challenges of tomorrow.

Course Requirements

Regular attendance at lectures is indispensable; the reading material will supplement and not duplicate the lectures. In addition to keeping up with the assigned reading, I encourage you to subscribe to a good daily newspaper like the *New York Times*. The paper version of the *New York Times* is available at a substantial discount to students and it is free online. Reading a good newspaper will enhance your understanding of the lectures and make you better able to participate in class discussions. Some level of participation is an essential part of your education and intellectual development. If this is difficult for you, please see us about some strategies to help you feel more comfortable engaging in discussion.

This class meets two times a week for two 75-minute class periods. Classes are scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. It carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, etc.) for about 3 hours out of classroom for every hour spent in class. The course is open to sophomores, juniors and seniors only.

There will be one comprehensive final examination of an essay type. Students affiliated with the McBurney Center should see me about exam arrangements and any other accommodations.

Electronic Devices

The use of laptops are not allowed except by special arrangement. The same goes for other electronic devices. Please turn off and put away your phones before you come to lecture or section.

Academic Integrity

I take academic integrity very seriously. If I suspect academic misconduct, I will investigate and impose penalties in accordance with university guidelines. Depending on the severity of the offense, penalties may include failure in the course and a notice being sent to the Dean of Students. You are encouraged to study with other students, but your work must be entirely your own. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please see me. Academic misconduct, even if it is unintentional, can seriously damage your career and it is not worth the risk. For complete discussion of the rules regarding academic integrity, see the Dean of Students website, or contact the assistant dean for academic integrity at 608-263-5700 or Room 70 Bascom Hall.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Institutional statement on diversity

“Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.”

The following books are required reading for the course and recommended for purchase. They are available at A Room of One's Own Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham Street.

Russell J. Dalton. *The Good Citizen: How a Younger Generation is Reshaping American Politics*. (Second edition)

Daniel Q. Gillion. *The Loud Minority: Why Protests Matter in American Democracy*.

James M. Jasper. *The Emotions of Protests*.

Erica Kohl-Arenas. *The Self-Help Myth: How Philanthropy Fails to Alleviate Poverty*.

Pietra Rivoli. *Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy*. (Selected chapters)

Kathleen Staudt. *Hope for Justice and Power: Broad-Based Community Organizing in the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation*.

Course Requirements

I. Class Participation

Classroom participation is important. In order to facilitate our understanding of social movement politics, students will participate in classroom discussion. There are many ways that you can earn participation credit. Discussing the readings, engaging in debate, asking good questions, and presenting the results of your research project all count toward your class participation credit. If you need help participating in class discussions, drop by to see me in my office. I will be happy to help you. In order to keep up with current events, I encourage you to subscribe to a good daily newspaper like the *New York*

Times. The paper version of the *New York Times* is available at a substantial discount to students and it is free online. For the latest in urban social movement research, I recommend that you visit the Cyberhood at <http://www.thecyberhood.net/>

II. Five Book Critiques

Students are required to write five (5) five-page book critiques. The objective is to analyze the author's thesis, methods, evidence, and conclusions of the reading assignments. Guidelines will be handed out in class.

Time will be set aside to discuss all of the assigned readings. In order to facilitate our critique of the assigned readings, all students will be assigned to a small discussion group. On the days discussions of the assigned readings are scheduled, students in these groups will spend about fifteen minutes raising issues and questions to be brought before the whole class. All students are required to read and critique the first book, James M. Jasper's *The Emotions of Protests*.

Even if you do not write a book critique during a given week, it is still essential that you read the assigned books each week before coming to class. Book critiques are due on the day the books are discussed. Late critiques are not accepted.

III. A Research Paper.

All students are required to write a research paper. The research paper will consist of three parts:

1. A typed, one-page description of your tentative research plan. I would like to have an informal discussion with you about your project, methods, and objectives. All students must meet with me in my office by February 7th. Bring the one-page description along with you.
2. A research proposal describing your work, the literature you will draw upon for your analysis, a working hypothesis, and some tentative conclusions. The research proposal is due on March 12th.
3. The finished product. The final paper is due on April 30th.

When preparing to research and write your term paper, I recommend that you refer to Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg's edited book, *Methods of Social Movement Research*. Written guidelines for the proposal and term paper will be handed out in class.

IV. A Comprehensive Final Exam

The final exam will take place at 2:45 on Tuesday May 5th. Format to be announced.

Grades will be determined using the following weighing scheme:

Book Critiques.....50% (10% each)

Research Paper.....30%

Final Exam.....20%

Class Participation.....up to 5% extra credit

Students must complete all required work in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. In calculating the final grade, number rather than letter grades will be averaged. Make-up exams will be given only in the case of a medical emergency. Students affiliated with the McBurney Center should see me about exam arrangements and any other accommodations.

Office Hours:

My office hours are on Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 or by appointment. Please feel free to make an appointment or drop by during my office hours. I welcome students. My office is located in North Hall, room 403.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One. January 22nd – January 24th

Tuesday: Course objectives and assignments. Book critique guidelines distributed.

Thursday: What is a social movement?

Week Two January 27th – January 31st

Tuesday: What is power? Who has it? Who does not? The Power Elite Thesis,.

Thursday: Decision Making, Citizen Mobilization and Democracy

Week Three. February 3rd – February 7th

Tuesday: Identity Politics in Social Movement Organizations

Thursday: Discuss Jasper. *The Emotions of Protests*. Five-page critique due.

Week Four. February 10th – February 14th

Tuesday: Funding Political Organizations.

Thursday: Cause Lawyering: Activist Attorneys and Civil Rights Organizations

Week Five. February 17th – February 21st

Tuesday: The Role of Leadership in Social Movement Organizations.

Thursday: Video: The Organizer. A film by Nick Taylor and Joey Carey

Week Six. February 24th – February 28th

Tuesday: Discuss. Kohl-Arenas. *The Self-Help Myth*. Five Page Critique Due.

Thursday: The American Labor Union Movement.

Week Seven. March 2nd – March 6th

Thursday: Power Relations in the Garment Industry.

Thursday: Discuss: Rivoli. *Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy*. (chapters 1,2, 5-12, and epilogue).

Week Eight. March 9th – March 13th

Tuesday: Class discussion of research plans and ideas. Bring one-page summary of your project to class. Review: Jasper. *The Emotions of Protests*, Appendix 1 & 2.

Thursday: Research Proposals Due

*******Spring Recess March 14th – March 22nd*******

Week Nine. March 23rd – March 27th

Tuesday: The Political Process Model of Economic and Demographic Change

Thursday: The Civil Rights Movement and Agency

Week Ten. March 30th – April 3rd

Tuesday: Discuss: Gillion. *The Loud Minority*.

Thursday: The Black Lives Matter Movement

Week Eleven. April 6th – April 10th

Tuesday: Values Based Organizing in Texas

Thursday: Discuss Staudt. *Hope for Justice and Power*. Five Page Critique Due

Week Twelve. April 13th - April 17th

Tuesday: The Environmental Justice Movement.

Thursday: Organizing on College Campuses

Week Thirteen. April 20th - April 24th

Tuesday: Discuss Russell J. Dalton. *The Good Citizen*. Five Page Critique Due.

Thursday: Student Presentation of Research Projects.

Week Fourteen. April 27th - May 1st

Tuesday: Student Presentation of Research Projects.

Thursday: Student Presentation of Research Projects.