

POLITICAL SCIENCE 329  
SEMINAR ON AMERICAN POLITICS  
TOPIC: POLITICAL MOVEMENTS  
Mr. McFarland: Spring 2007

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

The paper is not 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. 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 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.

**Political movements:** In this seminar we will discuss and research 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 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.

In the United States, political movements often give rise to citizens lobbies, interest groups that lobby Congress and other political institutions for the goals of the movement. The instructor has published books on citizens lobbies, and we give some particular attention to such lobbies.

There is a textbook for the class, because you are expected to use a certain amount of theory in your research paper: *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: 1100-1200, Tuesday, Thursday.

The class meets Wednesday afternoon: 1:00–3:30, 1171 BSB.

### **Schedule**

- January 17     Organizing the class  
What is a political movement?  
Social Psychological theory and movements.  
  
McAdam, 1-19 (you can skip the preceding introduction to the book)
- January 24     Resource mobilization theory  
McAdam, 20-35
- January 31     Political Opportunities Theory.  
McAdam, 36-116
- February 7     Political Opportunities (success and failure of movements)  
McAdam, 117-180
- February 14    Culture and Identity Factors: Frame Analysis.  
McAdam, 181-234
- February 14    FIRST PAPER DUE (three pages)
- February 21    Logic of Collective Action & Social Movements  
Handout by instructor.
- February 28    Cycles of movements in American history  
Handout by the instructor.
- March 7        Mobilization of Citizens Lobbies In the U.S..  
Handout by instructor.

March 14 Transnational political networks for citizen action.  
Handout from the instructor.

March 14 SECOND PAPER DUE. Another four pages.

March 21 MIDTERM.

March 26-30 Spring break vacation.

April 4 Begin student presentations (attendance taken).

April 11 Student presentations (attendance taken)

April 18 Student presentations (attendance taken)

April 25 Student presentations (attendance taken)

May 2 Student presentations (attendance taken)  
LAST CLASS

May 3 Papers due at 4:30 P.M.  
No final examination.