

POLITICAL SCIENCE 329
SEMINAR ON AMERICAN POLITICS
TOPIC: POLITICAL MOVEMENTS/CREATIVE PARTICIPATION
Mr. McFarland: Fall 2011

Writing in the discipline: This seminar meets the writing in the discipline requirement for political science majors. To meet the guidelines of the requirement, three papers are assigned, the second of which is a revision or extension of the first.

Thus, for this class you will write a research paper of 15 pages; (2) a four-page prospectus for the research paper; (3) a second four page paper, extending and/or revising the prospectus for the paper. The first prospectus may be revised to produce the second prospectus in light of comments by the instructor and further readings and class materials. If the first prospectus is well written, the student may simply add another four pages to the original pages.

Detailed directions for writing these papers will be handed out in class.

Grading criteria: The main paper will count 50%; each short paper will count 10%; there is one midterm which will count 30% with class participation included in some cases. There is no final examination. The main paper serves as the final. Late papers will result in a grade penalty.

Each student is required to present a summary of his/her research to the class. This will take about 15 minutes. Attendance will be taken during the classes for the student presentations, and too many absences will affect a student's grade.

In this class, unlike some classes, quality of writing will be a criterion in grading papers, in addition to the cogency of the ideas in the papers. A student will not get an "A" in this class unless the major paper is well written.

However, the student is encouraged to get help from the UIC Writing Center. Students may ask others to assist them in the methods of writing the papers, but students of course should turn in their own work. The paper topic will reflect the distinctive nature of this class.

Paper Topic: The student will write a research paper about creative participation or a political movement of the student's own choice, although the student must get approval from the professor, who will be receptive to well-defined requests. The definitions of creative participation and of political movement will be discussed right away. While this course is entitled "American Politics," the instructor is also interested in creative participation and political movements outside of the U.S.A. and students in the past have written about foreign politics, such as nationalism or women's movements abroad. The prospectus will serve as an introduction and overview of the student's paper topic.

The paper is not to be purely descriptive or historical, but is to contain some analysis of the role of some of the variables (social factors) discussed in the readings and in the meetings of the seminar. For instance, one might examine the role of leadership, patrons (resource providers), and organization in the development of the movement. In terms of creative participation, one might refer to the use of the internet and the creation of new protest organizations. The paper is not an argument paper, contrasting arguments “for” and “against” some issue such as abortion. The paper is a description and analysis of creative participation or of a political movement, in which you must use theory from this class. More direction about the paper will be given.

In addition to political movements, papers may be about a counter-movement, a series of social activities to oppose a previously appearing social or political movement. Some counter-movements may include noninstitutional actions like demonstrations and violence, and as such fit into the initial definition of political movements. But other counter-movements may just use established, institutional modes of activity, e.g. neoconservatism opposed to 1960s movements, or the opposition to McCarthyism in the early 1950s.

While currently famous movements may be liberal or progressive, such as the civil rights movement, environmentalism, or the women’s movement, there are also conservative or even reactionary social movements, both in the U.S. and abroad. Students should avoid labeling other students by their paper topic; a heterosexual may want to write a paper about gay rights; a Palestinian may want to study Zionism; a pro-choice person may want to study pro-life, and so forth.

Creative Participation.

This is a term coined by the instructor. “Creative participation sometimes appears in contexts in which scattered individuals, seeking commonweal [in-common] goals, lack established political institutions to engage in public action toward these goals.” (McFarland, p. 9) My book *Boycotts and Dixie Chicks: Creative Participation at Home and Abroad* chronicles examples such as consumer boycotts, protest gatherings in capitol squares, and transnational protest networks. I regard creative participation as one of five different types of political participation (McFarland, chapter 1), and often may constitute the initial events of a long-lasting political movement. Creative participation and political movements sometimes overlap.

Political movements: A “political movement” is defined as a sequence of social/political actions, perceived to be related, directed towards gaining some change of moderate or major significance in social/political institutions. A defining characteristic of a social or political movement is that non-institutional tactics and strategies are a significant part of movement activity. For instance, such tactics might include civil disobedience, various types of demonstrations, consciousness raising groups, or the threat or actual use of types of violence. This is a political science class, so the type of social movement discussed will have some political component, as opposed to those religious or life-style movements that may have little political impact.

This is just to articulate characteristics of the term “movement” in current vocabulary: the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, the anti-abortion movement, the environmental movement, the gay rights movement, and so forth.

There are two textbooks for the class, because you are expected to use a certain amount of theory in your research paper. These two will be available in the Student Union bookstore. My book just came out in paper, so there are no used copies yet. Do not make the mistake of buying a hardback copy of my book. Also make sure you get the book assigned for this class, as I have published several books. The McAdam book is available in used editions; the 1999 version has an additional introduction which students can skip. Actually the 1982 edition is OK if you see it.

Boycotts and Dixie Chicks: Creative Participation at Home and Abroad, Andrew S. McFarland, Paradigm Publishers, paper, 2011. Minuscule royalties will be donated to a Political Science Department fund.

Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970, by Doug McAdam, University of Chicago Press.

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Office hours, 1123 BSB: Tuesday 1:30 to 3:30.

The class meets Monday and Wednesday mornings, 11:00 A.M. to 12:15 P.M.

Schedule

- August 22 Organizing the class
Types of political participation.
Definitions of creative participation and of social movement.
- August 24 Creative participation and the environment.
McFarland, chs. 1 & 2.
- August 29 The environment; political corruption.
McFarland, ch. 3.
- August 31 Capitol squares, color revolutions.
McFarland, ch. 3.
- September 5 Labor Day holiday.
- September 7 Political consumerism.
McFarland, chs. 4 & 5.
- September 12 **Paper prospectus due.**
Transnational participation.
McFarland, ch. 6.

- September 14 Creative Participation today.
McFarland, ch. 7.
- September 19 What is a political movement?
Social Psychological theory and movements.
McAdam, 1-19 (you can skip the preceding introduction to the book)
- September 21 Resource mobilization theory
McAdam, 20-35
- September 26 Resource mobilization theory.
- September 28 Political opportunities theory.
McAdam, 36-116
- October 3 **Second paper installment due.**
Political opportunities theory
- October 5 Political opportunities (success and failure of movements)
McAdam, 117-180
- October 10 Political opportunities (success and failure of movements)
- October 12 Culture and identity factors: frame analysis.
McAdam, 181-234
- October 17 Culture and identity factors
- October 19 Cycles of movements in American history.
Handout to be distributed.
- October 24 Cycles of movements in American history.
- October 26 **MIDTERM**
- October 31 Begin student presentations (attendance taken)
- November 2 Student presentations (attendance taken)
- November 7 Student presentations (attendance taken)
- November 9 Student presentations (attendance taken).
November 14 Student presentations (attendance taken)
- November 16 Student presentations (attendance taken)

November 21 Student presentations (attendance taken)
November 23 Student presentations (attendance taken)
November 24 Thanksgiving Holiday.
November 28 Class meeting to be announced..
November 30 **FINAL PAPER DUE 5:00 P.M.**

[No final examination. The paper substitutes for a final.]