PS 212 – Women and Politics  
Fall 2012  
1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Johns Hall 208

Professor: Dr. Elizabeth S. Smith  
Office: 111L Johns Hall  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Office phone: 294-3674  
Email: liz.smith@furman.edu

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to examine the role women play in the American political system and how the political system plays a role in the lives of American women. We will examine how women participate in the political system in both conventional and unconventional ways. We will study how the integration of women into politics was made possible by the passage of the 19th Amendment and by the efforts of women in the First and Second Women’s Movements. We will also look at how women’s status in the family, the workplace and in the educational system affects and is affected by the political system. We will study the political behavior of women including vote choice and turnout, campaigning for political office, and the policy positions and activism of women as political elites. We will focus on public policy issues of particular concern to women activists, focusing in particular on the issue of reproductive rights, and how cultural constructs shape the dialogue surrounding these issues. We will also have the opportunity to hear first hand from feminist activists and female political elites about their experiences with the political system.

Course Readings: The following books are required and available for purchase in the bookstore.


*The New York Times*

Additional readings will be placed on Moodle which can be accessed at http://courses.furman.edu.

Course Expectations: You are expected to do all of the required reading and to come to class prepared to participate actively in the class discussion. You will not do well in this class without consistent attendance, participation and the lecture information. Because I believe that you learn the material in a more meaningful way when you become actively engaged in class discussion, simply attending every class but not participating in the class discussion will result in a C for a participation grade. So, speak up – you will have more fun if you do! Students are allowed one excused absence. Students who miss more than 3 days of class (unexcused) will have their final letter grade for the class lowered by 1/3 (from a B+ to a B, for example) for each day they are absent. If you must miss a class, it is very important you get the notes from another student (not from me). Students are also responsible for any changes in the syllabus announced in class.
There will be two major projects for this class designed to get you actively engaged in thinking about the issues faced by women in the political system.

1) **Group Projects:** This project will require you to work in a small group with other students in the class to research an issue of particular concern in the study of women and politics. The group is required to give the other students in the class a 5-6 page written briefing on the issue to be discussed. In order to facilitate good class discussion, the issue brief should be given to the class at least one full class day before the presentation. That is, if you are scheduled to present on a Thursday, you should give the class a copy of the paper in class on the Tuesday beforehand. Students will be expected to present their findings to the class and to lead the class in a discussion of the issue. More information on the possible group topics will be given out in class. This assignment will constitute 20% of your grade, 10% of which will be based on an assessment of how well the group does in leading the class discussion and 10% of which will be based on the written issue brief. In order to encourage all students in the group to participate actively, students will turn in written assessments of their own and their group members’ contributions. We will determine as a class the criteria which should be used to make these assessments fairly and which will provide me the greatest amount of information for determining individual grades appropriately.

2) **Putting the Theory to Practice – An Assessment of One Woman’s Political Campaign:** Given that it is an election year, it is a particularly exciting time to study politics. Unfortunately, our nation has yet to elect a female president or vice-president. In Congress, women still only make up about 17% of the seats despite the fact that females constitute slightly over 50% of the population. In its history, South Carolina has only had one female elected to Congress in her own right. South Carolina presently has no women in the state senate, only 17 women in the state house (of 124) and is ranked 50th in the nation in terms of women’s political representation. While our first female governor ever (Nikki Haley) was elected in 2010, no other women hold statewide elective executive office and Haley is only one of four ever in our state’s history that have.

For this assignment, you are to choose a female politician running for Congress (House or Senate) or for governor this year. You are to use what you have learned in this class through lectures and the class readings to understand your candidate, her political campaign, and her electoral success (or failure) this election season. For example, to what degree is your candidate swimming in the ‘eligibility pool’ as described by the scholars we have read? What motivated your candidate to run in the first place – in other words, what was the source of her political ambition and is this consistent with what you read in the Lawless and Fox research? What kind of ambition is your candidate exhibiting (discrete, static, or progressive) and what seem to be the strategic considerations at play? Are these considerations consistent with what the Palmer and Simon research would lead us to expect? To what extent have stereotypes about women, discussed in class and in the readings, shaped the content of the news media coverage of your candidate? Be sure to look at her coverage in a comparative sense relative to the coverage afforded her opponent. To what extent do stereotypes seem to be shaping the campaign strategy of the candidate you have chosen? Do the stereotypes seem to be hurting or helping your candidate’s campaign? What kinds of political ads are your candidate and her opponent running? Are these types of ads helpful or harmful according to the research? To what extent does the electoral context seem to be affecting this campaign (see, for example, Palmer and Simon’s discussion of “women-friendly districts”)? Does there seem to be a “role-model effect” at play? How has incumbency affected your candidate’s campaign? Has your candidate benefited from family connections? Etc., etc.

For a list of female candidates this election year, visit the following web site of the Center for American Women and Politics: www.cawp.rutgers.edu/. In order to do this project, you will need to make sure you have access to a newspaper (or two or three) in the state in which your candidate is running. You will need to write a 10-12 page typed paper reporting your findings. Your paper should include a brief discussion of the background of your candidate (1-2 pages). It should then include a more lengthy review of the relevant scholarly theory and findings in political science regarding women and political campaigns (5-7 pages). You should then evaluate the relevance and applicability of the theory and findings to your particular candidate’s campaign and electoral outcome (5-7 pages). For those of you who have not written a significant research paper before, I will be handing out general guidelines with information about the structure of the paper and proper referencing of sources.
Be sure you look at this carefully – please talk with me if you have any questions about how to cite your sources appropriately. I will grade papers down 5 points or more if the citations are not done correctly.

You will also be expected to give periodic updates to the class on your politician’s campaign and at the end of class a short summary of your findings and the outcome of your politician’s campaign to the class (5-7 minutes). This project will constitute 30% of your grade in this class.

**Examinations:** There will be two exams in this class – a midterm exam and a final. The exams will be a combination of short answer identifications and essay questions drawing from the assigned readings as well as the class discussion. You will be given a study guide one week before the exams. Each exam will constitute 20% of your grade in this class.

**Grades:** Grade will be calculated on the following basis:

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<th>Component</th>
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<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Group Project</td>
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<td>Campaign Paper</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY and FURMAN’S STATEMENT REGARDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

“Integrity gives the educational enterprise its legitimacy. Honesty, respect, and personal responsibility are principles that guide academic life at Furman, in and out of the classroom. Academic misconduct in any form (plagiarism, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, and other efforts to gain an unfair academic advantage) threatens the values of the campus community and will have severe consequences, such as failure in the course, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any question about what constitutes plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, it is your responsibility to consult with me so that you will fully understand what I expect of you in this course. If you have any doubts, ask! You should also be familiar with the *Academic Integrity & Plagiarism* and *Academic Integrity at Furman* materials available at [www.furman.edu>academics>academic integrity](http://furman_notes.furman.edu/p&p.nsf>Standard>Search>121.5]."

Due to the barrier and distractions as well as potential for cheating offered by laptops, cell phones, PDAs, etc., these items are not allowed to be used in the classroom at any time.

Although it is unlikely, students should be aware that this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of any changes. **Please note that the dates are approximations. My primary interest is that you learn the material and learn it well. If we decide to spend more or less time on a topic (because you find it easy, difficult or just particularly interesting), so be it. If you are feeling uncertain about where you should be with the reading, just ask me.**
Students who need special accommodations should see Gina Parris in the Office of Disability Services (Adm 207) and speak with me about these needs at the beginning of the term so the appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Assignment Outline:**

**August 21:** Introduction

**August 23 – August 28:** The Politics of the First Wave of the Women’s Movement
Read: Ford, Chapter 2 and “Old Law Shielding a Woman’s Virtue (on Moodle – bring to class with you); 1848 Declaration of Sentiments (bring to class); “My Favorite August”
Film: “One Woman, One Vote”

**August 30 (showing at 5:30 pm):** Film “Iron Jawed Angels”

**September 4:** The Second Women’s Movement
Read: Ford, Chapter 1;

**September 6:** Contemporary Feminism
Read: *Manifesta*: Spend some time looking at the young feminist website: Feministing.com
On Moodle: “Who’s a Real Feminist?”

**September 11:** The Politics of the Anti-Feminist Movement (Group Presentation and Class Discussion)
Read on Moodle: “Schlafly calls feminists ‘bitter whiners’ and ‘anti-men’”

**September 13:** Women and Political Participation (voter turnout, the gender gap, vote choice)
Read: Ford, Chap. 3; Reingold, Chapter 6

**September 18:** Women and the Military (Presentation and Class Discussion)
Read: Ford, Chap. 3; Reingold, Chapter 4

**September 20:** The Candidate Emergence Process: Women’s Political Ambition
Read: Lawless and Fox, *It Takes a Candidate*;

**September 25:** Southeastern Institute For Women in Politics
Read: Begin reading Palmer and Simon, *Women and Congressional Elections*;
Go to [http://www.scelectswomen.com](http://www.scelectswomen.com/) and read about the Southeastern Institute for Women and Politics and what they do

**September 27:** Women and Political Campaigns
Read: Finish Palmer and Simon, *Women and Congressional Elections*;
Reingold, Chapters 1-3;
On Moodle: “Calling Clinton Angry;” “Should Hillary Pretend to be a Flight Attendant?”; “Goodbye to All That;” “Pointed Question Puts McCain …”; “Women are Never Front Runners”; “Black, Female. Accomplished. Attacked”; “The Perfect Part”; “As Clinton’s Hopes Dim …. ;”

**October 2:** Women and Political Campaigns
Read: Reingold, Chapter 4;
Be prepared to discuss reading from Oct. 5: “Calling Clinton Angry”; “Should Hillary Pretend to be a Flight Attendant?”; “Goodbye to All That”; “Pointed Question Puts McCain …”; “Women are Never Front Runners”; “Black. Female. Accomplished. Attacked”; “The Perfect Part”; “As Clinton’s Hopes Dim ….”

October 4: Women and Politics Panel

October 9: Fall Break

October 11: Women in Elective Office
Read: Reingold, Chapter 5, 7-12;
    Ford, Chapter 5

October 16: Midterm

October 18: Work: The Role of Women in American Society as a Function of Politics
Read: Ford, Chapter 7;

October 23: The Issue of Pay Equity and Comparable Worth (Class Presentation and Discussion)

October 25: Education: The Role of Women in American Society as a Function of Politics
Read: Ford, Chapter 6;

October 30: Title IX: Its Past, Present and Future (Class Presentation and Discussion)
Read On Moodle: “More Men’s Teams Being Benched;” “Progress Toward Title IX;” “The Attack on Women’s Sports;” “Title IX at 30;” “Title IX Panel Recommends Changes;” “Wrestling with Title IX;” “Title IX, Back on Track;” “College Teams, Relying on Deception ….”

November 1: The Family: The Role of Women in American Society as a Function of Politics; The Family and Medical Leave Act (Class Presentation and Discussion) and Campaign Reports
Read: Ford, Chapter 8-9

November 6-8: Reproductive Politics
Film: “The Pill”

November 13 - 20: Campaign Reports
Paper Due: November 13

November 22: Thanksgiving Break

November 27: Violence Against Women (Class Discussion) or The Politics of Equity in Health Care, Research and Insurance Coverage (Class Discussion)
November 29: Reproductive Politics (cont.)
    Film “From Danger to Dignity;” Recommended “The Last Abortion Clinic”
    “Parents Torn Over Extra Frozen Embryos”; “Repairing the Damage, Before Roe”; “Abortion
    Foes See Validation for New Tactic”; “Men’s Abortion Rights;” “Fetal Personhood”

December 4: Reproductive Politics (cont.); Course evaluations; wrap-up

December 11: Final Exam 12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.