



Graduate Course Syllabus

POL 550: Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Lobbying

Center: Online

Course Prerequisites

POL 500

Course Description

Political parties, interest groups, and the mass media have been characterized as the "transmission belts" that connect politicians to the public, as well as a vehicle for achieving political objectives. In this course, students will examine how these groups differ in their role and approaches and how they affect public opinion and political decision making. Topics include the history and development of political parties and interest groups, their relationship with governmental and non-governmental institutions, and how they have influenced and are influenced by an ever-changing political landscape.

Course Outcomes

- Evaluate the roles of interest groups and political parties for their influence in the political and policymaking process
- Evaluate effective, research-based strategies utilized by interest groups for predicting the likelihood of political success
- Construct issue-based campaign plans by assessing alignment of key players involved in policy proposals to build partnerships and coalitions
- Design accountability measures in evaluating coalition or public sector leaders based on their roles, responsibilities, and ethical obligations
- Design effective campaign plans with the potential to achieve public policy or political outcomes

Required Materials

Using your learning resources is critical to your success in this course. Please purchase directly through the [SNHU Online Bookstore](#) rather than any other vendor. Purchasing directly from the bookstore ensures that you will obtain the correct materials and that the IT Service Desk, your advisor, and the instructor can provide you with support if you have problems.

Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns

M. J. Burbank, R. J. Hrebenar, and R. C. Benedict

Paradigm Publishers

2nd Edition

2012

ISBN: 978-0-19-994585-6

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As indicated in our core values, SNHU is committed to “embrace diversity where we encourage and respect diverse identities, ideas, and perspectives by honoring difference, amplifying belonging, engaging civilly, and breaking down barriers to bring our mission to life.”

This may or will be reflected in SNHU’s curriculum as we embrace and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to provide the most transformative experience for our students, faculty, and staff. Because topics pertaining to DEI can be sensitive, please remember that embodying and practicing diversity, equity, and inclusion is one of our core values that you will encounter throughout the academic experience. In higher education, we are expected to think and engage critically. Use a growth mindset to embrace the diverse readings, course assignments, and experiences of your peers and faculty.

For more information about DEI at SNHU, please visit our website at the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Instructor Availability and Response Time

Your class interaction with the instructor and your classmates will take place on a regular, ongoing basis. Your instructor will be actively engaged within the course throughout the week. You will normally communicate with your instructor in the weekly discussions or the General Questions discussion topic so that your questions and the instructor’s answers benefit the entire class. You should feel free, however, to communicate with your instructor via SNHU email at any time, particularly when you want to discuss something of a personal or sensitive nature. Your instructor will generally provide a response within 24 hours. Instructors will post grades and feedback (as applicable) within seven days of an assignment’s due date, or within seven days of a late submission.

Grade Distribution

Assignment Category	Number of Graded Items	Point Value per Item	Total Points
Discussions	10	20	200
Short Papers	4	75	300
Final Project			
Milestone One	1	50	50
Milestone Two	1	50	50
Milestone Three	1	50	50
Milestone Four	1	50	50
Final Project Submission	1	300	300
			Total Course Points: 1,000

This course may also contain practice activities. The purpose of these non-graded activities is to assist you in mastering the learning outcomes in the graded activity items listed above.

University Grading System: Graduate

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Points
A	93–100	4.00

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Points
A-	90–92	3.67
B+	87–89	3.33
B	83–86	3.00
B-	80–82	2.67
C+	77–79	2.33
C	73–76	2.00
F	0–72	0.00
I	Incomplete	
IF	Incomplete/Failure *	
W	Withdrawn	

* Please refer to the [policy page](#) for information on the incomplete grade process.

Grading Guides

Specific activity directions, grading guides, posting requirements, and additional deadlines can be found in the Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics section of the course.

Weekly Assignment Schedule

All reading and assignment information can be found within each module of the course. Assignments and discussion posts during the first week of each term are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Assignments and discussion posts for the remainder of the term are due by 11:59 p.m. of the student's local time zone.

In addition to the textbook readings that are listed, there may be additional required resources within each module.

Module	Topics and Assignments
1	An introduction to Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Lobbying <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 1 1-1 Discussion: Political Parties and Interest Groups 1-2 Short Paper: Advocacy 1-3 Final Project Review
2	Political Parties <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 2 2-1 Discussion: Political Parties and Electoral Success 2-2 Final Project Milestone One: Draft of Introduction
3	Interest Groups and Elections <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 9 3-1 Discussion: Interest Group Over-Reach? 3-2 Short Paper: Campaigns and Interest Groups
4	Interest Groups and Policymaking <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 8 4-1 Discussion: The Policymaking Process 4-2 Final Project Milestone Two: Analysis of the Key Players Draft

Module	Topics and Assignments
5	Partnerships and Coalitions 5-1 Discussion: Forming Partnerships and Coalitions 5-2 Short Paper: Methods of Coalition-Building
6	Interest Groups and Public Opinion 6-1 Discussion: Interest Groups and Public Opinion 6-2 Final Project Milestone Three: Strategic Approach and Recommendations Draft
7	Lobbying <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 10 7-1 Discussion: Lobbying 7-2 Final Project Milestone Four: Execution of Plan Draft
8	Public Accountability <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 6 8-1 Discussion: Ethical Conduct in Policymaking 8-2 Short Paper: Public Policy Ethics
9	Campaign Planning <i>Parties, Interest Groups, and Political Campaigns</i> , Chapter 9 9-1 Discussion: Campaign Plans 9-2 Final Project Submission: Campaign Strategy Plan
10	Course Summary 10-1 Discussion: Presenting Your Campaign Plan

Attendance Policy

Online students are required to submit a graded assignment/discussion during the first week of class. If a student does not submit a graded assignment/discussion during the first week of class, the student is automatically dropped from the course for non-participation. Review the [full attendance policy](#).

Late Assignments Policy

Meeting assigned due dates is critical for demonstrating progress and ensuring appropriate time for instructor feedback on assignments. Students are expected to submit their assignments on or before the due date. Review the [full late assignment policy](#).

SNHU Student Handbook

Review the [student handbook](#).

ADA/504 Compliance Statement

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008, Southern New Hampshire University does not discriminate on the basis of disability, including intellectual disability, in admission, treatment, or access to its programs or activities, nor does it discriminate in employment in its programs or activities.

The university prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability and takes action to prevent such discrimination by providing reasonable accommodations to eligible individuals with disabilities. A disability is a condition or impairment that impacts a “major life activity” or “major bodily function.”

- **Major life activities** include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.
- **Major bodily functions** include, but are not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. Disabilities include physical, medical (including pregnancy), mental health, and learning needs.

At the beginning of each term, or as soon as you become aware of a disability or accessibility concern, we encourage you to contact the Online Accessibility Center (OAC) to discuss accommodations for which you may be qualified. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student and the OAC.

Note that accommodations are not retroactive and that disability accommodations are not provided until acceptable documentation of a disability and its impact is received and an accommodation letter has been processed. If you are unsure whether your condition qualifies as a disability or accessibility concern, please contact the OAC for determination.

Contact Information:

Online Accessibility Center

Phone: 866-305-9430

Email: oac@snhu.edu

For questions concerning support services, documentation guidelines, or general disability issues, please visit the [Online Accessibility Center](#) website.

If you feel you have been denied appropriate disability-related accommodations, including appropriate auxiliary aids and services, you may file a grievance as described in the ADA/504 Grievance Policy found on the [Disability and Accessibility Services](#) website.

Academic Honesty Policy

Southern New Hampshire University requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. Activities such as plagiarism and cheating are not condoned by the university. Review the [full academic honesty policy](#).

Copyright Policy

Southern New Hampshire University abides by the provisions of United States Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). Any person who infringes the copyright law is liable. Review the [full copyright policy](#).

SNHU Withdrawal Policy

Review the [full withdrawal policy](#).

Southern New Hampshire University Policies

More information about SNHU policies can be found on the [policy page](#).

Student Work Samples

For the purpose of continuous improvement of our educational training, Southern New Hampshire University may, on occasion, utilize anonymous student work samples for internal professional development and staff training. If you would like to withdraw permission for use of your work, please complete the [Student Work Sample Survey](#).