

POLI 65-1  
Pressure and Power: Organized Interests in American Politics  
Spring 2012

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**Description:** This course is designed to introduce students to how political scientists think about how American politics works. We examine the phenomena of organized groups: where do they come from, why are there so many, does the group with the most money always win, are they ruining democracy, can there be a democracy without groups? In order to answer these questions you will learn about political science models, be exposed to the professor's own research on state-level interest groups, and conduct your own research on a political organization.

**Textbooks** (required): Interest Groups in American Politics, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (2013) by Anthony Nownes should be purchased. Additional readings are on the course's Sakai site. Note: some of these articles require real concentration and attention; they will need to be read more than once to grasp fully.

**Format:** The expectations of a seminar are somewhat different than for a regular course. In a seminar the instructor lectures relatively less and the students talk relatively more. Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss the reading for the day. Often you will have an assignment to do ahead of time and report on in class. The electronic classroom will allow you to show your classmates the web site of your organization, the list of its PAC contributors, and anything else that would make your report interesting. Your learning will come from what you do on your own, from the instructor, and from your fellow students. So please take the shared responsibility for learning seriously. It should be obvious that regular attendance is required; participation, engagement, and contributions to class discussions will be graded. Our classroom is a texting and surfing free zone; anyone caught doing these or other behaviors that distract from the civility of the class will be dealt with firmly. From the seminar experience you should improve your skills in speaking, writing, and your ability to work cooperatively in a group.

**Grading:** The course grade has the following components:

Midterm Exam	25%
In-Class Assignments	24%
In-Class Quizzes	11%
Class Participation	10%
Analysis of Interest Organization Paper	30%

Academic achievement at UNC is graded on the following basis:

- A Outstanding mastery of the course materials; students have exhibited performance far above that required for the course and far above that usually seen in the course.
- B Superior mastery of the course materials; students have exhibited performance that is strong and very clearly above what is required in the course.
- C Satisfactory mastery of the course materials; students have exhibited performance that clearly meets the course requirements in all respects.
- D Poor mastery of the course materials; students have exhibited performance that is below the course requirements, but still worthy of credit.
- F Unsatisfactory mastery of the course materials; students have exhibited performance that fails to meet the requirements of the course.

The **Honor Code** is in effect in this class and all others at the University. I am committed to treating Honor Code violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms set out at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. If you have questions, it is your responsibility to ask me about the Code's application. All exams and papers must be submitted with a statement that you have complied with the requirements of the Honor Code in all aspects of the submitted work.

**Analysis of Interest Organization Paper:** You are to choose one organized interest to follow throughout the semester. It will be the subject of most assignments; with just a little more work and analysis that material will become your analysis paper. Therefore, choose the group carefully; check with the instructor if you are uncertain. The paper is due on April 16; it should be at least 10 pages, double-spaced, and no longer than 15 pages.

In this research-exposure course, you will be working with a Graduate Research Consultant (NAME) who will assist you in the research project. The GRC program is sponsored by the Office for Undergraduate Research ([www.unc.edu/depts/our](http://www.unc.edu/depts/our)). I encourage you to visit this website to see other ways that you might engage in research, scholarship and creative performance while you are at Carolina.

**In-Class Assignments:** Typically I will talk about the topic and ask you to turn in an assignment illustrating what we are talking about. The assignments are listed at the end of the syllabus, and the due date for each is listed on the daily schedule. By the due date and time of class please submit the assignment via the Assignment Tool on Sakai. Also then bring a hard copy of the assignment to class so that you can report what you found to the rest of the class. The 12 assignments count 2 points each; collectively, the in-class assignments constitute 24% of the grade.

**Quizzes:** In place of a final exam, which is not required for FYS classes, after the midterm exam we will have several short quizzes on sections of the reading material. Collectively these will count 11% of the grade. General class participation will make up 10% of the grade.

## Outline and Daily Schedule

Jan 10 Introduction to Course

Jan 15 What is an Interest?

Read: (BB) Madison, Federalist, #10; (BB) Salisbury, "Interest Advocacy and Interest Representation"

What is an Interest Organization?

Read: Nownes, ch. 1

Jan 17 History of Organized Interests in America

Read: (BB) Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," Journal Of Democracy, 6 (Jan., 1995): 65-78; (BB) Barry, "This Land: A Grand Gathering, but One With a Solemn Note," *New York Times*, August 26, 2007; (BB) Maguire, "Age Gap Depletes Legion Posts," *News & Observer*, January 20, 2008

A1 Due

Jan 22

History (continued)

Read: (BB) Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"; Nownes, ch. 2  
A2 Due

Jan 24 Formation of Interest Groups: Pluralism

Read: Nownes, ch. 3

Jan 29 Early Critics of Pluralism

Read: (BB) Schattschneider, The Semisovereign People, Ch. 2

A3 Due

Jan 31 Formation of Interest Groups: Olson's Model

Read: (BB) Olson, The Rise and Decline of Nations, ch. 2

Feb 5 Formation of Interest Groups: Extensions of Olson's Models

Read: Nownes, ch. 4

A4 Due

Feb 7 Formation of Interest Groups: Population Ecology Interest Theory

Read: (BB) Lowery and Gray, "Interest Organization Communities: Their Assembly and Consequences"; (BB) Lichtblau, "Beyond Guns: N.R.A. Expands Agenda," *New York Times*, July 12, 2010.

A5 Due

Feb 12 Interest Communities

- Read: (BB) Bosso, Environment Inc., Ch. 3
- Feb 14 Maintenance of interest groups  
Read: (BB) Bosso, Environment Inc., Ch. 4  
A6 Due
- Feb 19 MIDTERM EXAM
- Feb 21 Why Do Interest Groups Lobby?  
Read: (BB) Godwin, Godwin, and Ainsworth, "Is Corporate Lobbying Rational or Just a Waste of Money?" (BB) Casey, "Why They Lobby," *National Journal*, May 31, 2008:46-48.
- Feb 26 Direct Lobbying  
Read: Nownes, ch. 5; (BB) Yoffe, "Am I the Next Jack Abramoff?" *Slate*, April 1, 2006.  
A7 Due
- Feb 28 How Do They Lobby?  
Read: (BB) Kersh, "Corporate Lobbyists as Political Actors: A View from the Field"
- Mar 5 Lobbying the Legislature  
View the movie "Thank You for Not Smoking"
- Mar 7 Research Presentation by Prof. Gray and Associates on State Interest Groups  
A8 Due
- Mar12-14 NO CLASS Spring Break
- Mar 19 Lobbying the Judicial and Executive Branches  
Read: We will discuss the campaign finance case *Citizens United v. FEC*. First go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens\\_United\\_v.\\_Federal\\_Election\\_Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens_United_v._Federal_Election_Commission) to read about the case. Then go to <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/preview/briefs/sept09.shtml> to see the line-up of interested parties in the case. Look at the list overall: how did groups differ in their support of the appellant (Citizens United) and the appellee (FEC)? Did any groups surprise you? Select 2 groups that filed amicus briefs in support of Citizens United and 2 groups that filed amicus briefs in support of the FEC. Then click on each brief and skim it to see what argument(s) it presented to the Court.  
A9 Due
- Mar 21 Lobbying the Executive Branch  
Read: Godwin, Ainsworth, and Godwin, Lobbying and Policymaking, ch. 5

Mar 26 Indirect Lobbying

Read: Nownes, Ch. 7; (BB) Brown & Waltzer, "Every Thursday: Advertorials by Mobil Oil on the Op-ed Page of *The New York Times*," *Public Relations Review*, 31, (June 2005):197-208.

A10 Due

Mar 28 Organized Interests and Political Parties

Read: Nownes, Ch. 8

Apr 2 Lobbying Before the Election: Campaign Contributions

Read: Nownes, Ch. 6

A11 Due

Apr 4 The PAC-Lobby Connection

Read: (BB) Koger and Victor, "Polarized Agents: Campaign Contributions by Lobbyists," *PS*, 42 (July 2009):485-488.

Apr 9 Does Money Buy Influence?

Read: (BB) Baumgartner et al., "Does Money Buy Public Policy?" ch. 10 in *Lobbying and Policy Change* (2009); (BB) Burns, "K Street and the Status Quo," *Miller-McCune*, August 10, 2010 at <http://www.miller-mccune.com/politics/k-street-and-the-status-quo-20015/>

Apr 11 Campaign Finance and Lobbying Reforms by Congress and the States

Read: (BB) Gurwitt, "Cookie-Jar Clampdown," *Governing*, April, 2007:32-39; (BB) Vaida, "K Street Paradox," *National Journal*, March 13, 2010:22-30.

Apr 16 What is the Policy Impact of Interest Groups?

Read: Nownes, Ch. 9

ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

Apr 18 Do Interest Groups Hurt the Economy?

Read: (BB) Olson, ch. 3, *Rise and Decline of Nations*; (BB) Gray & Lowery, "Interest Group Politics and Economic Growth in the U.S. States," *American Political Science Review* 82 (March 1988): 109-131.

Apr 23 What is the Influence of Interest Groups on Democracy?

Read: Nownes, Ch. 10

A12 Due

Class Presentations of Research Projects

Apr 25 Class Presentations of Research Projects

## Assignments

1) Informally interview someone who is lobbying, protesting, or demonstrating off the UNC campus. Hints: go to the Post Office on Franklin St and talk to the people who are gathering signatures or go to the corner of Franklin and Elliott by Whole Foods on Friday around 5 pm and talk to the folks who are holding up signs. Ask them what they expect to accomplish, how they got involved, how often they show up to do this etc. Or go to the Chapel Hill Town Council meeting on Monday evening (the agenda is printed in the Chapel Hill news) at City Hall and ask similar questions of residents who show up to address the Council. Or find a registered lobbyist and ask him/her about lobbying the state legislature or Congress.

2) Find a cartoon in the mainstream media depicting an interest organization. Extra points if you can find one showing an interest group in a positive light (not from the group's own website).

3) Select an interest organization to follow throughout the course. It should be one registered to lobby the U.S. Congress and one that has a PAC registered with the FEC. Find its web site and develop a description of the organization. What is its mission? Its identity? More information may be found in the [Encyclopedia of Associations \[serial\]](#). Call number: HS17 .E52, Latest volume located at Davis Library Reference Desk.

4) Identify the kinds of benefits your organization offers to its potential members.

5) Do a web search to find organizations that compete with your organization. Go to [www.followthemoney.org](http://www.followthemoney.org), click on a state, and see how many organizations are registered to lobby in that interest sector. Do the same at the federal level at <http://www.opensecrets.org/clients/index.asp>

6) How does your organization finance itself? Profile its patron/sponsor/entrepreneur.

7) What type(s) of lobbyists does your organization use? Use [www.followthemoney.org](http://www.followthemoney.org) to see if their lobbyists are registered at the state level; and check to see if lobbyists are registered with Congress at <http://www.opensecrets.org/lobbyists/index.asp>.

8) Has your organization testified at Congressional hearings? Go to <[web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp)> for links to Congressional testimony.

9) Does your organization file amicus curiae briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court? Go to <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/preview/home.html#0001> and click on "briefs", then search around.

10) Has your organization used indirect lobbying tools, such as "climate of opinion" ads, "grassroots lobbying," etc?

11) Does your organization have a PAC? Go to [www.crp.org](http://www.crp.org) to look up data on its federal PAC, see who contributes to it; then go to the FEC web site and find out to whom the PAC contributes? Or find the same information at <http://www.opensecrets.org/pacs/index.asp> . Go to <http://www.followthemoney.org/> to see if it has PACs at the state level. In which states? To whom does it give money? Candidates, initiatives, or parties?

12) Prepare pluralist or anti-pluralist position paper for class debate.