POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTIONS, FALL 2012

**PARTY COALITIONS & PARTY SYSTEMS OVER TIME**

Hershey chapter 7 (some of Wayne ch. 3 also covered today)

Wednesday, September 26

Friday, September 28

**Chapter 7 terms:** party realignment; party systems, when and which parties dominated during each (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th); New Deal Coalition components; key factors that organize party coalitions, such as SES, region, age, race, religion and religiosity, ethnicity, gender, issues; evidence for polarization of party coalitions today; maintaining elections, deviating elections, dealignment; summary of party coalition changes (Table 7.4, 143); evidence for and against a realignment in the last 50 years; secular change

1. (from Monday, September 24) What are the general trends in US party identification AND party voting over the last 50 years? What factors help to explain these trends? Table 7.4, p. 143 of Hershey will help with this question.

2. What factors are thought to cause realignments to occur? Why do realignments seem to have occurred at very regular intervals in U.S. political history (32-36 years)?

3. What evidence supports the idea of a dealignment around 1968?

4. (Wayne ch. 3) Examine Table 3.5, pages 97-99.

4A. What does this table tell us about the American electorate in the last four presidential elections? What general trends are present?

4B. Are there any surprises in this table? Ponder and discuss.

4C. How should this table influence the strategic decisions of the 2012 Obama and Romney campaigns?

5. Based on the data and arguments presented in Hershey and Wayne for this week, what model of voting behavior seems best suited to explain how Americans vote today?