

# POL-UA 395: Money and Politics

## SPRING 2019

**Professor:** Hye Young You, Wilf Family Department of Politics

**Time and Location:** Friday 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm, 12 Waverly Place L113

**Email:** [hyou@nyu.edu](mailto:hyou@nyu.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm or by appointment. 19 West 4th Street, Office 224

## Course Description

What do Apple Inc., the National Rifle Association, New York University, and the American Farm Bureau Federation share in common? The answer is that they are all special interest groups. Interest group politics lie at the heart of American politics and American democracy. Understanding why groups are organized and how they influence various public policies is critical to our understanding of political representation. This course examines the ways that firms, institutions, and citizens attempt to make their voices heard in elections and public policy making processes in the United States. Specifically, we will cover following topics: (1) How are interest groups organized and how they are sustained? (2) How do groups influence electoral politics, and how do lobbying strategies differ from campaign contribution strategies? (3) Whom among legislators, congressional aides, executive agency bureaucrats, and courts do interest groups target, and why? (4) Do interest groups really affect public policy, and how might we discover it if they do? (5) Do different groups - corporations, universities, and foreign countries, for example - have different political strategies? (6) What is the value of political connections and officeholding in the world of interest group politics?

## Requirements:

Your grade for the course will be based on:

**(1) Class Participation (30% of the grade):** Class participation is critical in this class. Students are expected to read materials before the class and you will be graded based on your participation in discussion of the assigned readings. Two students will be designated as discussion leaders each week. Each student is expected to write **one page response memo** (attach in a pdf format) that includes at least one critical question on each assigned reading by **Thursday 6pm**. Submit your memo on the course website. When you lead a discussion, you don't need to submit a memo. All the assigned readings are uploaded here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/886k6ruoem85v01/AAD-xNw6JeuXdJlBT6dWY8sza?dl=0>.

**(2) Two Short Essays (30% of the grade):** Students are expected to complete 2 short writing assignments, no more than 1,500 words.

- Assignment #1: Select an interest group of your own choice. Then (1) write a brief history of the organization; (2) explain whether it is membership based on an institution; (3) explore and discuss its strategy of campaign contributions for the 2018 election cycle. **Due: 3/8 (Friday) 5pm.**
- Assignment #2: Select two organizations in a similar sector (e.g., two firms in the same sector, two universities, or two local governments). Then (1) write a brief description of each group; (2) compare their lobbying expenditures in 2018; (3) discuss the similarities and the differences in their lobbying activities in 2018. **Due: 4/26 (Friday) 5pm.**

**(3) A Final Paper (40% of the grade):** A 4000 words paper. **Due: May 17th (Friday), 5pm.**

- **A.** Choose one big piece of legislation (such as the Dodd-Frank or the American Health Care Act) or one big issue (such as gun control or immigration). Then dig deeply into campaign contributions and lobbying strategy by different stakeholders for the topic that you choose. Who are the big and small players in this issue area? How much money do they have/spend in campaign contributions and which members of Congress do groups donate to? How much do groups spend in lobbying? Which lobbying firms represent them? Which agencies do they target in their lobbying? Then, in the student's opinion, which organizations are doing the best and worst jobs influencing policy in this area? What could the various players be doing differently to gain or wield more influence than they currently have?
- **B.** Go to visit a lobbyist who represents either your home town/ state/ country, New York University, New York City, or an issue that you care about, either at the local/state or federal level. Do an interview and write describing this person's work, issue priority, their campaign and lobbying strategy, how much influence this person thinks they have etc. Evaluate the lobbyist or the institution's political activity based on the theories and frames we cover during the course.

**\*\* Students are required to discuss their final paper topic with the instructor no later than Spring break \*\***

Late assignment will be penalized 1/2 letter grade per day, with the first penalty applied immediately after the assignment is due. When submitting by email, make sure to attach the file.

## Laptop/Tablet Policy

When used in the class for non-class purpose, laptops/tablets (and, likewise, any other electronic device) can be distracting to other students and to the course instructor. Consequently, the policy for this course is that laptops/tablets are not allowed unless you request my permission to use the equipment for the sole purpose of taking notes. Permission must be requested in person, in my office hours or by email. Lack of compliance with this policy will result in a failing participation grade.

## Collaboration Policy Statement and the Honor Code

I encourage discussion outside the classroom of readings and topics, but the essays and the paper you submit should be entirely your own. If you use sources outside the syllabus you must adhere to standard citation practices and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work.

## Useful Data Sources

Below are the useful webpages that provide various data for interest group activities, including campaign contributions, campaign expenditures, and lobbying activity.

1. Center for Responsive Politics: <https://www.opensecrets.org/bulk-data/downloads>
2. Databas on Ideology, Money in Politics, and Elections (DIME): <https://data.stanford.edu/dime>
3. Lobbying Disclosure Act Database: <https://soprweb.senate.gov/index.cfm?event=selectfields> and <https://www.lobbyview.org/#/>
4. Foreign Lobbying Data: [www.fara.gov](http://www.fara.gov) and <https://www.opensecrets.org/fara>

## Topics:

### 1. Introduction and Overview (2/1)

### 2. Basic Survey of Interest Groups (2/8)

Madison, James. *The Federalist* #10.

Allard, Nicholas. 2008. "Lobbying is an Honorable Profession: The Right to Petition and the Competition to be Right." *Stanford Law and Policy Review* 19(1): 23-68.

Schlozman, Kay L., Sidney Verba, and Henry Brady. 2012. "Introduction: Democracy and Political Voice" in *The Heavenly Chorus: Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 1.

Schlozman, Kay et al. 2015. "Organization and the Democratic Representation of Interests: What Does It Mean When Those Organizations Have No Members?" *Perspectives on Politics* 13(4): 1017-1029.

### 3. Special Topic: Introduction to Regression and Data (2/15)

\*\* Angirst, Joshua, and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. 2015. *Mastering Metrics: The Path from Cause to Effect*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch.2 (pp. 47-68) \*\* (no need to write a memo)

Jacobson, Gary. 2006. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in Congressional Elections." in *Capturing Campaign Effects*. Henry Brady and Richard Johnson (eds.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. pp. 199-220.

### 4. Campaign Contributions I: Motivations (2/22)

Kalla, Joshua, and David Broockman. 2016. "Campaign Contributions Facilitate Access to Congressional Officials: A Randomized Field Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(3): 545-558.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M. de Figueiredo, and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2003. "Why is There So Little Money in U.S. Politics?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17: 105-130.

### 5. Campaign Contributions II: Gender Inequality (3/1)

Crowder-Meyer, Melody, and Rosalyn Cooperman. 2018. "Can't Buy Them Love: How Party Culture Among Donors Contributes to the Party Gap in Women's Representation." *Journal of Politics* 80(3):1211-1224.

Barber, Michael, Daniel Butler, and Jessica Preece. 2016. "Gender Inequality in Campaign Finance." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 11(2): 219-248.

### 6. Research Mentoring Session I (3/8)

Students are expected to meet with the instructor in this week to discuss their first memo assignment and the final paper. **No class on 3/8.**

### 7. Effects of Money on Policy Outcomes (3/15)

Page, Benjamin, Larry Bartels, and Jason Seawright. 2013. "Democracy and the Policy Preference of Wealthy Americans." *Perspectives on Politics* 11(1): 51-73.

Gilens, Martin, and Benjamin Page. 2014. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." *Perspective on Politics* 12(3). pp. 564-581.

Fowler, Anthony, Haritz Garro, and Jorg Spenkuch. 2019. "Quid Pro Quo? Corporate Returns to Campaign Contributions." *Journal of Politics* (Forthcoming).

**\*\* No Class on March 22th: Spring Break \*\***

## **8. Campaign Finance Regulation and Candidate Selection (3/29)**

Kang, Michael. 2012. "The End of Campaign Finance Law." *Virginia Law Review* 98(1): 1-65.

Barber, Michael. 2016. "Ideological Donors, Contribution Limits, and the Polarization of American Legislatures." *Journal of Politics* 78(1): 296-310.

## **9. Lobbying (4/5)**

Drutman, Lee. 2010. "The Business of America is Lobbying: Explaining the Growth of Corporate Political Activity in Washington, DC." *University of California, Berkeley, PhD Dissertation*.

You, Hye Young. 2017. "Ex Post Lobbying." *Journal of Politics* 79(4): 1162-1176.

## **10. Revolving Door Lobbyists (4/12)**

Blanes i Vidal, Jordi, Mirko Draca, and Christian Fons-Rosen. 2012. "Revolving Door Lobbyists." *American Economic Review* 102: 3731-3748.

Palmer, Maxwell, and Benjamin Schneer. 2016. "Capitol Gains: The Returns to Elected Office from Corporate Board Directorship." *Journal of Politics* 78(1): 181- 196.

## **11. Universities and Local Governments as Lobbyists (4/19)**

de Figueiredo, John M., and Brian S. Silverman. 2006. "Academic Earmarks and the Returns to Lobbying." *Journal of Law and Economics* 49: 597-625.

Goldstein, Rebecca, and Hye Young You. 2017. "Cities as Lobbyists." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(4): 864-876..

## 12. Research Mentoring Session II (4/26)

Students are expected to meet with the instructor in this week to discuss their second memo assignment and the final paper. **No class on 4/26.**

## 13. Lobbying on Foreign Policy (5/3)

\*\* Date of the class is subject to change \*\*

Mearsheimer, John, and Stephen Walt. 2006. "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy." *Middle Eastern Policy* 13(3):29-87.

Pevehouse, Jon, and Felicity Valulas. 2019. "Nudging the Needle: Foreign Lobbying and US Human Rights Ratings." *International Studies Quarterly* (Forthcoming).

## 14. Special Interests and Knowledge Production (5/10)

Egan, Patrick, and Megan Mullin. 2017. "Climate Change: US Public Opinion." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 209-227.

Jacques, Peter, Riley Dunlap, and Mark Freeman. 2008. "The Organization of Denial: Conservative Think Tanks and Environmental Skepticism." *Environmental Politics* 17(3): 349-385.

Hertel-Fernandez, Alexander. 2014. "Who Passes Business's Model Bills? Policy Capacity and Corporate Influence in U.S. State Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 582-602.