

GOVT 620: Gender and Politics

Spring 2009

Dr. Michele Swers

Thurs 1:15-3:05 PM ICC 214

Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 11:40-12:40PM or by Appointment, ICC 655

Phone: 202-687-2980; E-Mail: mls47@georgetown.edu

Course Description: This course provides an overview of the major debates concerning gender and politics. We begin by examining the historical evolution of women's participation in American politics from the fight for suffrage through the modern feminist movement. The rest of the course focuses on the state of the field concerning the experience of women as voters, candidates, and officeholders. This part of the course deals with such questions as: What is the gender gap? Are voters biased against female candidates? Do female officeholders have different issue priorities than male politicians?

Course Goals: Students should: (1) understand the historical evolution of women's political participation and the obstacles women faced in their efforts to achieve equal political rights; (2) critically evaluate conventional wisdom and media reports concerning women's political behavior as voters, candidates, and officeholders; (3) develop political research skills as well as written and oral analytical skills.

Required Books:

Kraditor, Aileen S. 1981. *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement: 1890-1920*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Mansbridge, Jane. 1986. *Why We Lost the ERA*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schreiber, Ronnee. 2008. *Righting Feminism: Conservative Women and American Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press

Swers, Michele L. 2002. *The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

All the required books are available for purchase at the bookstore. Additional readings will be placed on reserve or distributed in class.

Course Requirements:

This is an intensive reading, writing, and discussion course. Students are required to complete each set of readings prior to the week for which they are assigned. To facilitate class discussion, I ask students to bring the assigned readings to class. I expect students to attend all class meetings and participate actively in the discussion. Participation will

be judged based on a demonstrated understanding of the readings and an ability to critique the arguments and apply theories to contemporary and historical events.

Reading Critiques: Each week, students will be assigned to write a 2-3 page paper that will be utilized as the basis of discussion for one of three areas: summary of the literature, critique, and research agenda. For weeks 2 and 4, the paper topic is assigned and included in the syllabus.

Literature Review: Students assigned to write a literature review for the week will write papers that provide a summary of the major questions addressed by the literature, the methodologies employed and the significant findings of the research and how these findings relate back to the major questions.

Research Critique: Students assigned to write a critique for the week will write papers that examine how the research advances our understanding of congressional politics? Students will also evaluate the major weaknesses of the research. For example, is the research theoretically or methodologically flawed? Does the research fail to address important aspects of congressional behavior or history? Are the methods employed inappropriate for the question? Do the authors fail to account for important influences on congressional behavior?

Research Agenda: Students assigned to develop a research agenda will write papers that build on the readings to develop further research questions. For example, one might offer an alternative research design to examine the same question and/or students can use the research as a basis for developing new questions and analyses.

Students must turn in a copy of their weekly paper to the professor at the beginning of class. All papers must be posted on Blackboard by 5PM the day before the class meets. Students are encouraged to download all papers and utilize them to study for comprehensive exams.

Ph.D. Students

Research Prospectus: Students will prepare a research prospectus (12-15 pages) that addresses a theoretical debate within the women and politics literature. Students are not limited to the debates addressed in class readings. However, the professor must approve all proposals in advance. Students will prepare an outline and presentation on their research idea for March 26. Students must meet with the professor before March 19 to get the proposal approved. Students will post a two-page outline of their research idea to Blackboard by 5PM on March 25. The second half of the March 26 class session will be devoted to student presentations of their research ideas and class discussion of the proposals.

The final research prospectus will be due at the beginning of the class session on the last day of class, Thursday April 23. The writing of the prospectus will prepare students for writing a dissertation prospectus or a research design for a think tank or government

organization and should be written in that style. Students will identify an important question, evaluate the current literature, develop hypotheses, and identify the data and methodology that would be necessary to address the question.

M.A. Students

M.A. students can choose to write a research prospectus or they write a 12-15 page paper on the following topic:

There is a large literature on media bias and women candidates and officeholders. Review the major findings of this literature. Conduct an analysis of media bias and the Clinton campaign for President. To what extent did Clinton experience media bias? In what ways did her campaign experience run counter to the findings in the literature?

Research Presentation:

The last 2 weeks of class will be devoted to presentations of student research projects. Students will create a 15-20 minute presentation on their research project. Students are encouraged to use Power Point or other professional presentation models.

Grading:

Research critiques of the week's readings (2-3 pages weekly). 45% (Students will sign up for these papers on the first day of class).

Research Prospectus (12-15 pages) 45%

Research Presentation and Class Participation 10%

The grade ranges are defined as follows;

A= unusual excellence (A- 90-92; A 93-100)

B= work distinctly above average (B- 80-82; B 83-86; B+ 87-89)

C= work of average quality (C- 70-72; C 73-76; C+ 77-79)

D= below average work, the lowest passing mark (D 60-66; D+ 67-69)

F= Failure, No course Credit (59 and below)

Late papers will be marked down ten points for each day late. **I will not allow incompletes.**

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Jan. 8 Introduction and Overview

Week 2

Jan. 15 The Women's Suffrage Movement

Baker, Paula. 1984. "The Domestication of Politics: Women and American Political Society, 1780-1920." *The American Historical Review* 89: 620-647.

Kraditor, Aileen S. 1981. *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement: 1890-1920*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Reaction Paper 1: Evaluate the major arguments for and against suffrage. In what ways does the private/ public sphere split advance and/or inhibit the cause of women's rights. In what ways are these arguments relevant to contemporary political debates?

Week 3

Jan. 22 The Women's Suffrage Movement

Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony a Ken Burns Film

Begin reading Mansbridge and Schreiber

Week 4

Jan. 29 The Modern Women's Movement and the Backlash Against Feminism

Mansbridge, Jane. 1986. *Why We Lost the ERA*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1-7, 9-11, 14: p. 1-66, 90-164, 187-199

Schreiber, Ronnee. 2008. *Righting Feminism*. Oxford University Press.

Reaction Paper 2: How do the feminist and conservative women's movements differ in their arguments and strategies to capture public opinion? What is each movement's greatest asset and greatest weakness in the fight to win over the hearts and minds of American women and the public at large?

Week 5

Feb. 5 Gender Gap

Kaufmann, Karen M. and John R. Petrocik. 1999. "The Changing Politics of American Men: Understanding the Sources of the Gender Gap." *American Journal of Political Science* 43: 864-887.

Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M., Suzanna DeBoef, and Tse-Min Lin. 2004. "The Dynamics of the Partisan Gender Gap." *American Political Science Review* 98 (August): 515-528.

Kaufmann, Karen M. 2002. "Culture Wars, Secular Realignment, and the Gender Gap in Party Identification." *Political Behavior* 24 (September): 283-307.

Burrell, Barbara. 2005. "Gender, Presidential Elections and Public Policy: Making Women's Votes Matter." *Journal of Women, Politics and Policy* 27: 31-50.

Week 6

Feb. 12

Women Candidates Why Don't More Women Run?

Fox, Richard L. and Jennifer Lawless. 2004. "Entering the Arena: Gender and the Decision to Run for Office." *AJPS* 48: 264-280.

Palmer, Barbara, and Dennis M. Simon. 2005. "When Women Run Against Women: The Hidden Influence of Female Incumbents in Elections to the U.S. House of Representatives, 1956-2002." *Politics & Gender* 1: 39-63.

Sanbonmatsu, Kira. 2002. "Political Parties and the Recruitment of Women to State Legislatures." *JOP* 64: 791-809.

Niven, David. 1998. "Party Elites and Women Candidates: The Shape of Bias." *Women & Politics* 19 (2): 57-80.

Week 7

Feb. 19

Women Candidates: Voter and Media Bias

Falk, Erika and Kate Kenski. 2006. "Issue Saliency and Gender Stereotypes: Support for Women as Presidents in Times of War and Terrorism." *Social Science Quarterly* 87: 1-18.

Sanbonmatsu, Kira and Kathleen Dolan. 2009. "Do Gender Stereotypes Transcend Party?" *Political Research Quarterly*

Banwart, Mary Christine, Dianne G. Bystrom, and Terry Robertson. 2003. "From the Primary to the General Election- A Comparative Analysis of Candidate Media Coverage in Mixed-Gender 2000 Races for Governor and US Senate." *American Behavioral Scientist* 46: 658-676.

Kahn, Kim Fridkin. 1993. "Gender Differences in Campaign Messages: The Political Advertisements of Men and Women Candidates for the U.S. Senate." *Political Research Quarterly*. Volume 46 No. 3, p. 481-502.

Herrnson, Paul S., J. Celeste Lay, Atiya Kai Stokes. 2003. "Women Running 'as Women': Candidate Gender, Campaign Issues, and Voter Targeting Strategies." *JOP* 65: 244-255.

Week 8

Feb. 26

Representation and Women's Interests

Sapiro, Virginia. 1981. "Research Frontier Essay: When Are Interests Interesting? The Problem of Political Representation of Women." *American Political Science Review* 75: 701-716.

Diamond, Irene and Nancy Hartsock. 1981. "Beyond Interests in Politics: A Comment on Virginia Sapiro's 'When Are Interests Interesting? The Problem of Political Representation of Women.'" *American Political Science Review* 75: 717-721.

Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent 'Yes.'" *Journal of Politics* 61: 628-657.

Hawkesworth, Mary. 2003. "Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender: Toward a Theory of Raced-Gendered Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 97: 529-550.

Kenney, Sally J. 1996. "Field Essay: New Research on Gendered Political Institutions." *Political Research Quarterly* 49 (June): 445-466.

Recommended:

Dovi, Suzanne. 2002. "Preferable Descriptive Representatives? Will Just Any Woman, Black, or Latino Do?" *American Political Science Review* 96: 729-743.

Week 9

March 5

Women in Office: Legislatures

Swers, Michele L. 2002. *The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress*. Chs 1-3, & 8. Chs. 4 - 7 skim.

Swers, Michele L. 2007. "Building a Reputation on National Security: The Impact of Stereotypes Related to Gender and Military Experience." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32: 559-595.

Schwindt-Bayer, Leslie A. and William Mishler. 2005. "An Integrated Model of Women's Representation." *JOP* 67: 407-428.

Bratton, Kathleen. 2005. "Critical Mass Theory Revisited: The Behavior and Success of Token Women in State Legislatures." *Politics & Gender* 1: 97-125.

Week 10
March 12

Spring Break

Week 11
March 19

Women in Office: The Executive and the Judiciary

Dolan, Julie. 2000. "The Senior Executive Service: Gender, Attitudes, and Representative Bureaucracy." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10: p. 513-529.

Bowling, Cynthia J., Christine Kellehr, Jennifer Jones, and Deil S. Wright. 2006. "Cracked Ceilings, Firmer Floors, and Weakening Walls: Trends and Patterns in Gender Representation Among Executives Leading American State Agencies, 1970-2000." *Public Administration Review* 66: 823-836.

Solowiej, Lisa A., Wendy L. Martinek, and Thomas L. Brunell. 2005. "Partisan Politics: The Impact of Party in the Confirmation of Minority and Female Federal Court Nominees." *Party Politics* 11: 557-577.

Songer, Donald R, Sue Davis, and Susan Haire. 1994. "A Reappraisal of Diversification in the Federal Court: Gender Effects in the Court of Appeals." *Journal of Politics* 56: 425-439.

Segal, Jennifer. 2000. "Representative Decision Making on the Federal Bench: Clinton's District Court Appointees." *Political Research Quarterly* 53: 137-150.

Week 12
March 26 **Gender, Representation, and Public Policy**

Weldon, S. Laurel. 2002. "Beyond Bodies: Institutional Sources of Representation for Women." *JOP* 64: 1153-1174.

Kittilson, Miki. 2008. "Representing Women: The Adoption of Family Leave in Comparative Perspective." *JOP* 70: 323-334.

Berkman, Michael B. and Robert E. O'Connor. 1993. "Do Women Legislators Matter? Female Legislators and State Abortion Policy." *American Politics Quarterly* 21: 102-124.

Meier, Kenneth and Jill Nicholson-Crotty. 2006. Gender, Representative Bureaucracy, and Law Enforcement: The Case of Sexual Assault. *Public Administration Review* 66: 850-860.

Week 13

April 2

Midwest Conference

Week 14

April 9

Easter Break

Week 15

April 16

Presentation of Research Projects

Week 16

April 23

Presentation of Research Projects