

***Pol 365: Power in America***  
M/W 1-2:15  
CSS 230

Dr. Chelsea Ebin  
Email: [cebin@rollins.edu](mailto:cebin@rollins.edu)  
Tel.: 407-646-2852  
Office: CSS 236  
Office Hours: T/R 3:30-4:30 and by appointment

**Course Description:**

This course explores how political power is created and maintained. The course is divided into three parts: It begins with an overview and examination of traditional theories of power that includes C. Wright Mills seminal text *The Power Elite*, Steven Lukes's "three faces" model of power and Clarissa Hayward's important intervention into the field of analyzing power. The second section of the course turns to the examination of power in relation to several key issues in American politics, including the impact of interest groups, voting, the media, political parties and social movements. The final section of the course applies these theoretic and analytic tools to the question of capitalist relations in 2018 America and asks students to actively explore how power is produced and functions as a complex set of economic, race, class, and gender relations.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and explain core theories of power;
- Understand how these theories apply to the production of American political institutions and the practice of American politics;
- Illustrate the productive and coercive functions of power and the intersectional forms power takes in relation to capitalist development;
- Independently apply theories of power to gain greater insight into and understanding of a political problem or phenomenon in American politics.

**Course Expectations:**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of two in-class exams and a final paper (2000-2500 words). Exam dates and paper deadlines are non-negotiable and missed exams or assignments will receive a zero. Papers and exams must be submitted in-class and on-time.

The final paper requires that students apply at least two theories of power to explain a contemporary American political problem or phenomenon of their choosing. Additionally, students are required to sign up to present a reading and submit a reading response based on that text (500 words). Reading responses will be graded check minus, check, or check-plus.

## **Grade Distribution**

First Exam: 25%

Second Exam: 25%

Final Paper: 35%

Reading Response and Presentation: 5%

Participation: 10%

## **Assignments/ Grading**

All written assignments must be submitted electronically prior to the start of class. A late assignment will lose one full letter grade (10%) for each day (24-hour period) it is submitted after the due date. For example, if there is a written assignment that is due at the start of class on Tuesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am, and you were to submit this assignment any time after 9:30am on the 29<sup>th</sup> but before 9:30am on the 30<sup>th</sup>, you would lose one letter grade.

**If you would like written feedback on your work, you must also submit a hardcopy in class.**

## **Evaluation Criteria:**

Student grade reports are based on the following definitions.

- Grade 'A' is reserved for work that is exceptional in quality and shows keen insight, understanding, and initiative.
- Grade 'B' is given for work that is consistently superior and shows interest, effort, or originality.
- Grade 'C' is a respectable grade. It reflects consistent daily preparation and satisfactory completion of all work required.
- Grade 'D-' is the lowest passing grade. It is below the average necessary to meet graduation requirements and ordinarily is not accepted for transfer by other institutions.
- Grade 'F' is failing.

## **Required Course Books:**

- Goldstein, Amy. *Janesville: An American Story*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017.
- Hayward, Clarissa Rile. *De-Facing Power*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

## **Reading Schedule\*:**

*All assigned reading should be completed prior to that day's class.*

*\*Reading schedule subject to change at professor's discretion.*

## **Monday, August 26:**

Course Introduction: What is Power?

**Wednesday, August 28:**

Marx and Engels, "The Ruling Class and the Ruling Ideas," (PDF);  
David Leopold, "Marxism and Ideology: From Marx to Althusser," excerpted from *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (PDF)

**Monday, September 2 – NO CLASS**

**Wednesday, September 4:**

C. Wright Mills, excerpt from *The Power Elite*, 3-29, 269-297 (PDF).

**Monday, September 9:**

Robert Dahl, "The Concept of Power," pgs. 201-215, (PDF);  
Dahl, *Who Governs?*, pgs. 271-281; 305-325 (PDF).

**Wednesday, September 11:**

Bachrach and Baratz, "Two Faces of Power" (PDF).

**Monday, September 16:**

Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power" (PDF).

**Wednesday, September 18:**

Steven Lukes, chapter 1 of *Power: A Radical View* (PDF).

**Monday, September 23:**

Bent Flyvbjerg, *Rationality and Power*, 1-38; 225-236 (PDF).

**Wednesday, September 25:**

Clarissa Rile Hayward, *De-Facing Power*, 1-56 (Book).

**Monday, September 30:**

Clarissa Rile Hayward, *De-Facing Power*, 57-110 (Book).

**Wednesday, October 2:**

Clarissa Rile Hayward, *De-Facing Power*, 111-179 (Book).

**Monday, October 7: First Exam**

**Section Two: Applying Theories of Power to Topics in American Politics**

**Wednesday, October 9: Voting: The Power of the Ballot?**

Joseph Schumpeter, "The Classical Doctrine of Democracy," excerpt from *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, (PDF);  
Martin Gilens, "Citizen Competence," *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*, (PDF).

**Monday, October 14 – NO CLASS**

**Wednesday, October 16:**

Leighley and Oser, “Representation in an Era of Political and Economic Inequality: How and When Citizen Engagement Matters,” 328-341 (PDF);

Sheila Seuss Kennedy, “Electoral Integrity: How Gerrymandering Matters,” 265-273 (PDF);  
[Rucho v Common Cause](#) (read summary and media coverage surrounding decision).

**Monday, October 21: Interest Groups: Affluence is Influence?**

Rozell, Wilcox, Franz, “Interest Groups and American Politics,” excerpt from *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*, 1-24 (PDF);

Sheila Krumholz, “Campaign Cash and Corruption: Money in Politics, Post-Citizen’s United,” (PDF).

**Wednesday, October 23:**

Shanna Pearson-Markowitz and Joshua J. Dyck, “Crime and Partisanship: How Party ID Muddles Reality, Perception, and Policy Attitudes on Crime and Guns,” (PDF);

Robert Richards, “The Role of Interest Groups and Group Interests on Gun Legislation in the US House,” (PDF).

**Monday, October 28: International Affairs: Super Power?**

David Hastings Dunn, “Isolationism Revisited: Seven Persistent Myths in the Contemporary American Foreign Policy Debate,” (PDF);

Charles Krauthammer, “Trump’s Foreign-Policy Revolution,” *National Review*,

<https://www.nationalreview.com/2017/01/trump-foreign-policy-isolationism-america-first-allies-nato-trans-pacific-partnership/>;

Richard Hass, “America and the Great Abdication,” *The Atlantic*,

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/12/america-abidcation-trump-foreign-policy/549296/>

**Wednesday, October 30: Mass Media: Power is Knowledge?**

Murray Edelman, “Political Language and Political Reality,” (PDF);

Alice Marwick and Rebecca Lewis, *Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online*, Data and Society Report: [http://centerformediajustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/DataAndSociety\\_MediaManipulationAndDisinformationOnline.pdf](http://centerformediajustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/DataAndSociety_MediaManipulationAndDisinformationOnline.pdf)

**Monday, November 4: Parties and Movements: Does Power Come from the Streets or the Party?**

Excerpt from James Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets*, (PDF);

Schickler, Pearson, Feinstein, “Congressional Parties and Civil Rights Politics from 1933 to 1972” (PDF)

**Wednesday, November 6: SECOND EXAM**

## Section Three: A Deep Dive into Analyzing American Power Relations

### Monday, November 11:

Excerpt from David Roediger's *The Wages of Whiteness* (PDF).

### Wednesday, November 13:

Sykes and Maroto, "A Wealth of Inequalities: Mass Incarceration, Employment, and Racial Disparities in U.S. Household Wealth, 1996-2011," 129-148 (PDF);

Michelle Alexander, excerpt from *The New Jim Crow*, pgs. TBD, (PDF).

### Monday, November 18:

Caroline Criado Perez, excerpt from *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* (PDF);

Katz, Stern, and Fader, "Women and The Paradox of Inequality in the Twentieth Century," 65-83 (PDF).

### Wednesday, November 20:

Roberto Gonzales and Stephen Raphael, "Illegality: A Contemporary Portrait of Immigration, 1-14 (PDF);

Sean Sellers and Greg Asbed, "The History and Evolution of Forced Labor in Florida Agriculture," 29-45 (PDF).

### Monday, November 25:

Catherine Cramer Walsh, "Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective," 517-532 (PDF).

### Wednesday, November 27 – NO CLASS

Begin reading: Amy Goldstein, *Janesville: An American Story*, Parts 1-2 (Book).

### Monday, December 2:

Amy Goldstein, *Janesville: An American Story*, Parts 3-4 (Book).

### Wednesday, December 4:

Amy Goldstein, *Janesville: An American Story*, Parts 5-Epilogue (Book).

**Final Paper Due: Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> by 10am**

### Course and College Policies:

#### Note on classroom decorum

This course asks students to engage with many of the most polarizing questions in American politics. A plurality of views are presented in our course readings and will be discussed in class. Students are encouraged to critically engage with the readings in order to formulate and express their own perspectives on these issues. The classroom should be a place where we debate political ideas and policies freely; for everyone to feel empowered to speak, students must be committed to civil and respectful dialogue. Students are expected to refrain from ad hominem

attacks and to ground their positions in relation to established political theories and empirical evidence. **Furthermore, electronic use is strongly discouraged in the classroom without professor's permission.**

### Participation Rubric

<p><b>10 pts</b> Stellar attendance and <i>daily</i> participation that reflected engagement with assigned readings and course topics.  (0-1 absences)</p>	<p><b>8 pts</b> Strong attendance and consistent participation in course discussions that reflected engagement with assigned readings and course topics.  (0-2 absences)</p>	<p><b>7 pts</b> Strong attendance and some participation; OR average attendance and very strong participation in course discussions that reflected engagement with assigned readings and course topics  (0-2 absences)</p>	<p><b>5 pts</b> Strong attendance and little participation; OR average attendance and strong participation in course discussions that reflected engagement with assigned readings and course topics.  (0-3 absences)</p>	<p><b>4-0 pts</b> Average attendance with no participation; OR poor attendance with some participation; OR participation in course discussions does NOT reflect engagement with assigned readings and course topics.  (2-4 absences)</p>
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### Attendance

*Students may have one absence without any grade reduction and two absences without significant penalty. Three absences will result in a significant reduction of the student's grade. (For guidelines, see participation rubric.) Five or more absences may automatically result in a failing grade.*

### Recording Device Use

In order to protect the integrity of the classroom experience, the use of recording devices is limited to either the expressed permission of the faculty member or with proper documentation from the Office of Accessibility Services. Information about accommodations through Accessibility Services can be found at <http://www.rollins.edu/accessibility-services/>. Recording without the proper authorization is considered a violation of the Rollins Code of Community Standards.

### Accessibility Services (updated 5/20/19)

Rollins College is committed to equal access and inclusion for all students, faculty and staff. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 create a foundation of legal obligations to provide an accessible educational environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. It is the spirit of these laws that guides the college toward expanding access in all courses and programs, utilizing innovative instructional design, and identifying and removing barriers whenever possible.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to fully participate in your classes, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services, located on the first floor of the Olin Library, as soon as possible. You are encouraged to schedule a Welcome Meeting by filling out the “First Time Users” form on the website: <https://www.rollins.edu/accessibility-services> and/or reach out by phone or email: 407-975-6463 or [Access@Rollins.edu](mailto:Access@Rollins.edu).

All test-taking accommodations requested for this course must first be approved through the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) and scheduled online through *Accommodate* **at least 72 hours before the exam**. Official accommodation letters must be received by and discussed with the faculty in advance. There will be no exceptions given unless previously approved by the OAS with documentation of the emergency situation. We highly recommend making all testing accommodations at the beginning of the semester. OAS staff are available to assist with this process.

### **Academic Honor Code Reaffirmation (updated 7/18/18)**

<http://www.rollins.edu/honor-code/documents/academic-honor-code-rollins-college.pdf>

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. The student commitment to uphold the values of honor - honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility - particularly manifests itself in two public aspects of student life. First, as part of the admission process to the College, students agree to commit themselves to the Honor Code. Then, as part of the matriculation process during Orientation, students sign a more detailed pledge to uphold the Honor Code and to conduct themselves honorably in all their activities, both academic and social, as a Rollins student. A student signature on the following pledge is a binding commitment by the student that lasts for his or her entire tenure at Rollins College.

The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others. This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to the paper, quiz, test, lab report, etc., the handwritten signed statement:

***"On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work."***

Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

### **Citation Expectations**

As per the Academic Honor Code, plagiarism is defined as “Offering the words, facts, or ideas of another person as your own in any academic exercise.” In order to avoid plagiarism, all students

are expected to use proper citation norms. **This includes citing *all* works you have consulted in your bibliography and providing citations in the body of your written work for all material that is quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. For our course, all assignments will use Chicago Manual of Style or MLA citations.**

### **Absences – religious holidays and/or campus business (catalogue website updated 8/19)**

The professor will accommodate a reasonable number of excused absences for religious holidays and official off-campus college business such as academic conference presentations and athletic competitions. However, per the College's policy on excused absences (<https://catalog.rollins.edu/>), students must discuss with the professor the dates of the anticipated absences no later than the last day of the drop period. Students must present to their professor written evidence of the anticipated absences and discuss with him/her how and when make-up work should be completed prior to missing the class. Students should not expect to receive allowance for excused absences if they do not meet with the professor beforehand and clarify the dates as necessary. Absences will be addressed by the faculty member in accordance with his/her attendance policy. The professor retains the right to determine what would be considered to be a reasonable number of absences (excused or otherwise) for the course. A student will not fail a course because the number of religious observances and/or college business absences exceed the number of absences allowed, except if excessive absences make it impossible to fulfill the expectations of the course. The student's class participation grade in the course, though, may still be affected.

### **Credit Hour Statement for Rollins Courses**

This course is a four-credit-hour course that meets three hours per week. The value of four credit hours results, in part, from work expected of enrolled students both inside and outside the classroom. Rollins faculty require that students average at least 2 ½ hours of outside work for every hour of scheduled class time. In this course, the additional outside-of-class expectations are the completion of: all readings prior to class, preparation for reading presentation, and the writing of a reading response and final essay.

### **Title IX Statement (updated 5/20/19)**

Rollins College is committed to making its campus a safe place for students. If you tell any of your faculty about sexual misconduct involving members of the campus community, your professors are required to report this information to the Title IX Coordinator. Your faculty member can help connect you with the Title IX Coordinator, ([TitleIX@rollins.edu](mailto:TitleIX@rollins.edu) or 407.691.1773). You will be provided with information, resources and support. If you would prefer to speak to someone on campus confidentially, please call the Wellness Center at 407.628.6340. They are not required to report any information you share with the Title IX Coordinator.

Misconduct under Title IX includes gender-based discrimination and harassment, sexual harassment, sexual violence including fondling and assault, sexual coercion/force, sexual-based communication, sexual exploitation, interpersonal violence including dating and domestic violence, stalking, complicity and retaliation. Everyone is protected under the following

protected statuses: sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity (including transgender status), gender expression, and sexual orientation. For information, visit <https://www.rollins.edu/sexual-misconduct/>.