

## POLITICAL SCIENCE 314: ELECTION CAMPAIGN PRACTICUM

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232 BSR, 313A

Office Hours: drop by W 2-4 pm

This course is designed for political nerds, junkies, and activists who want hands-on involvement in an electoral campaign this fall but would like to integrate that activity with a rigorous academic experience to yield deeper, broader, and more generalizable knowledge than you could gain from experience alone. In this course you will learn about elections and campaigns by participating in an electoral campaign (at least 5 hours a week) and framing and integrating that experience with critical reading of high quality research and journalism and investigation of current election-related data.

This course will

- expand your understanding of American campaigns and elections;
- improve your ability to be a critical consumer of election-related communications including journalism, campaign communications, and public opinion poll reports;
- develop your skills of integrating your personal political experience and observation with the findings of systematic and scholarly knowledge; and
- give you valuable experience in participating in serious, constructive, and civil discussions about politics across differences of belief, opinion, and commitment.

There are two phases to the course. In the pre-election period you will be very involved in a political campaign. During this period our work will revolve around critical topics required to understand what is going on as well as discussion of the ongoing campaigns and your experience. During election week we will make a transition: Following our review of the election outcomes, the class will devote one class period to discussing and choosing a set of topics to be covered for the remainder of the course. I will create a syllabus for the remainder of the course on the basis of that deliberative process.

### Requirements

***Class Attendance and Participation:*** All students are expected to attend all classes and come to class prepared, which means completing any assigned readings, activities, or other assignments. *If you suspect that participation in an 8:00 a.m. class is too challenging an expectation for you, reconsider whether this is the right class for you.* During the 8 or so classes after the election, the class will be divided into groups who will plan and run each class meeting.

During the pre-election period we will not meet for all class periods to recognize the large amount of work you will do in the campaigns and the fact that you should be watching the debates. But this also means there is no excuse for being unprepared for class or handing in assignments late.

Most of most class periods will be devoted to discussion, and all students are expected to remain engaged and participate in the full length of all class meetings – this means no use of the web or social media during class time that is unrelated to the current discussion. Not even under the table in your lap.

***Campaign Participation and Reporting:*** Every student is required to participate in a campaign or election-related organization at least *five* hours per week beginning by the end of the second week of classes through the week before the election. See the document, *Campaign Participation Requirement and Assistance* on the course website for further explanation. All students are required to keep a journal of your participation in the campaign on a weekly basis. You will submit your journal entries on the course website, which means that I can automatically read the entry and see when the assignment was completed. These entries will be visible only to the individual student and to me.

***PO314 Blog:*** Every student is required to take part in a class-wide blog posted on the course website and available to all participants in the course (only). *All students should submit at least one significant entry each week* (you can submit more). You may meet the minimum requirement either with a new topic or response to someone else. The entries should be thoughtful, well written (regular English, not twitter English or emoticons), and should address important issues, questions, or observations that come up in the course of your campaign participation, assigned reading, class discussion, or other serious news or information.

We will start a new blog each week; the blog week runs Tuesday, noon through Tuesday 11:59 a.m.; that is, the new blog week starts the afternoon before the first class each week. Blog discussion should be lively and even contentious, but it must be civil, intelligent, and informed. Your commentary should *not* be from the point of view of an advocate for one campaign or another, and it should not be mere partisan expression. This blog is meant to advance all of our knowledge about elections and campaigns, and to give you practice in civil discourse among politically engaged people. If you are unsure about whether an entry you plan to write is acceptable for the blog, or if you want to write things you would prefer not to share with the whole group, you may use the journal format to write privately to Professor Sapiro, but you must participate in the collective blog as specified.

Your blog participation will be graded through crowd-sourced assessment, and you will be required to participate in the collective assessment process. This means peers will assess each others' contributions over the course of the semester on how interesting and valuable their entries were.

***Final Paper:*** Every student will hand in a final paper that will integrate learning from the campaign participation, the discussion among class members about their experiences, and the research literature. The papers are due no later than Tuesday, December 13 at noon. You must submit a brief proposal for that paper no later than Monday, November 21 at noon.

Your paper should be about 10 pages in length and use proper research paper form, including complete and accurate bibliography and foot/endnotes. (I don't care which form you use as long as it is a standard one and you use it properly and consistently.)

Ten pp. is not a lot of space for discussion. You should focus very clearly on a question you want to answer or a challenging problem you want to analyze and get down to it. The paper should be an exercise through which you explore more deeply an *analytical* or *empirical* question related to electoral campaigns and elections. It should not be an opinion or advocacy piece that is aimed at supporting a particular candidate or party. If you are not sure you understand the difference, make sure you consult with the professor. Some possible approaches:

- Explore a research question of your choosing using high quality research literature. For example: What is the impact of negative advertising? What is the history of law and policy on campaign finance? What are "independent voters" and how do they make decisions? What is the role of race or religion or gender (etc.) in electoral politics? What is the role of social media in contemporary campaigns?
- Analyze the results of any 2016 electoral results using what we learn from high quality scholarly research on past elections and data-based analysis that is emerging after election day.
- Analyze the history of any past electoral campaign, its outcome, and significance.
- Develop a sophisticated case for change in a law or policy concerning elections or campaigns -- for example, concerning the structure or timing of primaries; campaign finance; campaign advertising; districting; voter requirements; the administration of voting (e.g. type and media of balloting, same-day registration, timing of balloting, super delegates, caucuses vs primaries, etc.). You cannot make a good argument without asking empirical questions about effects and bringing some scholarly research or high-quality data to bear on the question.
- Use survey research data set to do your own analysis on some important aspect of electoral public opinion or voting behavior. Your analysis should be informed by previous research in the area.
- Perform an analysis of a set of political advertisements to answer an interesting/important question about political advertising. Your analysis should be informed by previous research in the area.
- Pick a topic of your interest and I will provide you with a small collection of very high quality readings that lead to somewhat different conclusions, and you do an in-depth and analytical discussion of and launching from those readings.
- Draw a comparison between some aspect of elections and campaigns in the US, and the same aspect of elections and campaigns in another democracy or type of democratic electoral system.

You may do a joint final project with another student in the course. The paper should be double the size (for 2 authors, triple for 3, etc) and all co-authors will receive the same grade regardless of what each individual put into the project.

You may create a final project in a form other than a research paper – for example, a video or audio documentary, but only if you have real expertise in the alternative form, the point is analytical, and it truly is appropriate for the task. An example: a video on why students did and didn't participate in the election, or one on how people experience election day/evening and how they think back on that later. Please seek permission in order to take the alternative genre option.

Your **paper proposal** is due no later than Monday, November 21 at noon. Feel free to submit it as soon as you can -- that will give you more time to work on the paper. Your proposal should be brief -- no more than the equivalent of one page, 12-point font. It should include

- Tentative title of the paper.
- A one-paragraph description of the main question(s) or problem(s) your paper will address.
- A brief description of the major method(s) and types of sources you will use for your investigation.
- A brief statement about why this topic is worth pursuing.
- A list of any questions or problems for which you would like some help or advice.

To submit your paper proposal: Your paper should be composed in Word format with the document title, "YOURLASTNAME Paper Proposal Final" and submitted through the course website.

Your **final paper** is due no later than Tuesday, December 13 at noon. You may submit a draft for my consideration, but your draft must be submitted more than a week before your due date and you have to give me 2 days to get a chance to read your draft.

To submit your final paper: Your paper should be composed in Word format with the document title, "YOURLASTNAME Final Paper" and submitted to the course website.

### **Grading**

The weight of each element in the final grade:

- Final Paper (including 5% for the Final Paper Proposal): 30%
- Class Participation: 25%
- Blog Participation: 30%
- Campaign Participation/Journaling: 15%

If you believe that the assessment I made of a particular piece of work -- for example, the answer to an exam question, or a comment on your paper -- was a mistake, I may reassess the entire piece of work from scratch, which means the grade could go up, down, or stay the same. But I do grade very carefully.

Please note that your work will not be assessed by a machine. I reserve the right to use my discretion in assessing the quality of your work and achievements in the course.

### **Expectations**

**Your work should be submitted on time.** Plan now to make sure this happens without panic.

If you find that you will submit an assignment late, you must submit it with a written excuse. I will grade both the assignment and the excuse, and the value of the assignment can be

weighted down (only) by the quality of the excuse. "I was really busy" or "I had a lot of work" is not a good excuse. It is true of everyone else in class.

**Civility** is an essential ingredient in the process of learning in an academic environment, especially when the subject is as provocative, contentious, and occasionally uncomfortable as the topics that arise in the political and campaign world. Civility requires respect but *not* either being silent or silencing others. Conversations about contentious topics are not always very comfortable, nor should they be, but they must be respectful. Name calling, trolling, being quick to take offense, assuming one has "natural" knowledge that is better than other people's knowledge are all toxic to civility.

**Participation.** There are no pure observers in the classroom; everyone should participate.

**Academic Integrity.** *By remaining in the course you are tacitly agreeing to follow standard principles of academic integrity in this course.* Academic dishonesty is a serious offense because it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty among members of the community and defrauds those who may eventually depend upon our knowledge and integrity. Such dishonesty consists of cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. Examples of academic dishonesty include using someone else's words or ideas without proper documentation; copying some portion of your text from another source without proper acknowledgement of indebtedness; borrowing another person's specific ideas without documenting their source; turning in a paper written by someone else, an essay "service," or from a web site. *Any assignment that is generated in whole or part through academic dishonesty will be failed with no "do-overs."* If you think you may not understand what constitutes academic integrity or the lack of it, consult with me in advance. [Wording provided largely by Jeffrey Henriques years ago.] For the university policy on academic conduct, see <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>.

**Disabilities.** Students have a right to reasonable accommodations to take account of certain physical or cognitive disabilities and allow them to pursue success in their education at BU. Students who believe they require such accommodations must go through the formal process of application in a timely way. For more information, see <http://www.bu.edu/disability/policies-procedures/academic-accommodations/beginning-academic-program/>.

## Readings

Two books should be purchased or rented. All other readings required until the election are available on the web. Note that assigned readings after the election depend on what topics the class decides to cover.

Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations before and after Reform.* University of Chicago Press.

John Sides, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossman, Keena Lipsitz. 2015. *Campaigns and Elections: Rules, Reality, Strategy, Choice.* W.W. Norton.

## Office Hours and Contact

I have walk-in office hours Wednesdays, 2-4 pm in my office. Please let me know if you need to talk to me privately; otherwise, everyone who shows up is welcome to join in. Students can often learn from each others' questions.

I am nearly always available by email and I respond quickly, but be patient and considerate. I want to meet with all students in the course individually, so please find excuses to come by.

### **Week by Week Agenda and Preparation**

(Note: Watching the presidential and vice presidential debates is required and will be considered "class time.")

#### **Wed 9/7 – Fri 9/9: The Course: An Introduction & the Weirdest Nomination Season in ... Forever: Recap**

Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations before and After Reform*. Chicago University Press.

*Optional:* Commentary on this book in the context of the 2016 primary season:

Nate Silver. 2016. "The Republican party may be failing: What *The Party Decides* could get wrong about Donald Trump and the GOP." *Five Thirty-Eight*, 1/25.

<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-republican-party-may-be-failing/>.

Daniel W. Drezner. 2016. "The easy test for 'The Party Decides' suddenly doesn't look so easy." *Washington Post*. 1/26.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2016/01/26/the-easy-test-for-the-party-decides-suddenly-doesnt-look-so-easy/>

Steve Kolowich. 2016. "The life of 'The Party Decides.'" 5/16/16. <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Life-of-The-Party/236483>

Danielle Kurtzleben. 2016. "Celebrities, lies and outsiders: How this election surprised one political scientist." New Hampshire Public Radio, 6/21/16.

<http://www.npr.org/2016/06/21/482357936/celebrities-lies-and-outsiders-how-this-election-surprised-one-political-scienti>

#### **Wed 9/14: Some People Say That Campaigns Don't Much Matter**

*Campaigns and Elections* Ch. 13 "Voter choice."

Thomas Holbrook, "Forecasting US Presidential Elections, *Oxford Handbook*, Ch. 19 (346-71)

Henry E. Brady, Richard Johnston, and John Sides, "The Study of Political Campaigns," in Brady and Johnston, eds. *Capturing Campaign Effects* (University of Michigan Press, 2006), <http://www.press.umich.edu/pdf/0472099213-ch1.pdf> .

Gary C. Jacobson. 2015. "How do campaigns matter?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 18:31-47.

#### **Fri 9/16: Understanding Public Opinion Polling**

On Wed I will introduce the process and issues of survey research and polling.

Preparation: Spend some time looking at the links for Polling and Data, exploring not just current polling on the major candidates, but discussions of the polling results and methods.

The Roper Center, "Polling Fundamentals." <http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/support/polling-fundamentals/>

The Roper Center, "Analyzing Polls," <http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/support/analyzing-polls/>

Nate Silver, "How we're forecasting the primaries. (And why we might be totally wrong)." *FiveThirtyEight*, 1/12/16. <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-we-are-forecasting-the-2016-presidential-primary-election/> [How Silver's poll aggregation works]

Nate Silver, "The state of the polls, 2016." *FiveThirtyEight*, 6/2/16. <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-state-of-the-polls-2016/>

Nate Silver, "FiveThirtyEight's pollster ratings." *FiveThirtyEight*, 6/2/16. <http://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/pollster-ratings/>

Carl Bialik. "Why the polls missed Bernie Sander's Michigan upset." *FiveThirtyEight*, 5/9/16. <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-the-polls-missed-bernie-sanders-michigan-upset/>.

Harry Enten. "Gallup gave up. Here's why that sucks." *FiveThirtyEight*, 10/7/15. <http://fivethirtyeight.com/datalab/gallup-gave-up-heres-why-that-sucks/> .

Jeff Stein. 2016. "Political scientists have found the weird reason polls bounce around wildly during conventions." *Vox*, 8/1. <http://www.vox.com/2016/8/1/12341802/polling-clinton-trump-winning>.

American Association for Public Opinion Research, "Election Polling Resources," <http://www.aapor.org/Education-Resources/Election-Polling-Resources.aspx> .

**Wed 9/21 - Fri. 9/23: The "Base:" Where's the Party? Who's the Party? What Does it Do?**  
*Campaigns and Elections*, Ch.6. "Political parties."

Herrnson, Paul S. 2009. "The Roles of Party Organizations, Party-Connected Committees, and Party Allies in Elections." *The Journal of Politics* 71(04): 1207–24

**Mon 9/26, 9:00 p.m.: First Presidential Debate**

**Wed 9/28: Campaign Strategy**

*Campaigns and Elections*, Ch.5. "Modern campaign strategies," 10 "Congressional campaigns," and 11 "State and local campaigns."

Brendan Nyhan and J.M. Montgomery. 2015. "Connecting the candidates: Consultant networks and the diffusion of campaign strategy in American congressional elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 59: 292–308.  
 doi: 10.1111/ajps.12143.

Seth Masket, John Sides, and Lynn Vavreck. 2016. "The ground game in the 2012 presidential election." *Political Communication* 33:169-87.

Andrew O. Ballard, D. Sunshine Hillygus and Tobias Konitzer. 2016. "Campaigning online: Web display ads in the 2012 presidential campaign." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 49:414-419. doi:10.1017/S1049096516000780.

**Fri. 9/30: No class**

**Tues 10/4, 9:00 p.m.: Vice Presidential Debate**

**Wed 10/5: Continue Discussion of Strategy and Review of the Debates Thus Far**

**Fri. 10/7 : Money in Politics**

*Campaigns and Elections*, Ch.4

Douglas L. Kriner and Andrew Reeves, "The Influence of Federal Spending on Presidential Elections." *American Political Science Review* 106 (May, 2012). (Available at *Readings & Documents*)

Wendy L. Hansen, Michael S. Rocca, and Brittany Leigh Ortiz. 2015. "The effects of *Citizen's United* on corporate spending in the 2012 presidential election." *The Journal of Politics* 77 (2) 535-545.

And in case you want to read the original: *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 50, 130 S. Ct. 876, 175 L. Ed. 2d 753, 187 LRRM 2961 (2010) [2010 BL 15350] <http://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/citizens-united-v-federal-election-commission/>

**Sun 10/9, 9:00 p.m.: Presidential Debate**

**Wed 10/12: No Class**

**Fri 10/14: Political Communication Strategies: Campaign Advertising, the Media Campaign, and News**

*Campaigns and Elections*, Ch.8, "Media."

John G. Geer. 2012. "The News Media and the Rise of Negativity in Presidential Campaigns." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 45:422-427  
doi:10.1017/S1049096512000492. (available in *Readings & Documents*)

Virginia Sapiro, Katherine Cramer Walsh, Patricia Strach, and Valerie Hennings. 2011. "Gender, context, and television advertising: A comprehensive analysis of 2000 and 2002 House races." *Political Research Quarterly* 6: 107-120.

*The Living Room Candidate: Presidential Campaign Commercials, 1952-2012*.  
<http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/>

Daniel J. Hopkins. 2016. "One language, two meanings: Partisanship and responses to Spanish." *Political Communication* 31:421-45.

Yanna Krupnikov and Spencer Piston. 2015. "Accentuating the negative: Candidate race and campaign strategy." *Political Communication* 32 (1): 152-73.

**Wed, 10/19: No Class Today**

**9:00 p.m.: Presidential Debate**

**Fri 10/21: The Impact of Electoral Political Communication**

Lasse Lauststen and Michael Bag Petersen. 2016. "Winning faces vary by ideology: How nonverbal source cues influence election and communication success in politics." *Political Communication* 33 (2): 188-211.

Ted Brader. 2005. "Striking a responsive chord: How political ads motivate and persuade voters by appealing to emotions." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): pp. 388-405.

Larry M. Bartels. 2014. "Remembering to forget: A note on the duration of campaign advertising effects." *Political Communication* 31 (4): 532-544.

## **Wed 10/26 : Turnout and Voter Participation**

*Campaigns and Elections*, Ch. 12 “Voter participation.”

Michael P. McDonald. 2010. “American Voter Turnout in Historical Perspective.” In Jan Leighley, ed. *American Elections and Political Behavior*. New York: Oxford, pp.125-43.

Keith G. Bentele and Erin E. O'Brien. 2013. “Jim Crow 2.0? Why states consider and adopt restrictive voter access policies.” *Perspective on Politics* 11:1088-1116. doi:10.1017/S1537592713002843.

Stacy G. Ulbig and Tamara Waggener. 2011. “Getting Registered and Getting to the Polls: The Impact of Voter Registration Strategy and Information Provision on Turnout of College Students.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44:544-551. doi:10.1017/S1049096511000643 ((available in *Readings & Documents*)

Robert E. Goodin and James Mahmud Rice. 2009. “Waking Up in the Poll Booth.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7:901-910. doi:10.1017/S1537592709991873 (available in *Readings & Documents*)

**Fri 10/28:**

## **Wed 11/2-Friday 11/4: Topics Pertaining to the End of the Campaign**

Readings tba depending on what is happening.

On Friday be prepared to discuss and defend your predictions for next week.

**Tuesday 11/8: ELECTION DAY: DON'T FORGET TO VOTE IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO ALREADY!**

**Wednesday 11/9: Analyzing the 2016 Outcomes**

**Friday 11/11: Group Discussion: Planning the Syllabus for the Remainder of the Semester**

**Remaining Class Dates:**

**11/16, 11/18, 11/30, 12/2, 12/7: To Be Determine by Class Discussion**

**Monday 11/21 @ noon: Paper proposal due**

**Friday 12/9: Summary Discussion: Now that they have been elected..... what?**

Further: Assume that there is a final exam in this course, although there isn't. Please develop one superb essay final exam question and be prepared to discuss it and defend its excellence as a final exam question.

**Tuesday 12/13 @noon: Final Paper Due**

Version 9/1/16