

campaigns & elections

**PSCI 7108.004
FALL 2010
MONDAYS
1 - 3:30 P.M.**

**JENNIFER WOLAK
135 KETCHUM
WOLAKJ@COLORADO.EDU
OFFICE HOURS: WEDNESDAYS, 10 AM TO NOON**

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 platform 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 the campaign plays 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 candidate to vote for.

reading assignments

Course readings are drawn from several texts as well as journal articles. Journal articles are accessible through the library's website, while book chapters are available through the CULearn site for the course. In addition, the following books will be used the course:

- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Just, Marion R., Ann N. Crigler, Dean E. Alger, Timothy E. Cook, Montague Kern, and Darrell M. West. 1996. *Crosstalk: Citizens, Candidates, and the Media in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., William G. Jacoby, Helmut Norpoth, and Herbert F. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Vavreck, Lynn. 2009. *The Message Matters: The Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

requirements

PARTICIPATION (25% of your final grade)

One important prerequisite of participation is class attendance. Class attendance is vital and required.

It is essential to read all of the assigned readings and think carefully about what you have read in advance of the class session. Frantically skimming the articles in the minutes before class begins will limit the quality of our class discussion and impede your ability to learn anything useful. Your education and our class discussion of the readings will both benefit from your careful reading of the articles as well as the time you spend in advance of class reflecting on what you have read and learned.

You will also be expected to actively participate in class discussions in a thoughtful way.

LEADERSHIP OF CLASS DISCUSSION (15% of your final grade)

For three weeks during the semester, you will be responsible for leading class discussion. Your goal is to ensure that the class engages in thoughtful reflection about what we can learn from that week's readings. How you do this is up to you and your fellow discussion leader. You could spend time discussing the articles individually, engaging the themes that cross different articles, connecting that week's topic to prior readings, or discussing ways to extend and elaborate on the week's readings. Your grade will reflect the quality of your preparation, as well as the quantity and quality of class discussion you generate.

You will be graded on your class participation and discussion leadership, which will count toward 40% of your final grade. You can choose which assignments will compose the remainder of your grade from the following options:

AN EXTRA WEEK OF DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP (each is worth 5% of your final grade, if selected)

RESPONSE PAPERS (each is worth 5% of your final grade, if selected)

In these response papers, you will use the week's readings as inspiration for a possible future research project. In your memo, develop a plan for how you could empirically extend ideas raised in that week's readings. Your proposal might extend ideas raised in the studies, or you might propose an interesting question that the authors do not consider. Describe your research question, why it is important and how it would contribute to the literature, the central hypotheses you would want to test, and how you would test your hypotheses. These papers should be single-spaced and two to three pages in length. Turn them in at the beginning of class on the day we discuss that topic.

BOOK REPORT (each is worth 10% of your final grade, if selected)

If there is a book on campaigns and elections that you are interested in that is not on this syllabus, you can choose to read it and write up a book report. When we cover that topic in class, you will present a short summary of the book to the class and engage some of the strengths and weaknesses of the text. You should also turn in a book review essay (two to four pages) on the same matters, for distribution to the rest of the class via the course website.

LONGER ESSAY (worth 10% of your final grade, if selected)

Another option is to write a five page essay (single spaced) about how the study of campaigns and voting has evolved over time, based on themes evoked in *The American Voter* and *The American Voter Revisited*. More details will be outlined in a separate handout.

LITERATURE REVIEW (each is worth 20% of your final grade, if selected)

Another option is to write an essay that assesses the current literature on a topic of your choosing (given instructor approval). This essay should be five to eight single spaced pages in length and is due the last week of the semester. The central goal of the paper will be to assess and summarize the research about a particular topic – to identify the central question or questions, highlight the most important literature related to the topic, and provide commentary about the strengths and weaknesses of the current research in the area. More details will be outlined on a separate handout.

RESEARCH PAPER (worth 50% of your final grade, if selected)

You also have the option to develop a research paper that tests an interesting question about campaigns and elections. This paper should follow the format of the kinds of academic papers read in class – including development of a research question, a review of relevant literature, theory, tests of these explanations, and interpretation of what you find. Expectations for the research paper are outlined in a separate handout.

CUlearn is your friend

This syllabus, assignments, and other exciting material can be accessed on the class website on culearn.colorado.edu.

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 www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices.

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 www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode. Academic dishonesty will result in an F in the course and referral to the Honor Court 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).

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COURSE SCHEDULE

1. plan for the semester

Monday, August 23

2. candidate emergence

Monday, August 30

Who runs for office and why do they choose to do so?

- Aldrich, John H. 1980. *Before the Convention: Strategies and Choices in Presidential Nomination Campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-86." *American Political Science Review* 83: 773-793.
- Maestas, Cherie, Sarah Fulton, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone. 2006. "When to Risk It? Institutions, Ambitions, and the Decision to Run for the U.S. House." *American Political Science Review* 100(2):195-208.
- Lawless, Jennifer L., and Richard L. Fox. 2010. *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 and 5.
- Branton, Regina P. 2009. "The Importance of Race and Ethnicity in Congressional Primary Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 62: 459-473.

Monday, September 6

Labor Day – Class does not meet

3. political parties

Monday, September 13

What roles do political parties play in elections? How do parties affect candidate strategies and voter choices?

- Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Chapter 6.
- Beck, Paul Allen, Russell J. Dalton, Audrey Haynes, and Robert Huckfeldt. 1997. "Presidential Campaigning at the Grass Roots." *Journal of Politics* 59: 1264-75.
- Herrnson, Paul S. 2009. "The Roles of Party Organizations, Party-Connected Committees, and Party Allies in Elections." *Journal of Politics* 71: 1207-1224.
- Layman, Geoffrey C., Thomas M. Carsey, John C. Green, Richard Herrera, and Rosalyn Cooperman. 2010. "Activists and Conflict Extension in American Party Politics." *American Political Science Review* 104: 324-346.
- Schaffner, Brian F., Matthew Streb, and Gerald Wright. 2001. "Teams without Uniforms: The Nonpartisan Ballot in State and Local Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 54(1): 7-30.

4. campaign money and the role of interest groups

Monday, September 20

Who donates to campaigns, to which candidates, and why? What are the effects of campaign money?

- Grant, J. Tobin, and Thomas J. Rudolph. 2002. "To Give or Not to Give: Modeling Individuals' Contribution Decisions." *Political Behavior* 24: 31-54.
- Tam Cho, Wendy K., and James G. Gimpel. 2007. "Prospecting for (Campaign) Gold." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(2): 255-268.
- Rudolph, Thomas J. 1999. "Corporate and Labor PAC Contributions in House Elections: Measuring the Effects of Majority Party Status." *Journal of Politics* 61: 195-206.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 1978. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 72:469-491.
- 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(1): 105-130.

5. electoral institutions

Monday, September 27

How do electoral rules affect who runs and who participates? How do electoral institutions affect who wins?

- Meinke, Scott R., Jeffrey K. Staton, and Steven T. Wuhs. 2006. "State Delegate Selection Rules for Presidential Nominations, 1972-2000." *Journal of Politics* 68(1): 180-93.
- David T. Canon. 1999. "Electoral Systems and the Representation of Minority Interests in Legislatures." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 24(3): 331-385.
- Yoshinaka, Antoine, and Chad Murphy. Forthcoming. "The Paradox of Redistricting: How Partisan Mapmakers Foster Competition but Disrupt Representation." *Political Research Quarterly*.
- Brockington, David, Todd Donovan, Shaun Bowler, and Robert Brischetto. 1998. "Minority Representation under Cumulative and Limited Voting." *Journal of Politics* 60(4): 1108-1125.
- Trounstein, Jessica, and Melody E. Valdin. 2008. "The Context Matters: The Effects of Single-Member versus At-Large Districts on City Council Diversity." *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 554-569.

6. the effects of member and district attributes

Monday, October 4

Where do candidates choose to campaign? How do campaigns play out in different contexts?

- Bartels, Larry M. 1985. "Resource Allocation in a Presidential Campaign." *Journal of Politics* 47: 928-936.
- Pattie, Charles J., Ronald J. Johnston, and Edward A. Fieldhouse. 1995. "Winning the Local Vote: The Effectiveness of Constituency Campaign Spending in Great Britain, 1983-1992." *American Political Science Review* 89(4): 969-983.
- Mann, Thomas E., and Raymond E. Wolfinger. 1980. "Candidates and Parties in Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 74: 617-32.
- Ensley, Michael J., Michael W. Tofias, and Scott De Marchi. 2009. "District Complexity as an Advantage in Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 53: 990-1005.
- Hall, Melinda Gann, and Chris W. Bonneau. 2006. "Does Quality Matter? Challengers in State Supreme Court Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 20-33.
- Krebs, Timothy B. 1998. "The Determinants of Candidates' Vote Share and the Advantages of Incumbency in City Council Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 42(3): 921-935.

7. the effects of the economy and other national factors

Monday, October 11

What determines election outcomes?

- Vavreck, Lynn. 2009. *The Message Matters: The Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

8. campaign messages

Monday, October 18

How do candidates communicate with voters? How do the media convey campaign messages?

- Sellers, Patrick. 1998. "Strategy and Background in Congressional Campaigns." *American Political Science Review* 92(1):159-171.
- Sides, John. 2006. "The Origins of Campaign Agendas." *British Journal of Political Science* 36(3):407-36.
- Cox, Gary W. 1990. "Centripetal and Centrifugal Incentives in Electoral Systems." *American Journal of Political Science* 34: 903-935.
- Stone, Walter J., and Elizabeth N. Simas. 2010. "Candidate Valence and Ideological Positions in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 54: 371-388.
- Flowers, Julianne F., Audrey A. Haynes, Michael H. Crespin. 2003. "The Media, the Campaign, and the Message." *American Journal of Political Science* 47: 259-273.
- Hayes, Danny. Forthcoming. "The Dynamics of Agenda Convergence and the Paradox of Competitiveness in Presidential Campaigns." *Political Research Quarterly*.

9. media coverage of campaigns

Monday, October 25

How do the media cover campaigns? How does this coverage affect campaigns? How do voters respond?

- Just, Marion R., Ann N. Crigler, Dean E. Alger, Timothy E. Cook, Montague Kern, and Darrell M. West. 1996. *Crosstalk: Citizens, Candidates, and the Media in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

10. campaign events and campaign dynamics

Monday, November 1

What are the consequences of campaign events? How do campaigns play out across time?

- Stimson, James A. 2004. *Tides of Consent: How Public Opinion Shapes American Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4.
- Wlezien, Christopher, and Robert S. Erikson. 2002. "The Timeline of Presidential Election Campaigns." *Journal of Politics* 64:969-93.
- Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M., David Darmofal, and Christian A. Farrell. 2009. "The Aggregate Dynamics of Campaigns." *Journal of Politics* 71: 309-323.
- Kaplan, Noah, David K. Park, and Travis N. Ridout. 2006. "Dialogue in American Political Campaigns? An Examination of Issue Convergence in Candidate Television Advertising." *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 724-736.
- Alesina, Alberto, and Howard Rosenthal. 1989. "Partisan Cycles in Congressional Elections and the Macroeconomy." *American Political Science Review* 83: 373-398.

11. advertising strategies and their consequences

Monday, November 8

What kinds of advertising strategies do candidates employ, and how do campaign ads affect voters?

- Shaw, Daron R. 1999. "The Effect of TV Ads and Candidate Appearances on Statewide Presidential Votes, 1988-96." *American Political Science Review* 93(2):345-361.
- Freedman, Paul, Michael Franz, and Kenneth Goldstein. 2004. "Campaign Advertising and Democratic Citizenship." *American Journal of Political Science* 48:723-41.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, Shanto Iyengar, Adam Simon, and Nicholas Valentino. 1994. "Does Attack Advertising Demobilize the Electorate?" *American Political Science Review* 88:829-838.
- Lau, Richard R., Lee Sigelman, and Ivy Brown Rovner. 2007. "The Effects of Negative Political Campaigns: A Meta-Analytic Reassessment." *Journal of Politics* 69: 1176-1209.
- 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.

12. campaign effects: persuasion, priming, and learning

Monday, November 15

What explains campaign learning? How do campaigns influence how voters evaluate the candidates?

- 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.
- Bartels, Larry M. 2006. "Priming and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns." In Henry E. Brady and Richard Johnston, eds., *Capturing Campaign Effects*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Arceneaux, Kevin. 2005. "Do Campaigns Help Voters Learn? A Cross-National Analysis." *British Journal of Political Science* 36:159-173.
- Kahn, Kim Fridkin, and Patrick J. Kenney. 1997. "A Model of Candidate Evaluations in Senate Elections: The Impact of Campaign Intensity." *Journal of Politics* 59(4): 1173-1205.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, Edward G. Carmines, Jeffery J. Mondak, and Eric Zeemering. 2007. "Information, Activation, and Electoral Competition in the 2002 Congressional Elections." *J. of Politics* 69: 798-812.

Monday, November 22 Fall break: Class does not meet.

13. campaign effects: turnout and mobilization

Monday, November 29

What promotes voter turnout? How do campaigns animate voter involvement?

- Rosenstone, Steven J., and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. Chapter 6.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1992. "Political Parties and Electoral Mobilization: Political Structure, Social Structure, and the Party Canvass." *American Political Science Review* 86(1):70-86.
- Holbrook, Thomas, and Scott D. McClurg. 2005. "Presidential Campaigns and the Mobilization of Core Supporters." *American Journal of Political Science* 49: 689-703.
- Smith, Mark A. 2001. "The Contingent Effects of Ballot Initiatives and Candidate Races on Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 45:700-6.
- Hall, Melinda Gann. 2007. "Voting in State Supreme Court Elections: Competition and Context as Democratic Incentives." *Journal of Politics* 69: 1147-1159.

14. vote choice

Monday, December 6

How do people decide how to vote? What factors direct vote choice?

- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lewis-Beck, Michael S., William G. Jacoby, Helmut Norpoth, and Herbert F. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.