

## SOUTHERN POLITICS

This course examines politics in the American South, with special attention to political parties and elections. The emphasis is on politics at the state level, but in this presidential election year considerable attention is paid to the place of the South in the national political arena.

Your grade for the course will be based on the midterm examination (20 percent), the final examination (30 percent), active and informed class participation, including participation in a panel discussion (20 percent), and a paper analyzing a competitive 2008 election in a southern state (30 percent). You are bound by the Honor Code in all aspects of the course, and responsible for understanding the code and seeking clarification when you have doubt about its meaning.

In addition to following news accounts of southern politics at RealClearPolitics (<http://realclearpolitics.com>) and other websites, you will read the following books, all of which are available for purchase at the bookstore:

Charles S. Bullock III and Mark J. Rozell, *The New Politics of the Old South*, 3rd. edition (referred to below as Bullock)

V. O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (referred to below as Key)

Michael Nelson and John Lyman Mason, *How the South Joined the Gambling Nation: The Politics of State Policy Innovation* (referred to below as Nelson)

J. David Woodard, *The New Southern Politics* (referred to below as Woodard)

### *Schedule of Topics and Readings*

Thursday, August 28: Introduction to the course

Thursday, September 4: **The One-Party Democratic South**

Woodard, Ch. 2 and pp. 390-396

Tuesday, September 9: **Race and Southern Politics**

Woodard, Ch. 4

- Thursday, September 11:     **Religion and Southern Politics**  
  
  Woodard, Ch. 5  
  Bullock, Ch. 13
- Tuesday, September 16:     **The Rise of the Republican Party**  
**Paper topic due**  
  
  Woodard, Ch. 6  
  Bullock, Introduction
- Thursday, September 18:     **Virginia**  
  
  Key, Ch. 2  
  Woodard, pp. 83-87, 263-269 and 326-3331  
  Bullock, Ch. 6
- Tuesday, September 23:     **Mississippi**  
  
  Key, Ch. 11  
  Woodard, pp. 114-117, 295-299 and 352-356  
  Bullock, Ch. 4
- Thursday, September 25:     Nelson, Chs. 1-2
- Tuesday, September 30:     **Georgia**  
  
  Key, Ch. 6  
  Woodard, pp. 74-79, 252-259 and 317-322
- Tuesday, October 7:         Bullock, Ch. 2  
  Nelson, Ch. 3
- Tuesday, October 14:       **Midterm examination**
- Thursday, October 16:       **Arkansas**  
  
  Key, Ch. 9  
  Woodard, pp. 106-109, 288-291 and 345-348
- Thursday, October 23:       Bullock, Ch. 9  
**Progress report due**         Nelson, Ch. 6



Thursday, December 4:       **Alabama**

Key, Ch. 3  
Woodard, pp. 102-106, 283-288 and 341-345  
Bullock, Ch. 3

Tuesday, December 9:       **Conclusion**

***Paper Assignment***

The main out-of-class assignment for this course is an analytical paper about a competitive election in a southern state, which you will choose from a list of races that I will provide. To complete the assignment, you must closely follow news accounts of the race in a newspaper (or its web site) in the state, as well as news accounts of the race in national news media like the *New York Times* ([www.nytimes.com/politics](http://www.nytimes.com/politics)) and CQ Politics (<http://www.cqpolitics.com>). Real Clear Politics (<http://realclearpolitics.com>) and, in particular, Real Clear Politics' "Politics Nation" blog ([http://www.realclearpolitics.com/politics\\_nation/](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/politics_nation/)) offer useful daily compilations of political news state by state. (See also Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball (<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>)). Various online databases that are available through the Barrett Library website, especially Lexus Nexus, will also be useful. Finally, you must ground your analysis in the scholarly literature on southern politics, as well as the relevant entries in the reference book *Almanac of American Politics 2008*. Copies of each entry are on reserve at the Barrett Library circulation desk, and the books itself is shelved in the reference section.

A one-paragraph statement of which election you have chosen and why you chose it is due on September 16. A two-page progress report and bibliography is due on October 23. The final paper is due on November 18. Late papers will be graded down at the rate of one full grade per day. For example, an A paper turned in on November 20 will receive a C. No extensions will be granted.

The paper must be 1,300 to 1,600 words long. (This will be strictly enforced.) It should describe the political background (both state and national) of the race, the campaign strategies of the candidates, and the resources (money, consultants, name recognition, etc.) of the candidates. It should analyze and explain the outcome of the election.

You may discuss the topic of your paper with others, but the paper you submit must be entirely your own work, in conformance with the Honor Code.

***Contacting Mr. Nelson***

Office hours:           2:30-3:30 T Th (Buckman 304) or by appointment  
Telephone:           843 3879 (office) and 458 1836 (home);  
Email:                 mnelson@rhodes.edu