

**POLS 53001 02
Women and Politics
Fall 2008**

RESEARCH PAPER ASSIGNMENT

The research paper is **due in my mailbox (217 O'Shaughnessy) by noon on Friday, November 21st. Penalty for late papers is a half grade deduction (5 points) for every day the paper is late.** Papers should be approximately 15 pages in length. While you may refer to materials from class, your paper should predominantly utilize materials (both books and scholarly articles) from outside of the class reading.

Your assignment is to write a research paper on a topic in the field of women and politics. There are only two real constraints on the subject matter you choose: it must involve political science, and it must involve women or gender. Political science encompasses the law, political institutions, public policy, social movements, interest groups, mass behavior and political participation, political parties, ideology, judicial systems, the use of power, and so on. By women, I mean the subject must be relevant to women as a group, specific groups of women, or women as a social, economic, or political interest. Topics involving questions of gender generally also would be acceptable in most cases. Once you have selected a topic, choose a question that will drive your research. What are you trying to determine or discover in this research paper? Be specific. There are many interesting topics and questions in this field; if you are having trouble picking one, please come see me *soon*.

A description of your paper topic and research question (paragraph or two) is due in my mailbox by noon on Friday, September 19th. This document should tell me what topic you are researching and identify the specific research question your paper will explore.

A preliminary list of sources and paper outline is due in my mailbox by noon on Friday, October 31st. I expect your outline will be about a page long, and you should have at least a page of preliminary references. The more you give me, the more useful my comments can be in helping you write your final paper.

These assignments are intended to encourage you to do some preliminary research on the topic so that you can get a sense of what resources are available and what research has been done, and to begin formulating your own paper in a timely fashion. You are welcome and encouraged to come talk to me during my office hours and/or on the days in the schedule that are put aside for research for any assistance I might be able to provide on topics, research, and so on.

Organization

Your paper should have:

1. a **title page** with the title of the paper, your name, the number and name of the course, and the date;
2. an **introduction**, in which you describe your topic, specify your research question, and preview the main points of your paper;
3. a **body**, in which you describe and explain what is known about the answer to your question, employing published scholarly research;
4. a **conclusion**, in which you review your major points, tie them together, and hopefully reach some sort of conclusion about the answer to your research question; and,
5. a **references section** as described below.

Format

The following stylistic guidelines **must** be adhered to in your paper. Failure to follow these simple directions will reduce your paper grade.

1. Number your pages.
2. Use Times New Roman 12 point font.
3. 1 inch margins (left, right, top, bottom). *This requires you to change the default settings in Microsoft Word.*
4. Double-space.
5. Employ appropriate citation.

Citation

Use “in text” citation. At the end of the sentence or paragraph for which you have a source, cite in text by name and year of publication (Author Year). If the information or quote comes from a specific page(s), add the page number (Author Year, #). The References section at the end of your paper should include all the works (books, articles, web pages, interviews) cited within the paper. When information comes from a web page, the cite in the reference section of your paper should include the name, URL, and the date at which you obtained the information (as web pages often change from day to day). In the body of your paper, simple refer to it by the author name and date. Do **not** put the URL in the text. It would also be a good idea to print out the page from which your information came for future reference.

CITATION EXAMPLE

Parties have long been viewed as mediating linkages between citizens and government (Brown 1995). Early theorists expressed concern that the multitude of choices and messages with which citizens would have to contend made democracy unwieldy and impractical; by organizing elections, parties have long been lauded as making democracy workable (Ranney and Kendall 1956). Indeed, theorists, social scientists, and political practitioners alike often describe parties as uniquely suited to provide this vital link between the people and their government. As broad-based organizations, American parties are praised for their ability to negotiate consensus and

cooperation among wide-ranging interests and groups. As established institutions, parties boast the resources, experience, and skills necessary to undertake the complex task of putting forth slates of candidates and policy positions. Party elites have an interest in protecting and upholding the party's reputation, be it for particular standards of conduct, candidate quality, or issue stands (Smith 2005; Wittman 1990). Thus, the longevity of the American parties contributes to accountability that extends beyond particular electoral contests, times, and places. "In short, only political parties provide us with the cohesion, continuity and accountability necessary to make democracy work" (California Committee 2005, 45).

References

- Brown, Robert D. 1995. "Party Cleavages and Welfare Effort in the American States." *American Political Science Review* 89:22-33.
- California Committee for Party Renewal. 2005. "Seeking Legal Relief From Excessive Regulation of California's Parties." Accessed 6 January 2005 <<http://www.ca.gov/~ccpr>>.
- Ranney, Austin and Willmoore Kendall. 1956. *Democracy and the American Party System*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.
- Smith, John (Republican party activist). 2005. Interview with the author, 9 January.
- Wittman, Donald A. 1990. "Spatial Strategies When Candidates Have Policy Preferences." In *Advances in the Spatial Theory of Voting*, eds. James M. Enelow and Melvin J. Hinich. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Plagiarism

Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by Notre Dame's Code of Honor (<http://www.nd.edu/~hnr/code/>). Plagiarism is a violation of the Honor Code and strictly prohibited in this course. Any violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism, will be pursued according to Notre Dame policies.

While gratuitous citing should be avoided (that is, it's rarely necessary to provide a reference for every sentence in your paper), you should provide a cite when (1) quoting a work verbatim, or (2) using ideas, concepts, or arguments from a particular source. Generally known facts (e.g., "women won the right to vote in 1920") do not require citations. An author's ideas or arguments or specialized facts and information do require citation. Quotations can be effective, but avoid particularly long quotes or excessive reliance on quotations. Paraphrasing is an important skill, but remember, it also usually calls for citing. (*Nota bene*: Changing two or three words in a sentence is not paraphrasing, it's plagiarism). In some cases, plagiarism is not purposeful and lacks malicious intent, but it is your responsibility to take all possible steps to avoid the appearance of such, and to give proper attribution to the authors who inform your research. I recommend you read the Philosophy Department's useful guide to plagiarism posted here: <http://www.nd.edu/~hnr/code/docs/plagiarism.pdf>. If you have any questions

about proper attribution of the ideas, arguments, words, or phrases you use in your own writing, feel free to discuss them with me.

A Few Suggestions Regarding Topics and Questions

I have complete faith in each student's ability to identify a research topic and question of interest to her or him. If you are interested in a little help in brainstorming, I have listed some examples here. You are in no way encouraged to use (or discouraged from using) these actual suggestions; they are just provided to give you a sense of the possibilities. I am happy to talk to you about topic ideas you might have.

| Topic | Research Question(s) |
|------------------------|--|
| Women as candidates | Do male and female candidates receive different media coverage, and if so, what is the effect? Do female candidates present themselves in different ways than male candidates? |
| Women as officeholders | Do female judges make different decisions than male judges? Do female legislators have different policy interests and priorities than male legislators? |
| Suffrage movement | What explains why some people supported women's suffrage and others opposed it? How did the abolition movement affect the suffrage movement? What was the role of women (and men) of color in the suffrage movement? Why was suffrage initially successful in the West? |
| Pornography | Is pornography harmful to women? Is there a feminist argument in support of pornography? |
| Education | Is single-sex education better for girls? Is single-sex education better for boys? What has been the effect of Title IX on women's (men's) sports at the collegiate level? |