

Required Texts

G. William Domhoff, Who Rules America? 6th ed.(2010)
Jacobs and Skocpol, Health Care Reform and American Politics (2010)
Hacker and Pierson, Winner-Take-All Politics (2010)
Drutmand and Cray, The People's Business (2004)
Robert Reich, Aftershock (2010)

I Theoretical Debates on Power

A. Mechanisms of Power

Assignment: John Gaventa, "Power and Participation," from Power and Powerlessness, pp. 3-32 ®.

B. Classic Perspectives on Power

1-Pluralism

Assignment: Nelson Polsby, "How to Study Community Power: The Pluralist Alternative," from Community Power and Political Theory, pp. 112-121 ®.

2-Elitism

Assignment: C. Wright Mills, "The Higher Circles," pp. 3-29 and "The Mass Society," pp. 298-324 from The Power Elite ®.

C. Current Perspectives on Power

1-Structural Power

Assignment: Charles Lindblom, "The Market as Prison," Journal of Politics, Vol.44, No.2, May 1982, pp. 324-336 ®.

2-Elitism Reconsidered

Assignment: Domhoff

II Oligarchy, American Style: Economic Inequality and Unequal Political Influence

Assignment: Winters and Page, "Oligarchy in the United States?" Perspectives on Politics, Vol. 7, No. 4, December 2009, pp. 731-751.

III Health Care Reform: Differing Perspectives on Failure and Success

A. Past Failures

1. State-Centered Explanation

Assignment: Steinmo and Watts, "It's the Institutions, Stupid! Why Comprehensive National Health Insurance Always Fails in America," Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law, Vol. 20, No. 2, Summer 1995, pp.329-372 ®

2. Stakeholder Mobilization: Pluralism Revisited?

Assignment: Jill Quadagno, "Why the United States Has No National Health Insurance: Stakeholder Mobilization Against the Welfare State, 1945-1996, Journal of Health and Social Behavior, Vo, 45 (2004), pp. 25-44.

B. How and Why Health Care Reform Passed: Legislative Power Up Close

Assignment: Jacobs and Skocpol

IV Rising Inequality and its Political Roots

Assignment: Hacker and Pierson

V Corporate Power and Democratic Renewal

Assignment: Drutman and Cray

V The Current Economic Crisis and Prospects for Economic Renewal

Assignment: Reich

Course Requirements

1-There will be two essay tests—one around the middle of the semester and the other during finals week. Each will be worth 33 percent of the final grade. The remainder will be calculated from class participation. Each student will be responsible for a oral presentation on the day's reading. An outline of the presentation must be handed in at the time of the presentation.

2-The focus of each class will be a critical discussion of the assigned reading. Accordingly everyone is expected to come to class prepared to discuss it.

3-There may be a number of unannounced quizzes on the reading. It is possible, although not likely, that an article or two may be added to the reading.

4-Everyone is expected to closely follow current events, particularly those concerning course issues. At the beginning of each class period we will have a short discussion of these developments. Accordingly all students should regularly read the New York Times.

5-Anyone experiencing problems with the material should see the instructor immediately to prevent larger problems from developing.

6-Those who think they have a disability should contact the Disability Access Center at the beginning of the semester to arrange appropriate accommodation.

7-Any act of plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade.

8-All electronic devices should be turned off in class unless approved in advance.