

POLS 4241: Southern Politics

Dr. Keith E. Lee Jr.

Spring 2019

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Office Hours: MW 2:00-3:15, TR 11:00-12:15, or by appt.

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Class Room: A & S 2-75

Course Description¹

Southern politics has been a key component in American political development. The success of the Progressive Movement, the New Deal, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Republican Revolution have all depended on some level of southern cooperation as the southern bloc in Congress largely dictated public policy for the better part of the 20th century. Likewise, the mood of the southern electorate played a major part in presidential election outcomes. Political development in the South has been transformational at the national and subnational level with significant variation across time and region. Therefore, we will survey the history of the U.S. south from 1877 across the 11 states of the Confederacy and through three distinct periods: the Old "New South" (1877-1953), the South in Transition (1953-1980), and the New "New South" (1980-present). The aim of this course is to assess the mechanisms by which southern elites maintained power for so long, how lower and middle class whites understood their own political and economic interests, and why Civil Rights continue to be challenged in the 21st century. Similarly, we will tackle the claims presented by recent research that suggests southern exceptionalism has ended or that it may have never existed.

Course Readings

- **Required** McKee, Seth. 2018. *The Dynamics of Southern Politics*
- **Required** Shafer, Byron and Richard Johnston. 2006. *The End of Southern Exceptionalism*
- **Required** Woodward, C. Vann. 1955. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*

¹I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. Students will be notified when changes are made.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Evaluate and analyze competing arguments regarding the post-Reconstruction South;
- Elaborate on the conditions that produced subnational authoritarianism in the American South;
- Examine the mechanisms by which the South overcame subnational authoritarianism;
- Compare the conditions of the post-Reconstruction South to the Newest South;
- Evaluate claims that the South is either no longer exceptional or that it was never exceptional.

Course Assignments

Reading Summaries (Multiple Due Dates): You will draft a summary of each week's readings that synthesizes the core concepts and analyze the arguments presented. Each week's summary will be due the Monday **before** we discuss them in class. There will be 12 weekly summaries due throughout the semester.

Midterm Exam (February 28): You will take a 1-hour exam during our normal class period to assess your mastery of the content presented in the first seven weeks of class. The exam will consist of identification, short answer, and essay questions.

State Paper (Due April 17): You will write a paper on a southern state that details the political development of the state from 1877 - 2019 with sections devoted to the Old "New South" (1877-1953), the South in Transition (1953-1980), and the New "New South" (1980-present). The paper must conform to standard formatting (12 point font, 1 inch margins, and double spaced) and follow the [APSA citation style](#). The final paper should be between 15-20 pages (excluding the cover page, references, and appendices).

State Paper Presentation (Multiple Due Dates): You will deliver a presentation to the class on your state paper.

Academic Book Review (Due April 28): You will read a book of your choosing, with my approval, and submit a book review ([tips for an academic book review](#)). The review should be 800-1000 words and must conform to standard formatting (12 point font, 1 inch margins, and double spaced) and follow the [APSA citation style](#). I have books in my office that I am willing to loan out, but students not returning the book by April 30, 2019 will receive an F in the course.

Final Exam (May 8): You will take a 2-hour exam during our scheduled final exam period to assess your mastery of the content presented over the course of the semester. The exam will consist of identification, short answer, and essay questions.

Specification Grading

All of your assignments will be graded as Sat/Unsat. The purpose for this is to (hopefully) avoid the subjectivity of grading and to save you the urge to email asking why your paper was a 93 instead of a 97 or an 84 instead of a 90. Numerical grading, even with a strong rubric, is challenging and often inconsistent. Therefore, we will use specification grading and you get to determine your final grade in the class by completing one of the following bundles. The bundles must be completed as prescribed, i.e., you do not get to swap assignments. You **MUST** complete the bundle as specified. Note, I will give students the opportunity to revise and resubmit assignments that are borderline (which I realize is subjective, but I am doing my best). Students that receive an “R & R” will be given detailed feedback on how to make their assignment satisfactory and will be given one week to resubmit after the feedback is delivered.

Bundle	Satisfactory Grade on:
A	10 Weekly Summaries, State Paper, Presentation, Midterm Exam, Final Exam, Book Review
B	7 Weekly Summaries, State Paper, Presentation, Midterm Exam, Final Exam
C	4 Weekly Summaries, Midterm Exam, Final Exam
D	Midterm Exam, Final Exam
F	None of the above

Course Policies:

- **Office Hours and Contact:** Office hours are stated on the front page of the syllabus. I will be in my office to assist students during the times listed UNLESS an emergency arises in which case I will notify students.
- **Late Policy:** No assignments will be accepted after the due date. Every assignment will be posted with ample time to complete them, thus a medical/family emergency on the due date is not an acceptable excuse. Get your work done early and you should not have any issues.
- **Attendance and Absences:** This class does not have an attendance policy.
- **Academic dishonesty:** Cheating, including plagiarism, will not be tolerated and will result in an “F” in the course. This class will use plagiarism detection via GeorgiaView. Furthermore, you are not allowed to use a paper you submitted in another course. You are free to build on an idea explored in another course, but the writing must be original.
- Please read these additional [common syllabus statements](#) provided by Georgia College.

Class Schedule

*Readings outlined below that are not from the three required books will be posted to GaView. The approximate number of pages you will read is provided.

Week 01, 01/14 - 01/18: The South Introduced [54 pages]

- Key, V.O. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation* Ch. 1
- Woodward Introduction
- McKee Chs. 1 & 2

Week 02, 01/21 - 01/25: The Rise of Jim Crow [100 pages]

- Woodward Chs. 1-3

Week 03, 01/28 - 02/01: Establishing Subnational Authoritarianism [103 pages]

- Key, V.O. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation* Chs. 13, 14, & pp. 315-316.
- Gibson, Edward L. 2012. *Boundary Control* Ch. 3
- McKee Ch. 3

Week 04, 02/04 - 02/08: Political Economy and the Great Divide [135 pages]

- Bensel, Richard Franklin. 1984. *Sectionalism and American Political Development: 1880-1980* Chs. 1, 3, & 4

Week 05, 02/11 - 02/15: Marginalized Communities and the Fight for Civil Rights [81 pages]

- McAdam, Doug. 1982. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* Ch. 5
- Friedman, Gerald. 2000. "The Political Economy of Early Southern Unionism: Race, Politics, and Labor in the South, 1880-1953." *The Journal of Economic History* 60(2):384-413.

Week 06, 02/18 - 02/22: The March to Freedom [120 pages]

- Woodward Chs. 4-6

Week 07, 02/25 - 03/01: The End of an Era? [30 pages]

- Key, V.O. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation* Chs. 30 & 31

Midterm Exam Thursday

Week 08, 03/04 - 03/08: The South in Transition I [100 pages]

- Karch, Andrew. 2016. "The States and American Political Development." In *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Development*, eds. Richard Valelly, Suzanne Mettler, and Robert Lieberman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 364-380.
- McKee Chs. 4-6

We will discuss the paper and plagiarism prevention.

Week 09, 03/11 - 03/15: The South in Transition II [108 pages]

- McKee Chs. 7-9

Week 10, 03/18 - 03/22: Spring Break

Week 11, 03/25 - 03/29: The New "New South" [80 pages]

- McKee Chs. 10 & 11

Week 12, 04/01 - 04/05: Southern Exceptionalism Questioned I [91 pages]

- Shafer and Johnston Chs. 1-3

Week 13, 04/08 - 04/12: Southern Exceptionalism Questioned II [80 pages]

- Shafer and Johnston Chs. 4 & 5

Week 14, 04/15 - 04/19: Is the South Exceptional? [50 pages]

- Shafer & Johnston Ch. 6
- McKee Ch. 12

State Paper Due Wednesday
Presentations begin Thursday

Week 15, 04/22 - 04/26: Presentations

- Presentations

Book review due Sunday

Week 16, 04/29 - 05/03: Presentations

- Presentations

Week 17, 05/06 - 05/10: Exam Week

- Final Exam May 8 3:30 - 5:45pm