

campaigns & elections

PSCI 3021.003
SPRING 2017
DUANE PHYSICS G1B25
T/TH 11:00 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.

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OFFICE HOURS: THURSDAYS 1-3 P.M.
& BY APPOINTMENT

Elections are at the center of American politics. For citizens, campaigns are a time of heightened political interest and involvement, and an opportunity to convey their preferences to politicians. For political parties and interest groups, it is a time to gain new political influence (or lose it). Journalists are called upon to translate information about the campaign to the electorate, and politicians must market their policy platforms both to the electorate and other political elites.

In this course, we will explore how campaigns are practiced in the United States. We will consider why people run for office and how political parties, interest groups, and electoral rules influence how campaigns play out. Next, we will explore the content of campaigns – the positions candidates take, the effects of political contexts and campaign events, how campaign messages are conveyed to citizens, and how this all influences election outcomes. Finally, we will consider the effects of campaigns on citizens – what they learn, how they evaluate candidates, what animates their participation, and how they choose which candidates to vote for.

D2L is your friend

I will regularly update class information on the website for the class at learn.colorado.edu. This syllabus will be posted there, as well as links to assignments and other exciting material.

reading material

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, the readings include a set of journal articles and book chapters, which can be accessed via the course website.

expectations

You are encouraged to be an active participant in class! Please feel free to raise questions at any point during class, including matters of clarification, theoretical points, or topics to address in class discussion. You should also keep in touch by e-mail or by visiting office hours if you have any questions about course expectations or the material covered in class.

You are also expected to maintain proper classroom etiquette. This includes respecting the opinions of others even if you disagree, not talking out of turn, putting away newspapers and crossword puzzles during lecture, turning off cell phones before class, and not disrupting the class if arriving late.

requirements

In addition to the readings, you will be responsible for the following:

PARTICIPATION, SHORT ASSIGNMENTS, AND QUIZZES *(worth 25% of your final grade)*

Because class attendance is an important prerequisite for participating in discussions and in-class activities, attendance will be taken each class session. Frequent absences will lower your participation grade. We will also have several in-class activities that contribute to this portion of your grade, and many weeks we will have short quizzes on the readings. We will have a few short homework assignments as well.

THREE ESSAYS *(each worth 10% of your final grade)*

Over the course of the semester, several paper topics will be provided. Some of these essay prompts will ask you to engage with debates raised in the readings. Others will ask you to apply class lessons to real-world campaigns. Others will invite you to suggest ways to reform electoral institutions. You will be asked to write essays in response to three of these assignments over the course of the semester. Paper guidelines will be detailed in separate handouts.

THREE EXAMS *(each worth 15% of your final grade)*

There will be two midterm exams and a final exam.

special accommodations

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. You can contact the Disability Services office for more information at disabilityservices.colorado.edu.

some important comments on academic integrity

- Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are not familiar with the rules of citing sources in written work or what constitutes plagiarism, you should contact me or refer to the University Honor Code at honorcode.colorado.edu. Additional information about avoiding plagiarism, citation style, and writing in political science is also posted on the course website. Academic dishonesty will result in an F in the course and referral to the Honor Council for additional non-academic sanctions.
- All papers are expected to be original work, not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course (unless prior approval of all instructors involved is obtained).

campaigns & elections class schedule

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Tuesday, January 17 – Thursday, January 19

The landscape of elections in the United States

CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Tuesday, January 24 – Thursday, January 26

U.S. elections in historical perspective, in comparative perspective

- Streb, Matthew J. 2015. *Rethinking American Electoral Democracy*. New York: Routledge. Chapter 3.
- King, Anthony. 1997. "Running Scared." *Atlantic Monthly* 279:41-61.

CANDIDATE SELECTION

Tuesday, January 31 – Thursday, February 2

Who runs for office? Gender and political ambition. Young people's interest in entering politics.

- Fox, Richard L., and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2004. "Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office." *American Journal of Political Science* 48:264-280.
- Lawless, Jennifer L., and Richard L. Fox. 2015. *Running from Office: Why Young People are Turned Off to Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2.

ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

Tuesday, February 7 – Thursday, February 9

How do we select a president? Primary elections. Voting rules. Who benefits from election rules?

- Wayne, Stephen J. 2014. *Is This Any Way to Run a Democratic Election?* Washington, DC: CQ Press. Chapter 7.
- Dahl, Robert A. 2003. *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 4.
- Donovan, Todd, and Shaun Bowler. "Election Reform: What is Expected, and What Results?" In Stephen K. Medvic, ed., *New Directions in Campaigns and Elections*. New York: Routledge.

POLITICAL PARTIES

Tuesday, February 14

The role of political parties in candidate selection, how political parties influence elections.

- Hassell, Hans J. G. 2016. "Party Control of Party Primaries: Party Influence in Nominations for the US Senate." *Journal of Politics* 78:75-87.

Thursday, February 16: Exam 1

CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND INTEREST GROUPS

Tuesday, February 21 – Thursday, February 23

The role of money in politics. When does campaign spending matter?

- Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M. DeFigueiredo, and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2003. "Why Is There So Little Money in U.S. Politics?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17:105-130.
- Jacobson, Gary. 2006. "Measuring Campaign Spending Effects in U.S. House Elections." In Henry E. Brady and Richard Johnston, eds., *Capturing Campaign Effects*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

CAMPAIGN CONTEXTS AND CANDIDATE STRATEGY

Tuesday, February 28 – Thursday, March 2

Incumbency, competition, economic influences, battleground strategies

- Jacobson, Gary C., and Jamie L. Carson. 2016. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Chapter 6.

CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATION

Tuesday, March 7 – Thursday, March 9

Issue selection, voter targeting, campaign agendas

- Macdonald, Stuart E., George Rabinowitz, and Holly Brasher. "Policy Issues and Electoral Democracy." In Michael B. MacKuen and George Rabinowitz, eds. *Electoral Democracy*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- West, Darrell M. 2014. *Air Wars: Television Advertising in Election Campaigns, 1952-2012*. Washington, DC: CQ Press. Chapters 3 and 4.

CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING

Tuesday, March 14 – Thursday, March 16

Candidate advertising strategy, effects of campaign ads

- Freedman, Paul, Michael Franz and Kenneth Goldstein. 2004. "Campaign Advertising and Democratic Citizenship." *American Journal of Political Science* 48:723-741.
- Brader, Ted. 2005. "Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions." *American Journal of Political Science* 49:388-405.

MEDIA COVERAGE OF CAMPAIGNS

Tuesday, March 21

The goals of the press in election coverage, evaluating the quality of media coverage of campaigns

- Patterson, Thomas E. 2016. "News Coverage of the 2016 General Election: How the Press Failed the Voters." Report for the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics, and Public Policy.

Thursday, March 23: Exam 2

Tuesday, March 28 – Thursday, March 30: Spring break – class does not meet.

THE TIMELINE OF CAMPAIGNS

Tuesday, April 4 – Thursday, April 6

Campaign events, debates, conventions, speeches, appearances

- Stimson, James A. 2004. *Tides of Consent: How Public Opinion Shapes American Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4.

CAMPAIGN EFFECTS

Tuesday, April 11 – Thursday, April 13

The effects of campaigns on citizens. Election forecasting.

- Noel, Hans. 2010. "Ten Things Political Scientists Know that You Don't." *The Forum* 8(3):1-19.
- Gelman, Andrew, and Gary King. 1993. "Why Are American Presidential Election Campaign Polls So Variable When Votes Are So Predictable?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23:409-451.

VOTE CHOICE

Tuesday, April 18 – Thursday, April 20

How do people choose how to vote? Assessing the quality of voters' choices.

- Lau, Richard R., and David P. Redlawsk. 1997. "Voting Correctly." *American Political Science Review* 91:585-598.
- Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 5.

VOTER TURNOUT

Tuesday, April 25 – Thursday, April 27

Why do people turn out to vote? What would increase voter turnout?

- Rosenstone, Steven J., and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. Chapter 2.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1997. "Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma." *American Political Science Review* 91:1-14.

CAMPAIGN PROMISES AND POLICY OUTCOMES

Tuesday, May 2 – Thursday, May 4

Do elections matter? How elections connect public preferences with policy outcomes.

- Sulkin, Tracy. 2009. "Campaign Appeals and Legislative Action." *Journal of Politics* 71:1093-110.

Monday, May 8: Final exam (4:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.)