

GOV 308: Money and Politics

Spring 2008
Hubbard—22

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Office Hours:

Tuesday, 9am-11am
Wednesday, 2pm-4pm
And by appointment

This course considers the historical and contemporary relationship between money and government. In what ways do moneyed interests have distinctive influences on American politics? Does this threaten the vibrancy of our representative democracy? Are recent controversies over campaign finance reform and lobbying reform signs that American government is in trouble? This course is reading, writing, and discussion intensive, and we consider the large academic literature on this subject, as well as the reflections of journalists and political practitioners. Election law and regulations on money in politics are always changing (and none of us are campaign finance lawyers!!), and so part of the course is designed to give students tools at tracking these developments. The overall goal of the course is to foster an understanding of the money/politics relationship in ways that facilitate the evaluation of American democracy.

Course Requirements

There are three major components to your grade:

1. **Five long papers** (75 points; each worth 15 points)—these are about 5-page papers (double-spaced) that deal with the readings for a week. **You are free to write about whatever you want on the week's readings, but the paper must have a main idea and must be supported with evidence from the texts.** Treat these as critical reviews of the readings. What was compelling about the authors' points? What was not convincing? What are the implications of the points made in the readings? I encourage you to read up on current events (see the resources listed in the "Other Issues" section of the syllabus), and feel free to include anything relevant into your discussion of the week's readings. I will evaluate these on the basis of the logic and defense of your argument. Simply summarizing the ideas in the readings is not sufficient!
*You can write a paper starting with the February 5th readings.
**There are 12 possible weeks, so you have plenty of options, BUT you must do one at least one paper in each of the three main Parts of the course.
***There are no extensions for these papers and you must hand them in during class (I do not accept emailed papers).
2. **Class presentation** (15 points)—Every week a student will present about a 10-15 minute review of the readings and will conclude by offering a number of discussion questions. Again, I encourage students to read up on current events and include anything relevant in your

presentation. **This is not an opportunity to summarize; think of this as a verbal paper, following the guidelines listed above.**

*You cannot write a paper during the week you are presenting.

**We will be signing up for presentations during Week 2 and presentations will begin in Week 3 (February 5th).

3. **Participation** (10 points)—this includes attendance and class participation. Attendance is required, and I will take regular note of who is and who is not in class. I understand that people get sick, have doctor's appointments, and so on, but I only grant excused absences in rare circumstances. Because we are only meeting once a week, be very careful about missing class. Finally, mere attendance is not sufficient. I expect every student to come prepared to participate every week.

Readings

There are four books for this course, and a number of outside articles. All four books are available through the campus bookstore, and all of the outside readings are on electronic reserve (which can be accessed through Blackboard and the library website).

1. *The New Campaign Finance Source Book*, by Anthony Corrado et al
2. *Selling Out: How Big Corporate Money Buys Elections, Rams Through Legislation, and Betrays Our Democracy*, by Mark Green
3. *Unfree Speech: The Folly of Campaign Finance Reform*, by Bradley Smith
4. *Voting with Dollars: A New Paradigm for Campaign Finance*, by Bruce Ackerman and Ian Ayres

Other Issues

1. I expect all students to abide by the Bowdoin Academic Honor Code, which can be accessed online at <http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/forms/>. If you have any concerns or questions about how to cite work appropriately, please consult me or a reference librarian.
2. I will make use of Blackboard to convey information and class discussion topics. I have also posted the syllabus there, and I encourage you to check the course page frequently.
3. If you have chosen to take the class as Credit/D/F, I will only grant a Credit grade if the student has completed all of the work for the class. This means completing all five papers and the presentation.
4. Keeping with up legal or political developments on campaign finance, lobbying reform, election law, etc is very difficult. To help us do this, consider consulting the following blogs or online resources. I've listed them in order of most to least helpful (by helpful I mean ones that are updated most often):
 - a. <http://electionlawblog.org/>
 - b. <http://moresoftmoneyhardlaw.com/>
 - c. <http://opensecrets.org/>
 - d. <http://www.cfinst.org/>

I've also posted these (and other) links on Blackboard!

Part 1—Where Are We? And How Did We Get Here?

January 22—Introductions and Expectations

January 29— The Campaign Finance System

- Anthony Corrado et al, *The New Campaign Finance Source Book*, Chapters 1-3 and 5-7
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February 5 —The (Potential) Corrupting Influence of Money

- Mark Green, *Selling Out*, Chapters 1-4
 - ***Class ends at 8:30pm—final hour in Shannon Room for Super Duper Tuesday election results***
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February 12— The (Potential) Corrupting Influence, cont.

- Mark Green, *Selling Out*, Chapters 5-8 (and the epilogue)
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February 19— Not So Fast on the Corrupting Influence

- Bradley Smith, *Unfree Speech*, Chapters 1 and 3-5 (skim Chapter 2)
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February 26—The FEC as Enforcer: “Toothless Anaconda” or Unsung Hero

- Anthony Corrado et al, *The New Campaign Finance Source Book*, Chapter 8
 - FEC’s 30-Year Report to Congress (Uploaded to Blackboard only)
 - Michael M. Franz. “The FEC as Enforcer: Evaluating the ‘Toothless Tiger’” (Uploaded to Blackboard only)
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March 4—Constitutional Matters

- Bradley Smith, *Unfree Speech*, Chapters 6-8
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March 7-23—**Spring Break!!!!**

Part 2—What is the Impact of Money?

March 25—Can Interest Groups Buy Legislation?

- Stephen Ansolabehere, John M. de Figueiredo, and James M. Snyder. 2003. "Why Is There So Little Money in Politics?", *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(1): 105-130.
- Richard Hall and Frank Wayman. 1990. “Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees,” *American Political Science Review*. 84(3): 797-820.

- John Wright. 1990. "Contributions, Lobbying, and Committee Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives," *American Political Science Review*. 84(2): 417-438.
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April 1—Can Money Keep Out Challengers and Can Candidates Buy an Election?

- Jay Goodliffe. 2001. "The Effect of War Chests on Challenger Entry in U.S. House Elections," *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(4): 830-844.
 - Jeffrey Milyo and Timothy Groseclose. 1999. "The Electoral Effects of Incumbent Wealth," *Journal of Law and Economics*. 42(2): 699-722.
 - Alan Gerber. 1998. "Estimating the Effect of Campaign Spending on Senate Election Outcomes Using Instrumental Variables," *American Political Science Review*. 92(2): 401-411.
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April 8—Can Interest Groups and Parties Buy an Election?

- Stephen Ansolabehere and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2000. "Soft Money, Hard Money, Strong Parties." *Columbia Law Review*. 100(3):598-619
 - David Magleby. "The Impact of Issue Advocacy and Party Soft Money Electioneering," in *The Medium and the Message*, Kenneth Goldstein and Patricia Strach (eds). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson.
 - Michael Pfau, David Park, R.Lance Holbert and Jaeho Cho. 2001. "The Effects of Party- and PAC Sponsored Issue Advertising and the Potential of Inoculation to Combat Its Impact on the Democratic Process." *American Behavioral Scientist* 44(12):2379–2397.
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April 15— Where Does Pork Barrel Politics Come From?

- Frances E. Lee. "Geographic Politics in the U.S. House of Representatives: Coalition Building and Distribution of Benefits." *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(4): 714-728.
 - Steven J. Balla, Eric D. Lawrence, Forrest Maltzman, and Lee Sigelman. 2002. "Partisanship, Blame Avoidance, and the Distribution of Legislative Pork," *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(3): 515-525.
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Part 3—What Reforms are Possible? Or Necessary?

April 22—Some General Reform Ideas

- Anthony Corrado et al, *The New Campaign Finance Source Book*, Chapter 10
 - Clean Election Laws
 - Consult: <http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/cleanelections.html>
 - <http://campfin.polisci.wisc.edu/>, Click on "Publications" and read, "Do Public Funding Programs Enhance Electoral Competition?"
 - Bradley Smith, *Unfree Speech*, Chapters 9 and 10
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April 29— A New Paradigm Proposed

- Bruce Ackerman and Ian Ayres, *Voting With Dollars*, Chapters 1-4 (skim "The Model Statute" section)

May 6— A New Paradigm in Action

- Bruce Ackerman and Ian Ayres, *Voting With Dollars*, Chapters 5-11
- ***End of semester gathering (Location: TBA)***