POSC 233  
Interest Groups  
Fall 2007  
Monday 4-6:30 PM  

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407 Wehr Physics  
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Tues 10-2, Wed 12-3, Fri 12-2  

Overview  
This course is designed to provide an in-depth survey of key political science works related to the study of interest groups. The focus of our efforts will be two-fold: 1) the organization of groups and 2) interest group lobbying, with the purpose of preparing you to conduct research on interests groups, to incorporate theoretical concepts and conceptual frameworks into your other classes and comprehensive exams, and to prepare you for future endeavors within and beyond academia. By the end of this class you should have a firm understanding of the major works and debates in the field of interest groups, you will have written an original research paper that is theoretically grounded and empirically supported, and you will have reflected on the role of interest groups in the larger political system.  

Requirements  
I expect you to attend every class and to have completed all of the readings prior to the start of class. You should be prepared to discuss and debate the readings in class.  

You will take a midterm and a final exam. The midterm will be of the take-home variety and the final will be in class (aimed to simulate the comps experience).  

You will complete a 20-25 page research paper that tackles a pertinent research question, engages a scholarly debate, and demonstrates the capacity to conduct research.  

Course Materials  
Books have been ordered at the Bookmarq and are also widely available online. Supplementary readings will be archived on D2L. We will utilize the resources of D2L for extending class discussions and presenting research findings.  

Book List:  

Special Note on Plagiarism
Even though this is a graduate course, I have had experience in the past with plagiarism. There is the blatant kind, where text is copied directly, and the less blatant kind where someone else's ideas are passed off as one's own. Neither are acceptable, both violate the student code of conduct, and punishment will be meted out without sympathy.

**Weekly Schedule**

**August 27**  
- Introduction to Interest Groups  
  - Baumgartner and Leech, *Basic Interests*, Chapters 1-3  
  - Lowery and Gray, “A Neo-Pluralist Theory of Interest Groups”

**September 3**  
- Labor Day, No Class

**September 10**  
- Collective Action, Part I  
  - Mancur Olson, *Logic of Collective Action*, Chapters 1, 2, 6  
  - Baumgartner and Leech, *Basic Interests*, Chapters 4, 5

**September 17**  
- An Organizational Alternative to Collective Action  
  - James Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations*, chapters 1-5, 10-12  

**September 24**  
- Collective Action, Part II: The Critics  

**October 1**  
- Collective Action, Part III: The Next Generation  

**October 8**  
- Behavior within Interest Group Communities  
  - James Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations*, Chapter 13  
  - Frank Baumgartner, and Beth Leech. 2001. "Interest Niches and Policy Bandwagons: *

October 15 - Interest Groups and Political Development

October 20 – Take Home Exam Due by 5pm

October 22 - Interest Groups in Politics
- Richard Harris and Daniel Tichenor. 2006. The Development of a Washington Lobbying Community: Mobilization and Bias” Presented at the Policy History Conference, Charlottesville, VA.

**Preliminary Presentation of Research**

October 29 - Interest Group Lobbying
- Baumgartner and Leech, *Basic Interests*, Chapter 7
- Anthony Nownes. 2006. *Total Lobbying*. Chapters 1, 2

November 5 - Lobbying Strategies
- Anthony Nownes, *Total Lobbying*, Chapters 3, 4

November 12 – Business Lobbying Strategies
- Anthony Nownes, *Total Lobbying*, Chapters 5, 6

November 19 – Venue Selection as Lobbying Strategy

November 26 – Political Economy of Expertise

December 3 – Presentations of Research

**FINAL EXAM TO BE HELD DURING UNIVERSITY ASSIGNED FINAL EXAM TIME**