

Pols 337 01[Dr. Randolph C. Horn](#)

Fall 2004

RCHORN@Samford.edu

Class meetings: TR1:00-2:50, DBH 208

Elections and Political Participation

Phone: 726-2179

Office: DBH 108

Office Hours: T 3-4:00, W 1-2:00

& by appointment

Required Readings:

Douglas J. Amy 2000 *Behind the Ballot Box: A Citizens Guide to Voting Systems*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.

Russell Dalton 2002 *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies, 3e*. New York: Chatham House.

William H. Flanigan and Nancy H. Zingale 2002 *Political Behavior of the American Electorate, 10e*. Washington, D. C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

[The New York Times](#), daily

Course Description:

As the title implies, this course addresses two related subject areas in the field of political science: elections and political participation. Discussion of political participation will not be limited to participation in election, but electoral participation will be emphasized. The first three-quarters of the course will focus on various aspects of mass political behavior. The final quarter of the course will emphasize electoral systems.

A significant portion of the class time and reading will utilize cases or examples from the United States; the course will also address material from other countries. Students interested in cross-national or cross-cultural phenomena will have ample opportunity to indulge those interests. Students interested in American politics will benefit from looking at the U. S. in the more general context of other advanced industrial democracies. While the readings provide a focal point for discussion, students are expected to bring different strengths to the class, reflecting their interests.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Students must be prepared for class, completing readings before class meetings.
- 2) Class participation is required. Students with five cuts will FA. Absences may be excused if the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, official university duties, or legal obligation.
- 3) Plagiarism is unacceptable.
- 4) Students performance will be evaluated in these areas:

	Track I	Track II
Class Participation	20	20%
Short Papers	60	60%
Final exam	20%	
Research Project		20%
Total	100	100%

Grades, in ascending order:

greater than 60%= D-
greater than 70%= C
greater than 80%= B-
greater than 90%= A-

greater than 63.3%= D
greater than 73.3%= C
greater than 83.3%= B
greater than 93.3%= A

greater than 66.6%= D+
greater than 76.6%= C+
greater than 86.6%= B+

Class participation: The seminar format requires that students take responsibility for meeting their educational goals and for helping their colleagues with the same. High class participation marks require more than attendance and skimming of the required reading. Student must be prepared to thoughtfully discuss the readings and actively and constructively contribute to the collective effort to grapple with the course material. Additionally, students will be responsible for sharing research articles and providing reports on races they are tracking to the class. Nonparticipation is not an option.

Short Papers: One short paper will be due each week, either an essay on the required readings or an abstract of current research on the week's topic. The abstract and essay receiving the lowest grade will be dropped. Though short, each essay represents an exercise in formal writing. Essays will be evaluated in terms of style, grammar, spelling, content, and creativity and will earn letter grades (i.e. A, B, C, D, F, missing=0). Late papers will receive a one-letter grade penalty per day. Each week half the class will write the short essay and the other half will write the abstract. For example:

Week t	Tuesday	Thursday
Group A	Current Event	Abstract
Group I	Essay	Current Event
Week t+1		
Group A	Essay	Current Event
Group I	Current Event	Abstract

Due Tuesday: Students will write short essays discussing the weekly reading. Short essays are due by 9:00 the morning of class. Each essay should be two-pages long and may be submitted electronically or delivered to DBH 108.

Due Thursday: Students will write an abstract of a recent publication relevant to that week's topic. Abstracts will discuss the theory, data, and methods of the piece, explain its connection to the weekly theme, and assess the implications for contemporary politics. Submit a photocopy of the first page of the reviewed article (or a persistent link with the abstract. Students may select articles for review from the following journals: American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, American Politics Quarterly, British Journal of Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, Comparative Politics, European Journal of Political Research, Journal of Politics, Legislative Studies Quarterly, Mobilization, Political Behavior, Political Research Quarterly, Polity, Public Administration Review, Public Opinion Quarterly, Publius: The Journal of Federalism, Social Forces, Social Science Quarterly, State and Local Review, World Politics, and others by permission. Abstracts are due at 9:00 the morning of class and are not to exceed one page in length.

Current Events: Students are responsible for bringing in a press clipping concerning a relevant current event and a brief (one paragraph-may be hand-written) explanation of its general significance or relevance to the material addressed that week. Student may bring actual clippings or photocopies to class or post the URL and their paragraph to the message board for that week. The latter method is preferred and especially recommended when students have graphics or images they wish to share with the class. Students are encouraged to choose and track races in their home state or a swing state.

Final exam: For students choosing Track I, the final exam is cumulative and is worth 20% of the semester grade.

Independent research: Students choosing Track II will conduct independent research based on the scholarly literature on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor. The typical product of such research is a 15-page term paper. Other creative products (by permission only) are welcome as supplements to or instead of the term paper, but should be comparable scholarly achievements. Students should submit a project proposal by 3 November; the proposal should include a one-page description of the project idea and a tentative bibliography, including at least 10 scholarly references. The final draft of the paper is due in class on 3 December.

Class Schedule		
<u>Week</u>	<u>Session Topic/Assignment</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Week 1 8/30	Introductions	No Class Thursday
Week 2 9/06	Structure Of Mass Beliefs	Dalton Ch. 1-2, Flanigan Ch. 1
Week 3 9/13	Modes Of Participation	Dalton Ch. 3, Flanigan Ch. 2
Week 4 9/20	Protest	Dalton Ch. 4 + Handout
Week 5 9/27	Public Opinion	Flanigan Ch. 6 & Appendix
Week 6 10/04	Values And Ideology	Dalton Ch. 5-6,
Week 7 10/11	Media Effects?	Flanigan Ch. 7 +Handout
Week 8 10/18	Electoral Politics: Parties	Dalton Ch. 7, Flanigan Ch. 3
Week 9 10/25	Fall Break: 10/25-10/26 Social Groups	Dalton Ch. 8, Flanigan Ch. 5 Essays and abstracts due Thursday
Week 10 11/01	Partisanship	Dalton Ch. 9, Flanigan Ch. 4
Week 11 11/08	Attitudes And Issues	Dalton Ch. 10, Flanigan Ch. 8
Week 12 11/15	Citizens And Political Systems	Dalton Ch. 11, Dalton Ch. 12
Week 13 11/22	Electoral Systems Thanksgiving Break: 11/24-26	Amy Ch.1-2 Abstracts due Tuesday
Week 14 11/29	Proportional Representation	Amy Ch. 3-4
Week 15 12/06	Semi-Proportional & Single Office	Amy Ch. 5-7
Final Exam	Tuesday, December 14, 2004, 10:30 AM	

Samford University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations must make their request by contacting Disability Support Services, located in Counseling Services on the lower level of Pittman Hall (telephone number: 726-4078 or 726-2105). A faculty member will grant reasonable accommodations only upon written notification from Disability Support Services.