POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTIONS, FALL 2012

**PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT: EXECUTIVE BRANCH & COURTS**

Hershey chapter 14; [Gibson, “Nastier, Noisier, Costlier – and Better”](http://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/judicialelect.pdf)

Friday, November 16

**Chapter 14 terms**: different ways that the President can act as party leader, campaigner-in-chief; coattails, why coattail effects declined from end of World War II through 1980s; why the president’s party usually loses congressional seats in midterm elections; why the midterm loss pattern failed to hold in 1998, 2002; divided government, implications for the president; bureaucratic constituencies, how these affect executive ability to influence bureaucratic agencies and departments; political outlooks among federal bureaucrats, changes over time; evidence of judicial voting along party lines, reasons for partisan behavior on the courts; party considerations in appointing federal judges and justices; merit appointment of state judges; retention election

**Gibson terms**: why state judicial elections have become more politicized (state courts more important, more interest group involvement, Supreme Court decision in *Republican Party of Minnesota v. White*); arguments that increased politicization of judicial elections threatens legitimacy of courts, and counterarguments; policy making by judges, why this is the most appropriate way to view the role of judges; public attitudes toward judicial elections and candidates

14.1. Discuss the ways that presidents influence Congress and especially the ways that party enters into this process of influence. Also discuss whether President Obama’s influence over Congress will be greater, smaller, or the same in his second term compared to his first term, and why.

14.2. Why is it hard for executives, especially the president, to influence the agencies and departments within their branch of government?

14.3. Why are federal judicial appointments increasingly partisan battles?

14.4. From a party’s perspective, what is good and what is not good about state judicial selection procedures?

G.1. Gibson makes the case against the politicization of judicial elections, but ultimately argues why judges should be allowed to speak out during political campaigns. Summarize the two sides to this argument.

G.2. Is one side right?

x. Ask your question here!