

Money & Politics

POS 4931/Fall 2022

Suzanne M. Robbins Ph.D., @ the University of Florida

Office hours:

Tuesdays 12-1 (Zoom)
Wednesdays 1-3 pm
(205 Anderson Hall)

Class meets:

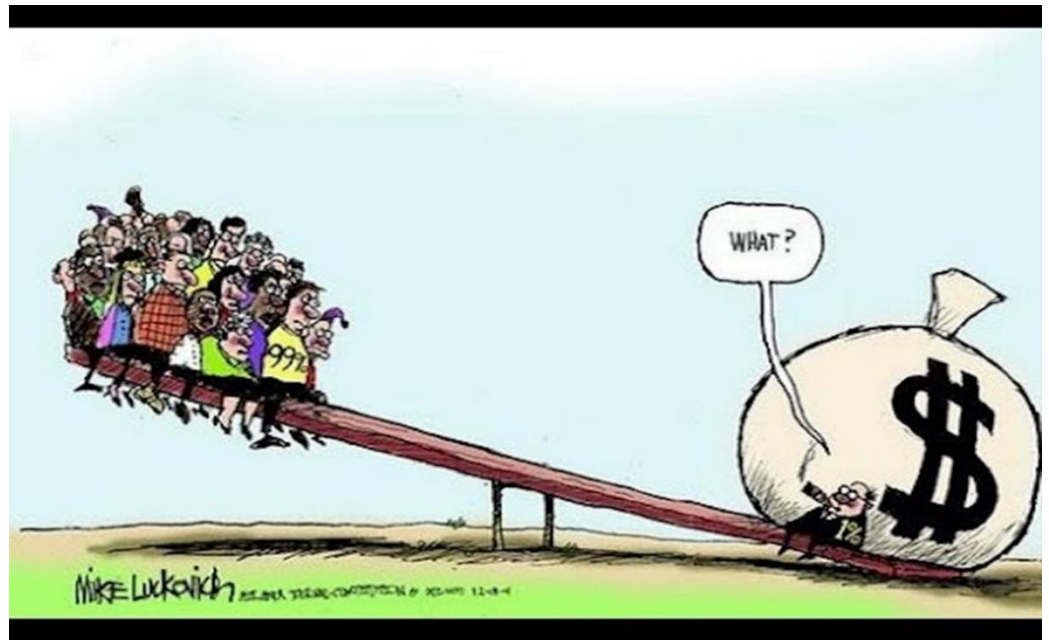
MWF 11:45-12:35
Dauer Hall Room 342

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This Photo of Mike Luckovich's political cartoon is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

*We may have
democracy, or we may
have wealth
concentrated in the
hands of a few, but we
can't have both. -Justice
Louis Brandeis, 1941*

*There are two things
that are important in
politics. The first is
money and I can't
remember what the
second one is. - Mark
Hanna, ~1896*

*Politics has got so
expensive that it takes
lots of money to even
get beat nowadays. -
Will Rogers, 1931*

*Money is the mother's
milk of politics. - Jesse
Unruh, 1966*

Course Overview

Harold Lasswell (1936) defined politics as "the struggle who gets what, when, and how." He noted that the elites held power, in that they made decisions over the distribution of resources and the promotion of desired values. Traditionally, those with resources are part of that elite and those without them or without patronage do not hold power.

This course examines the role of money in U.S. politics, emphasizing the role of economic inequality in America and its effect on political equality. We will examine theories of inequality, apply them to American policy and politics and discuss the consequences for representative democracy.

Learning objectives:

- Understand the relationship between political and economic inequality.
- Distinguish between myths and reality of money and politics.
- Distinguish between assumptions and evidence in evaluating arguments.
- Synthesize a diverse literature to make conclusions about money and politics.
- Understand the state of U.S. campaign finance law, as constrained by the Supreme Court, and laws' effect on politics and policies.
- Access and make use of empirical data relating to money and politics.
- Understand the obstacles to reform in the current political/economic current system.

Required Texts



Please note that politics by its very nature is conflictual. I'm not asking to you agree with me or any of our authors. I am asking you to read carefully, understand the arguments, and to critically evaluate the evidence. You'll also need to learn how to make connections across the literature. Much of the reading is on Canvas. You also need to read major newspapers to keep up with current events (like the election). The Hacker et al text is available via the library (instructions on canvas). The following are required, and e-books are acceptable:

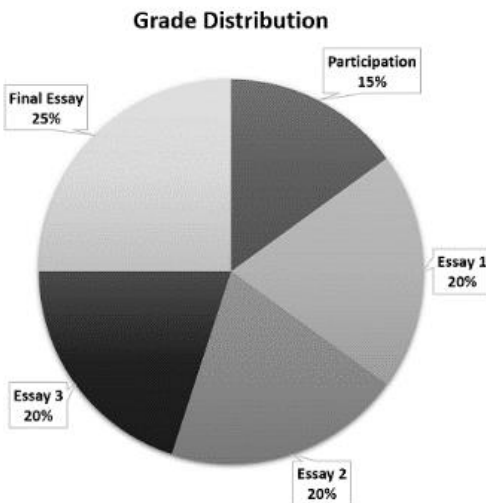
- Hacker, J.S., Hertel-Fernandez, A. Pierson, P., and K. Thelen. 2022. *The American Political Economy: Politics, Markets, and Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mutch, Robert E. 2016. *Campaign Finance: What Every Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Witko, C., Morgan, J., Kelly, N. J., and P. E. Enns. 2021. *Hijacking the Agenda: Economic Power and Political Influence*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Tips for Success

Go to class (and read before class). The class is organized as a advanced seminar. I will lecture, but we will talk often. Pay attention when I lecture and ask questions. Participate during workshops. You can't do well if you skip class.

Move beyond parroting talking points to using **critical thinking skills**. Ask yourself, "why," "if this is true, what else must be true," and "what is this an example of?" Think about implications and **make connections across the reading**.

Complete all the assignments on time.



A	94.0%	C	73.0%
A-	90.0%	C+	70.0%
B+	87.0%	D+	67.0%
B	83.0%	D	63.0%
B-	80.0%	D-	60%
C+	77.0%		

Assignments & Grading

Participation/Attendance: Read the assigned readings before class - this is absolutely critical to your success. Raise questions about what you do not understand, question assumptions, demonstrate a firm grasp of the material. Everyone will also self-evaluate their participation twice during the semester. *You must attend class to participate.* (15%)

Short Essays: Three short essays have been designed to help you draw connections across the literature within a module. Specific instructions for each essay will be posted in Canvas. (20% each)

Comprehensive Final Essay: You write one comprehensive final essay due during the final exam period assessing your mastery of the course readings, lectures, and discussions. The essay question(s) will require critical analysis and synthesis of material from the entire semester. (25%).

More details assignments & grading are on Canvas.

Reading Schedule

Module 1: Introduction (August 24-26)

- What's Wrong with Inequality? (Iverson)*
- The Great Money in Politics Debate (Matthews)
- Forgotten: How Congress Ignores the Lower & Middle Classes (*Hijacking the Agenda*, Chapter 1)

Module 2: Inequality & Politics (August 29-Oct. 3)

Defining & Describing Inequality: (August 29-Sept. 2)

- Pew Research Economic Inequality/Poverty (2 articles)
- Rise of Extreme Poverty (Schaefer/Edin)
- America's One Percent Problem (Stiglitz)
- Striking it Richer (Saez)

Causes & Theories of Inequality: (Sept. 7-16)

- Class, Status, & Party (Weber)
- Rent Seeking/Markets & Inequality (Stiglitz)
- Power and the Policy Agenda (*Hijacking*, Chapter 2)
- Winner Take All Politics (Hacker/Pierson)

Political Consequences of Inequality: (Sept. 19-Oct. 3)

- Politics of Income Inequality (Porter)
- Explanations for Inequality and Partisan Polarization (Suhey et al)
- American Dem. in Era of Inequality (Jacobs et al)
- The American Political Economy, Intro (Hacker text)
- Racial Inequality, Market Inequality (Chapter 4, Hacker text)

Essay 1 due on October 5, midnight, Canvas

Module 3: Lobbying and Policy (Oct. 5-Nov. 4)

Power and Influence (October 5)

- Lobbying & Influence (Leech)
- Agenda Setting and Policy (October 10-17)*
- Hurdles to Shared Prosperity (Chapter 1, Hacker text)
- The Role of Law (Chapter 2, Hacker text)
- Congressional Attention/Economic Interests (Chapters 2, 3, *Hijacking*)

Case Studies:(October 19-26)

- Empowering Wall Street, Financial Re-Regulation, Ignoring Main Street (Chapters 5-7, *Hijacking*)
- Big Tech's Governmental Ambitions, (Teachout)

Political Consequences of Unequal Access, Implications (October 28-Nov. 4)

- Money, Priorities, and Stalemate (Baumgartner et al)
- Everybody Knows Money Influences Politics (Koerth-Baker)
- Concluding Thoughts (Chapter 8, *Hijacking*)

Essay 2 due November 4, midnight, Canvas

Module 4: Money & Elections (Nov. 7-Dec. 7)

Introduction to Campaign Finance (Nov. 7)

- What is the Campaign Finance Problem? (Mutch text)
- Campaign Finance Laws, Purists, Pragmatists (La Raja/Schaffner)
- How to Read a Legal Opinion (Kerr)
- Legal & Statutory History & Policy (Nov. 9-18)*
- Campaign Finance Chapters 2-5 (Mutch)
- *Buckley v. Valeo, 1976*
- Campaign Finance Chapters 6-9 (Mutch)
- *Citizens United, 2010*
- The Myth of Campaign Finance Reform (Smith)
- What does Money Buy? Raising and Spending Money (Nov. 21-28)*
- Ideological Wellsprings (La Raja/Schaffner)
- Who Gets Campaign Money? (La Raja/Schaffner)
- Shining the Light on Dark Money (Dimmery/Peteron)
- Allocating Unlimited Money (Rocca/Clay)
- Political Consequences of Unequal Participation, Implications (Nov. 30 - Dec. 7)*
- How Outside Money makes Governing More Difficult (Norton/Pildes)
- Small Donor Empowerment Depends on the Details (Malbin/Parrot)
- Money and Politics: The Effects of Campaign Spending Limits (Avis et al)
- Diversifying the Donor Pool (McCabe/Heerwig)
- *Campaign Finance, Conclusion (Mutch)*
- The Future of Reform: Build Canals, Not Dams (LaRaja/Schaffner)

Essay 3 due December 5, midnight, Canvas

Final Essay due December 13, midnight, Canvas

***Readings other than the three texts are in the modules on Canvas**

A restriction on the amount of money a person or a group can spend on political communication during a campaign necessarily reduces the quantity of expression by restricting the number of issues discussed, the depth of their exploration, and the size of the audience reached.

– Buckley v. Valeo, 1976

Money & Politics

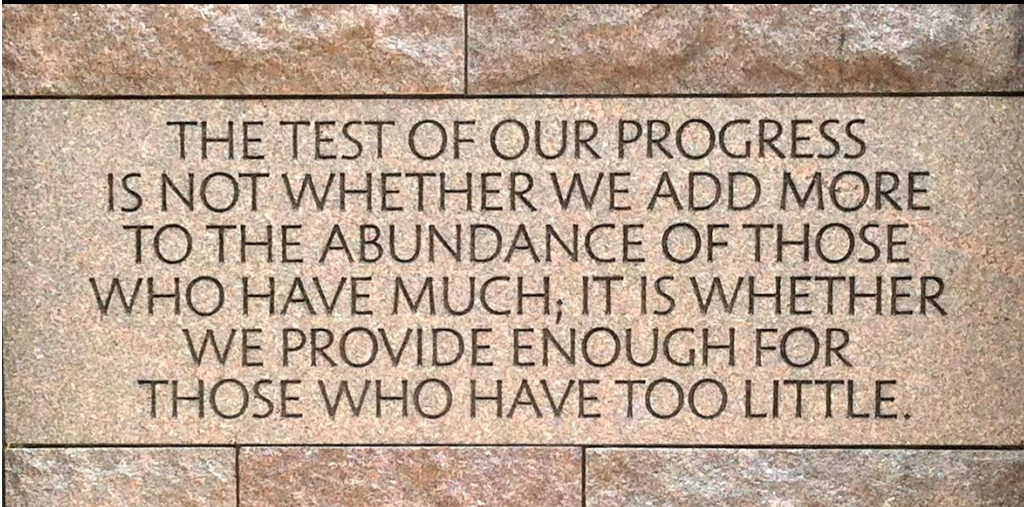


Photo: Suzanne M. Robbins, FDR Memorial, Washington DC

*Have a question?
See Canvas or email me.*

The Fine Print: Course, Department, and University Policy

Attendance: Attendance is required. Students failing to attend class during the first week may be dropped from the course; excessive absences could result in a failing grade. Requirements for class attendance, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>). Please contact Dr. Robbins if you will miss lecture and your TA if you will miss discussion for documented absences (e.g., religious observances, illness, or academic/athletic competitions).

COVID-19 (and other illnesses): If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.ufl.edu for vaccination opportunities.

- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided with a documented excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

Late Work: Canvas will assess a 5% per day penalty automatically to late work.

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback is available at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email, they receive from GatorEvals or via Canvas. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Disability Services: Students who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. Please share your accommodation letter (and discuss your needs) with Dr. Robbins as early as possible.

Plagiarism/Cheating: Cheating/plagiarism will result in zero for the assignment and will be reported to the SCCR. Students are bound by the UF Honor Pledge: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>.

Current UF Grading Policies/Grade Points: Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points is here: catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/.

Recording lectures/discussion: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.