This course centers on two crucial entities in the U.S. political system: political parties and elections. While considerable attention will be given to the history of American political parties and electoral reform, the main focus of the course is on the difficulties of the current two-party system in adjusting to the changing political environment and how interest groups and the mass media have taken over many of the previous roles and functions of political parties.

REQUIRED READING:
2) Semiatin, *Campaigns on the Cutting Edge*.

GRADING: There will be three exams, each worth 40%, 40%, and 20% of your grade, respectively. These exams will be noncumulative, and consist of identification and short essay questions. There is no final exam in this class.

COURSE OUTLINE:

**Sept. 28-30**
Current Developments and Recent Trends; History of Political Parties
Reading: Hershey, Chapters 1 and 6; Streb, Chapters 1-3.

**Oct. 5-7**
Party Realignment; Primaries and Caucuses
Reading: Hershey, Chapter 7-8; Streb, Chaps. 4-7.

**Oct. 12-14**
Primaries and Caucuses; No class on Wednesday, October 14th
Reading: Hershey, Chapters 4-6 + 9-11; Streb, Chap. 8-9

**Oct. 19-21:**
National Conventions and Electoral College
**FIRST EXAM, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21ST**

**Oct. 26-28**
Campaign Financing; Rise of Political Action Committees (PACs)
Reading: Hershey, Chapter 12; Streb, Chaps. 10-11; Semiaton, Chaps. 1-2 and 10

**Nov. 2-4:**
Mass Media & Elections; Post-2015 Election Results
Reading: Semiatin, Chapters 3-6 and 9.
Nov. 9-11  Third Parties and Independent Candidates; Parties in Congress Reading: Hershey, Chapters 2, 13-14; Semiaton, Chapters 11-12.

Nov. 16-18 Parties & Elections at the Local and State Level; Oregon Politics Reading: Hershey, Chapters 3; Semiaton, Chapters 7-8.

SECOND EXAM, WEDNESDAY, NOV. 18

Nov. 23-25 A Comparative Look at Political Parties & Elections Reading: Hershey, Chapter 15; Semiaton, Chapters 13-14

Nov. 30-Dec. 2 A Comparative Look at Political Parties & Elections (cont.) Hershey, Chapters 16

THIRD EXAM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES:

1. You will need to consult your uoregon.edu email account daily, as this is how I will send you important information.
2. There will be no makeups for any of the exams without a written, documented excuse that is approved by me. If you are approved to take a makeup, you must take the make-up exam during the regularly scheduled final exam period for this class. If you simply miss an exam and do not contact me, you will receive a “0” for this exam. No incompletes will be given for this course. You cannot makeup more than one exam in this course.
3. Students with disabilities will be accommodated. Please contact the Accessible Education Center, and they will then advise me as to how to meet your needs.