**POL 318 - Politics of the American South**

Spring 2024

M/W/F 12:00 - 12:50pm

Turner 241

**Dr. Marvin King**

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Office Hours: Tuesday: 10am - 11:am, Wednesday: 10a – 11am

If you cannot physically come to my office, I will send you a Zoom link.

A note about emails and titles: While I am not overly concerned about titles, many faculty do insist upon being addressed by their rank, so it is worth the time and trouble to use a person’s correct name and title – Dr. King, Professor, or Professor King – are all fine, rather than just “Hey.” The subject line should indicate the class you are in as well. I teach several classes and have some responsibility/contact with more than 500 students this semester.

I typically respond to all necessary and appropriate emails directly related to course matters within one working day during the workweek. I will likely not respond to unsolicited student emails after 5pm or on the weekends.

# Key Spring 2024 Dates - Administrative

# Last Day of Add/Drop (with professor approval) February 7

# Mandatory Drop Date for Non-Attendance February 12

Deadline for Course Withdrawals (no refund) March 8

Spring Break March 9 to 17

Good Friday Holiday March 29

# Key Spring 2024 Dates - Grade

Quiz 1 February 7

Beyond the Classroom Assignment February 23

Quiz 2 February 28

Midterm March 6

Quiz 3 March 27

Quiz 4 April 22

Policy Brief May 3

**Required Text**

McKee, Seth C. 2019. *The Dynamics of Southern Politics*. Sage CQ Press.

Additional readings on Blackboard

**Purpose**

There are many definitions of the South just as there are many emotions, connotations, perceptions, positive and negative, when we evoke the terms South and southern. This is so because the American South is just different. Its conservatism is different, its racial history is different, its religiosity is different, and as a result, Southern politics is very different. As residents of the South, we all take a particular interest in its politics, although the effects of southern politics reverberate throughout the nation.

We start the semester reviewing what makes the political South different from the other 39 states. For our purposes, we define the South as the 11 states that seceded from the USA. The experience and legacy of race, Civil War, and Reconstruction continue to serve as the three most obvious difference-makers. This class can and should bring additional logic explaining the South’s political differences.

We focus on the South as a whole; however, we will spend some time examining unique political characteristics of each state. For instance, Alabama’s religiosity, Texas’s redistricting, Virginia’s evolving demographics, the North Carolina Tea Party, and the withering away of moderate Dems in MS.

The throughline of the class is conservative control intertwined with the rise of Southern Republicanism. By the end of the semester, each of you should have a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of Southern politics and the ability to explain how Southern politics got to be where it is today. In doing so, we will learn about ways in which America influences the South as well as the southernization of American politics.

We have a busy semester in front of us. With each of you contributing your best, I hope and expect you will take much from this class. I recognize that many of you enter this class with pre-conceived notions of Southern politics. I cannot change minds. That is not my goal. However, what I expect is that you finish this course with a broader and more factually correct notion of Southern politics.

Importantly, I ask that you respect the diverse views of fellow students and utilize common courtesies during class. Please, while in class, refrain from eating, and reading the newspaper. Make sure your cell phones are off, etc. If you bring a laptop into class, please avoid social media, or any activity distracting students from classroom lecture and discussion, especially those social media platforms I have never even heard of.

This class utilizes lecture and discussion. I fully expect you to complete the assigned reading for that day’s lecture and come to class prepared to participate. I encourage students to ask questions, particularly when you need material clarified.

**Learning Objectives**

Discuss the history and significance of the one-party South.

Explain Republican Party ascendancy in the South and Democratic Party decline in the South

Articulate the political differences between the Deep South and the Periphery South, and the South and non-South

**Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend all class meetings; improving writing skills takes time and is a process unlike learning content alone. In acknowledgment of the fact that students may experience some circumstances that prevent complete attendance, the following policy is in effect:

All absences are viewed as absences; there are no “excused” or “unexcused” categories.

If a student is attending UM with a scholarship requiring course absences (e.g., athletics, band), the following exception applies - students will not be penalized for required absences alone, if the student presents to the instructor by the end of the course an official letter from the scholarship-issuing program declaring the required absences for the entire semester.

0-4 absences: no penalty - 100 Attendance Grade

5-6 absences: 90 Attendance Grade

7-8 absences: 80 Attendance Grade

9-10 absences: 70 Attendance Grade

11+ absences: 60 Attendance Grade

Students who plan to miss 20% or more of the course should consider enrolling in the course during another semester.

UM requires all students to have a verified attendance at least once during the first two weeks of the semester for each course. If attendance is not verified, then a student will be dropped from the course and any financial aid will be adjusted accordingly. Please see http://olemiss.edu/gotoclass for more information. This requirement is independent from the attendance policy stated previously in this syllabus.

**Make-Up Policy**

I allow make-up work only if you obtain a UM approved excuse. In lieu of a UM approved excuse, any student failing to turn in their assignment, or take their quiz or test, will receive a zero on that exam. For instance, if you do not feel well and you visit the Student Health Center, it is insufficient to send me a note stating you visited the doctor or a copy of your prescription. I require a note from a health professional stating your illness prevented you from completing your assignment (however, I do not need to know the exact nature of your illness).

**Disability Services**

If you have a documented disability, as recognized by Student Disability Services, please contact Student Disability Services at 234 Martindale Center, 662-915-7128. Course requirements will not be waived but reasonable accommodations may be provided as appropriate. Please consult <https://sds.olemiss.edu/> for more information on student disability services.

**Academic Ethics**

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, just ask. If you think something might be wrong, it probably is. No matter, just ask for clarification. Please reference the [UM M Book](https://communications.olemiss.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/10/MBook.pdf) for all policies regarding academic honesty, ethics, and plagiarism. Punishment for violations of academic ethics will range from loss of a letter grade on the assignment to failure in the class. The decision will be made by the faculty member in consultation with the department chair. Appeals can be made to the UM Academic Discipline Committee.

**Late Assignment Policy**

All students have one Free Pass to be used on any written assignment EXCEPT the final essay. One assignment can be turned in up to 24 hours late with no questions asked and no negative consequences for the grade. After the Free Pass is used, any assignment submitted late will be subject to the late assignment policy. Assignments (outside the Free Pass) submitted late will be docked a 15-point penalty.

Do not ask for an exception to this policy unless you bring a UM approved excuse. Missing class or an assignment because you are sick or not feeling well does not constitute a UM approved excuse. A UM approved excuse needs to be a written notice from another professor, department (i.e., Athletics, Band, Mock Trial, etc..) or from [UMatter](https://umatter.olemiss.edu/). If you miss class for any reason other than one for which you can obtain a UM-approved excuse do not ask me for the class notes. For instance, if you are not feeling well and you visit the Student Health Center, it is not sufficient to bring me a note stating you visited the doctor or a copy of your prescription.

# Assessments

# Online Quizzes (20%) Four online (Blackboard) quizzes, each worth 5% of your final grade. The material for the quizzes will primarily come from your textbook, *The Dynamics of Southern Politics*. These quizzes are open book and will post on Blackboard and will be available 8am – 8pm on the following dates (February 7, February 28, March 27; and April 22).

# Midterm Exam (25%). The midterm exam is Wednesday, March 6.

# Beyond the Classroom Experience (25%) Students must attend one event from the Overby Center or the Center for the Study of Southern Culture. Students can also suggest alternative online lectures, podcasts, documentaries, or long-form journalism that will count. Students will submit a two-page summation. This must be submitted no later than February 23, but it can be submitted as soon as completed. A scoring rubric is included on Blackboard.

# Policy Brief (25%)

In many policy shops and legislative offices, it is common to write a policy brief. A brief will contain an executive summary, an introduction, an overview of the research, and examination of the findings and implications of the research. Students will turn in a final paper brief recommending a policy action to an elected official in the South. The brief should be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with standard one-inch margins. You do not need a cover sheet. The bibliography page does not count against the page limit. Specific details and requirements will be posted to Blackboard. **Due: May 3.**

# Attendance (5%)

# Grading (+/- grading scale)

The Political Science Department maintains a "C" policy. Students must make at least a grade of C or better for the course to count towards the major.

A: 93-100 A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89 B: 83-86 B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79 C: 73-76 C-: 70-72

D: <70 F: <60

# Miscellaneous

# This syllabus is a guide for the coming semester. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, but I will do my best to adhere to this syllabus.

I will make appropriate allowances for those with disabilities, but it is your responsibility to notify me by the second week of the semester of any needed accommodations. If this is the case, I require validation from Student Disability Services.

Requests for Lecture Notes: I provide copies of lecture notes to students only for UM-approved absences and for emergencies. If you are away from class for a health-related reason, I require a note from a health professional stating why you could not attend class. This is not the same as a note saying you visited the doctor. If you are just feeling sick, that doesn’t count. Otherwise, if you want the notes, come to class.

Use your olemiss.edu email address and please be accessible via Blackboard.

Do *not* delay until late in the semester to seek help. By then it will be too late.

# Schedule

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Day | Month | Date | Topic | Assignment |
| Monday | January | 22 | Course Introduction |  |
| Wednesday | January | 24 | General Discussion of Southern Politics |  |
| Friday | January | 26 | South vs. Non-South |  |
| Monday | January | 29 | Contemporary Southern Politics |  |
| Wednesday | January | 31 | Contemporary Southern Politics |  |
| Friday | February | 2 | The Constitution and the South |  |
| Monday | February | 5 | The Constitution and the South |  |
| Wednesday | February | 7 | Antebellum and Reconstruction | Quiz 1 |
| Friday | February | 9 | Antebellum and Reconstruction |  |
| Monday | February | 12 | One-Partyism |  |
| Wednesday | February | 14 | 1930s-1940s |  |
| Friday | February | 16 | 1930s-1940s |  |
| Monday | February | 19 | Civil Rights |  |
| Wednesday | February | 21 | Civil Rights |  |
| Friday | February | 23 | Partisanship | Beyond the Classroom |
| Monday | February | 26 | No Class |  |
| Wednesday | February | 28 | Partisanship | Quiz 2 |
| Friday | March | 1 | Symbolic Politics |  |
| Monday | March | 4 | Religion |  |
| Wednesday | March | 6 |  | Midterm |
| Friday | March | 8 | Economics |  |
| Monday | March | 18 | Nixon |  |
| Wednesday | March | 20 | Carter |  |
| Friday | March | 22 | Reagan |  |
| Monday | March | 25 | Reagan |  |
| Wednesday | March | 27 | Clinton | Quiz 3 |
| Friday | March | 29 | No Class |  |
| Monday | April | 1 | Gingrich |  |
| Wednesday | April | 3 | Obama |  |
| Friday | April | 5 | No Class |  |
| Monday | April | 8 | Tea Party |  |
| Wednesday | April | 10 | Trump |  |
| Friday | April | 12 | Minority Voters |  |
| Monday | April | 15 | Minority Voters |  |
| Wednesday | April | 17 | State Legislatures |  |
| Friday | April | 19 | State Legislatures |  |
| Monday | April | 22 | State Legislatures | Quiz 4 |
| Wednesday | April | 24 | GOP Descriptive Representation |  |
| Friday | April | 26 | Policy Issues in the South |  |
| Monday | April | 29 | Policy Issues in the South |  |
| Wednesday | May | 1 | Contemporary Southern Politics |  |
| Friday | May | 3 | Future Politics in the American South | Policy Brief |