

Political Science 313

Campaigns and Elections

Fall 2016

Department of Political Science
Oregon State University

1 Instructor Information

Dr. Christopher Stout
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Office: Bexell 312
Office Hours: 11:00-12:00 M, W, Tr or by Apt

Class Location: Stag 262
Class Time 8:00-9:50
4 Credits

2 Course Description

Politics has been defined as the process of explaining who gets what, when, where, and how. While the answers to these questions vary significantly, in the United States the consensus is that the spoils go to the winner of elections and their supporters. To gain a better understanding of the elections process, this course will focus on how the rules of the game (the electoral system) influences who wins and who loses in American politics, who votes and why, who runs for office, and the role the media and money play in influencing elections.

Additionally, campaign consulting and campaign management is one of the fastest growing markets in the United States. One of the main goals in the course will be to prepare students to run a successful campaign for candidates running for political office. To accomplish this goal students in this course will learn how to mobilize voters, construct a successful media campaign, polling, and fund raising skills. Students will demonstrate their capabilities in this area in a final paper examining the campaigns of a 2016 Presidential, U.S. Senate, or Gubernatorial Candidate.

Finally, students in this class will learn skills that transcend the course's topic and can be used in their future careers. In particular, students in this course will learn how to think critically about social science research, learn how to formulate and analyze a research question, and improve their public speaking abilities.

3 Course Readings

This course's readings will be primarily drawn from two main sources, neither of which is a text book. The first source will be academic articles posted on Canvas. These second will be popular articles posted on the same site. Because the readings for each class are extremely manageable, students are required to complete all of the readings before each class.

4 Course Structure

Recent research has demonstrated both the strengths and limitations of a strict lecture format. While students learn a significant amount of information through hearing the analysis of professors,

a combination of lecture, discussion, active learning exercises, videos and student participation generally yields better learning outcomes for students. To ensure that students get the most out of this course, we will use a multi-faceted approach to learning which will include all of these features.

5 Assessment

In-Class Short Writing Assignments (10%)

To help students think critically about Campaigns and Elections and to improve their writing and communication skills, students will be asked to write down their answers (about a paragraph in length) to 2 to 4 question prompts given in each class. Students will be required to turn in 10 of their written responses and these will be graded simply as pass or fail. Each completed assignment is worth 1%. For every additional writing assignment students turn in (beyond the 10), they will earn a half of a percent extra credit toward their final exam grade. **For full credit, each question must be answered and they are due at the end of class. No late assignments will be accepted**

Midterm (25%-30%)

The midterm will test your knowledge of the first half of the course. The test will include a combination of multiple choice questions, short answer identifications, and a short essay prompt. The essay prompt will focus on ways to improve the electoral system in the United States.

Final Research Paper (35%)

One of the primary goals of this course is to train students to think like social scientists. To assess student's progress in this area, each student will write a 7-10 page paper examining the campaigns of a single 2016 Presidential, U.S. Senate, or Gubernatorial Candidate. In these papers, students will be asked to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in their candidates campaign for elected office and describe ways in which they would have improved their campaign.

To substantiate the claims of the author, students will present evidence of their candidate's shortcomings and demonstrate that their suggested changes would have yielded different results by citing empirical studies. Students will be graded on their ability to conduct quality research and provide convincing evidence for their claims.

The final paper will be due on November 30th, 2016

Final (25%-30%)

The final will test your knowledge of the second half of the course, with a few questions from the first half of the course. The test will include a combination of multiple choice questions and short answer identifications.

6 Course Policies

A Note on Academic Integrity

I find it unfortunate that instructors must include this section on the syllabus, but with a rise of electronic resources, academic dishonesty is a part of the reality in which we now function. Thus, I include a very short reminder here on the importance of maintaining academic integrity. Cheating in any form is prohibited and will result in an automatic fail for the course.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and Disability Access Services. (DAS) Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

Accessibility of Course Materials

All materials used in this course are accessible. If you require accommodations please contact Disability Access Services (DAS).

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a vendor statement certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

7 Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

Wednesday-September 21st Introduction and Syllabus

- *NO READING*

Monday-September 26th-The Science of Debating

Required Readings

- Schill, Dan, and Rita Kirk. "Courting the Swing Voter Real Time Insights Into the 2008 and 2012 US Presidential Debates." *American Behavioral Scientist* 58.4 (2014): 536-555.
- Matthew, Dylan. 2012. Do presidential Debates Usually Matter? Political Scientists Say No. *Monkey Cage: Washington Post*

The Rules of the Game: US Elections

Wednesday-September 28th Elections in the U.S. Constitution

Required Readings

- Federalist Papers 68 and 59
- Anti-Federalist Papers 72 and 7

Monday-October 3rd-Presidential Primaries

Required Readings

- Putnam, Josh. 2015. Everything you need to know about how the presidential primary works. *Washington Post*
- Sides, John. 2016. Everything you need to know about delegate math in the presidential primary *Washington Post*

Wednesday-October 5th The Electoral College

Required Readings

- Gelman, Andrew. Compared to national popular vote, the electoral college favors voters in small states (on average), not large states. *Monkey Cage: Washington Post*

Monday-October 10th Congressional Elections

Required Readings

- Brown, Adam R. "Voters Don't Care Much About Incumbency." *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 1.02 (2014): 132-143.
- Ingraham, Christopher. 2016 This is the Best Explanation of Gerrymandering You Will Ever See. *Monkey Cage: Washington Post*
- Sides, John. Gerrymandering is Not What's Wrong With American Politics *Monkey Cage:The Washington Post*

Wednesday-October 12th-How We Vote: Ballots, Polling Booths, and Registration

Required Readings

- Highton, Benjamin. "Voter registration and turnout in the United States." *Perspectives on Politics* 2.03 (2004): 507-515.

Monday-October 17th Who Runs for Office Predicting Candidate Emergence

Required Readings

- Fox, Richard L., Jennifer L. Lawless, and Courtney Feeley. "Gender and the Decision to Run for Office." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (2001): 411-435.
- Motel, Seth. Who Runs for Office. *Pew Research Center*

Wednesday-October 19th How Voters Decide

Required Readings

- Jacobson, Gary C. "How do campaigns matter?." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (2015): 31-47.
- Johnson, Betram et al How do Primary Voters Decide... *Monkey Cage: Washington Post*

Monday-October 24th Political Parties*Required Readings*

- Rae, Nicol C. "Be careful what you wish for: The rise of responsible parties in American national politics." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 10 (2007): 169-191.

Wednesday-October 26th The Media and Political Campaigns*Required Readings*

- None

Monday-October 31st-Midterm*Required Readings*

- None

Wednesday-November 2nd-Political Polarization*Required Readings*

- Layman, Geoffrey C., Thomas M. Carsey, and Juliana Menasce Horowitz. "Party polarization in American politics: Characteristics, causes, and consequences." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 9 (2006): 83-110.

How to Run a Campaign**Monday-November 7th-Mobilizing Turnout***Required Readings*

- Cox, Gary W. "Electoral Rules, Mobilization, and Turnout." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (2015): 49-68.

Wednesday-November 9th Raising the Funds to Run*Required Readings*

- Drutman, Lee. 2014. Why We Still Need to Worry About Money in Politics. *Monkey Cage: Washington Post*

Monday-November 14th Campaign Advertisements and Television*Required Readings*

- Goldstein, Kenneth, and Travis N. Ridout. "Measuring the effects of televised political advertising in the United States." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 7 (2004): 205-226.

Wednesday-November 16th Polling*Required Readings*

- Silver, Nate. Election Update Leave The LA Times Poll Alone *Fivethirtyeight.com*
- Gelman, Andrew. Every Latest Shift in the Polls Is News. But it Should Not Be *Monkey Cage: Washington Post*

Monday-November 21st Recap about 2016 Presidential Election*Required Readings*

- None

Wednesday-November 23rd-No Class Thanksgiving*Required Readings*

- None

Monday-November 28th Gender and Political Campaigns*Required Readings*

- Women Candidates and Their Campaigns. *Politicalparity.org*

Wednesday-November 30th Race and Political Campaigns*****FINAL PAPER DUE******Required Readings*

- Stout, Christopher T. Bringing Race Back in: Black Politicians, Deracialization, and Voting Behavior in the Age of Obama. University of Virginia Press, 2015. Conclusion: A Necessary Compromise.

Final Exam-Thursday December 8th at 6pm (MAY CHANGE)