

**CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS**  
POLS 3037  
Fall 2018

Classroom: Brewster C-206  
Class time: Mon. and Wed., 2 to 3:15 p.m.  
Office hours: Tues., Thurs., and Fri. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.,  
or by appointment

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**COURSE OVERVIEW AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Campaigns and elections are the cornerstone of American democracy. In the absence of free and fair elections, there can be no government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Respect for popular rule in the United States is reflected in the fact that it has more elections for more officials for public offices than any other nation in the world. The purpose of this course is to examine the key issues, questions, and controversies that surround the study of campaigns and elections in the United States. Subjects include:

- (1) the rules that govern U.S. elections, including voting rights, campaign finance laws, the nomination process of the two major parties, the Electoral College, the single-member-plurality system, and ballot access for minor-party candidates;
- (2) the decisions that confront candidates, consultants, and other campaign professionals, including the reasons behind running for public office, the choice to “go negative” against an opponent, and how to handle the press during times of scandal;
- (3) voting behavior (who votes and why, and how voters decide which candidates to cast ballots for), the advantages of incumbency and celebrity, and theories of mid-term congressional election outcomes (surge and decline, negative voting, balance, and referendum theories);
- (4) comparisons of campaigns for federal office with those for state and local office, as well as the “Americanization” of campaigns waged in other nations; and
- (5) the methods and accuracy of forecasting elections, and the related topic of whether campaigns matter.

By the end of the course, you should be able to demonstrate factual, applied, and conceptual knowledge of the subjects covered in the course. I will expect you to be able to identify and define terms; interpret the significance of important events; apply political principles to hypothetical scenarios; compare and contrast political ideas and concepts; construct solutions to political problems; and assess the strengths and weaknesses of various different political arguments and perspectives. Please note that I will not share my partisan affiliation to anyone in the class and pledge to present both sides of every political argument as fairly as possible. My larger and ultimate learning objective in this course is to teach each of you not what to think, but rather how to think about issues concerning campaigns and elections.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

Classes begin with a lecture on the topic listed in the course outline. You should come to class prepared to ask questions and to participate in class discussions. Keeping up with the assigned weekly readings and attending class regularly throughout the semester will allow for more informed classroom dialogue and for more interesting debates, as well as improve your ability to contribute to and learn from the class interactions. I also encourage everyone to read a newspaper, watch the television news, and follow current events. Doing so will broaden your interest in this course and will help you better understand the importance of the material we cover. To incorporate visual learning in the classroom, and to help generate additional thought on the subjects covered in the course, I often show video material in class. This includes televised news footage of various historical events, documentaries, and political films. On occasion, I may select documentaries and films that have an “R” rating. Please see me if you have any moral, religious, political, or other objections to viewing documentaries or films with an “R” rating.

## READINGS

Required Readings: (1) *Campaigns and Elections*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., by John Sides, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossman, and Keena Lipsitz (W.W. Norton, 2018); and (2) selected readings available on Blackboard.

Optional Readings: (1) *Chasing Hillary: Ten Years, Two Presidential Campaigns, and One Intact Glass Ceiling* by Amy Chozick (HarperCollins, 2018); and (2) *Conventional Wisdom and American Elections: Exploding Myths, Exploring Misconceptions* by Jody C Baumgartner and Peter L. Francia (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

## EVALUATION

Your final grade in the course is based on your class attendance, and your performance on two exams and a final exam or optional research paper. The weight assigned to each is:

- (1) Exam 1 on September 26 = 25% of your overall grade.
- (2) Exam 2 on November 19 = 25% of your overall grade.
- (3) You have the option of choosing to submit a 12-page paper due on December 3 or to take the final exam on December 10. The paper/exam is worth 30% of your overall grade.
- (4) Class attendance is worth the remaining 20% of your overall grade.

Course averages will be converted to letter grades using the scale below:

Course Average	Grade	Course Average	Grade
93 and above =	A	73 to 76 =	C
90 to 92 =	A-	70 to 72 =	C-
87 to 89 =	B+	67 to 69 =	D+
83 to 86 =	B	63 to 66 =	D
80 to 82 =	B-	60 to 62 =	D-
77 to 79 =	C+	Below 60 =	F

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Class attendance is mandatory. I will circulate an attendance sign-in sheet at the beginning of each lecture. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the attendance sheet if you are present in class. If you arrive excessively late to class or if you leave class early, you will receive only partial credit for attendance. Your class attendance grade will be based on the percentage of classes that you attend (e.g., a student who attends every class will earn a 100; a student who attends half of the classes will earn a 50, etc.). Students who are active participants during class discussions will receive a bonus point added to their overall course grade.

## **EXAM ATTENDANCE**

Failure to be present for any of the scheduled exams will result in an automatic “0.” On all exam dates, please come prepared with an exam booklet and a pen. If you cannot attend the exam, you must contact me at least 30 minutes before I have administered the test. I will grant a make-up exam only for circumstances that I deem extraordinary or for circumstances that meet university guidelines. If you miss the exam because of an illness, you are still required to contact me before the exam. You must also present me with proper verification (see below).

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES AND VERIFICATION**

I will excuse absences, including those on exam dates, for the following reasons: (1) participation in an authorized activity as an official representative of the university (this includes athletic events, university-sponsored performances, or academic conferences); (2) participation in other activities deemed by the Dean of Students to warrant an excused absence; (3) an extreme personal emergency; (4) the death of an immediate family member; (5) participation in a religious holiday; and (6) health reasons such as an incapacitating or contagious illness or unavoidable surgery. If your absence meets any of the criteria mentioned above, I will need you to present me with some form of verification no later than one week after the absence if you wish to have your absence excused. Some acceptable forms of verification include the following: a note from Student Health Services; a note from a doctor or medical office; an obituary; or official documentation from the athletic department indicating your travel schedule. In the event of severe weather, please call the University Emergency Telephone Number at 252-328-0062 or visit the ECU emergency alert website (<http://www.ecu.edu/alert>) to check on whether the university has canceled classes.

## **CLASSROOM RULES**

The classroom is a learning environment. I expect all students to observe some basic rules of courtesy and respect, which include the following: (1) arrive to class on time and do not leave before class is dismissed; (2) do not pack up your things early; it is disruptive to others around you; (3) turn off cell phones; (4) no laptop use during video screenings; (5) no reading the newspaper or listening to music through headphones during class; (6) no sleeping during class; (7) no carrying on private conversations with others in the classroom while someone else is speaking; and (8) please be courteous to your classmates and respectful of your fellow students' views, comments, and questions. Classroom discussion is meant to allow us to hear a variety of viewpoints, and this can only happen if we respect each other and our differences. Failure to follow these rules will negatively affect your class attendance and participation grade. Repeated or extreme offenses could result in your expulsion from the class.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education shared by all at East Carolina University. Consistent with this principle, I expect all students to complete their academic work honestly. I will not tolerate any student's involvement in cheating, plagiarism, falsifying work, submitting the same assignment for more than one course, or other acts that would be in violation of the university's academic integrity standards. If I become aware of or suspect a potential academic integrity violation, I will meet with the student under suspicion following the procedures outlined in the university's academic integrity policy. Should I determine that an academic integrity violation has occurred, I reserve the right to assign a grade penalty up to and including an "F" for the assignment or the course. If it also comes to my attention that the student involved in such an incident has had a prior academic integrity violation, or if there are other aggravating circumstances, I will refer the case directly to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Should the Academic Integrity Board determine that the accused student committed an academic integrity violation, the penalties, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, may include a grade penalty and up to suspension from the university. For more information, please see: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/currentfacultymanual/part6section2.pdf>.

## **E-MAIL**

E-mail is a valuable tool for me to communicate announcements and information to the entire class. Please check your ECU e-mail at least once a day (weekends excluded). E-mail is also a good way for you to contact me. Please feel free to use e-mail to set up one-on-one meetings with me if my office hours conflict with your schedule. If you have specific questions about the course material, I am happy to answer them through e-mail; however, I would encourage you to set up a one-on-one meeting with me if you are having general difficulty with your understanding of the course material. Please do not use e-mail to request information already listed in the syllabus, such as an exam date or the weight assigned to a specific exam.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

I have two offices located in the Brewster Building, Room A-101 and Room D-303. Typically, I work from A-101 in the morning and D-303 in the afternoon. My office hours are from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. If you cannot meet with me during my office hours, please see me after class or contact me by telephone or e-mail to schedule an appointment. I am also happy to have lunch with anyone on Friday who wishes to join me. If you wish to schedule a lunch, please contact me at least one day in advance.

## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 to verify the disability before any accommodations can occur. The telephone number is 252-737-1016.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### **Week 1. History of American Democracy and the Electoral Process**

August 20, 2018. Overview of the course and the American electoral process

August 22, 2018. The struggle for voting rights

- Required reading for Week 1: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapters 1-2
- Video: *10 Days That Unexpectedly Changed America: Freedom Summer*

### **Week 2. Candidate-Centered Campaigns and the Presidential Nomination Process**

August 27, 2018. Changes in campaigning for public office

August 29, 2018. Rules of the presidential nomination system

- Required reading for Week 2: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 3, and “The Strategic Context” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Assassination and Chaos: The Death of Robert Kennedy and the '68 Convention*

### **Week 3. The Electoral College and the Single Member Plurality System**

September 3, 2018. NO CLASS (Labor Day)

September 5, 2018. The Electoral College and its impact on campaign strategy

- Required reading for Week 3: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 10, and “The Electoral College” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Gerrymandering*

### **Week 4. Campaign Finance Laws and Outside Money in Elections**

September 10, 2018. Overview of federal campaign finance laws

September 12, 2018. Interest groups

- Required reading for Week 4: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapters 4 and 7
- Video: Selected video clips and campaign advertisements

### **Week 5. Political Parties and Minor Party Candidates**

September 17, 2018. Political parties

September 19, 2018. Campaigning for office as a minor-party candidate

- Required reading for Week 5: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 6, and “The Case for a Multiparty System” and “In Defense of the Two-Party System” (Blackboard)
- Video: *An Unreasonable Man*

### **Week 6. Modern Campaign Strategies**

September 24, 2018. Voter targeting strategies

September 26, 2018. Exam #1

- Required reading for Week 6: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 5
- Video: *...So Goes the Nation*

## **Week 7. The Media**

October 1, 2018. Media coverage of campaigns

October 3, 2018. Twitter and free media

- Required reading for Week 7: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 8, and “Free Media and Twitter in the 2016 Presidential Election” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Journeys with George*

## **Week 8. The Professionalization of Campaigns**

October 8, 2018. NO CLASS (Fall Break)

October 10, 2018. Roles and responsibilities of the campaign team

- Required reading for Week 8: “The Campaign Team and Volunteer Organization” (Blackboard)
- Video: *The War Room*

## **Week 9. Congressional Campaigns**

October 15, 2018. Running for the U.S. House

October 17, 2018. Running for the U.S. Senate

- Required reading for Week 9: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 10
- Video: *Taking on the Kennedy's*

## **Week 10. Voter Participation and Mid-Term Election Theories**

October 22, 2018. Presidential voter turnout compared to mid-term voter turnout

October 24, 2018. Mid-term election theories

- Required reading for Week 10: “*Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 12, and Surge and Decline,” “Presidential Popularity and Negative Voting,” and “Congressional Elections: Why Some Incumbent Candidates Lose” (Blackboard)

## **Week 11. State and Local Elections**

October 29, 2018. The decision to run for state and local office

October 31, 2018. Outsider campaign versus the incumbent campaign

- Required reading for Week 11: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 11
- Video: *Street Fight*

## **Week 12. Importing American Campaigns Abroad**

November 5, 2018. Why American campaign techniques have spread around the world

November 7, 2018. Impact of the “Americanization” of campaigning for office

- Required reading for Week 12: “The Worldwide Proliferation of American Campaign Techniques” and “There Goes the Neighborhood” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Our Brand is Crisis*

### **Week 13. Polling**

November 12, 2018. How polls are conducted

November 14, 2018. How to evaluate good polls from bad polls

- Required reading for Week 13: “Analyzing and Interpreting Polls” (Blackboard)
- Video: Selected video clips

### **Week 14. Exam and Thanksgiving Break**

November 19, 2018. Exam #2

November 21, 2018. NO CLASS (Thanksgiving break)

### **Week 15. Forecasting Elections**

November 26, 2018. Punditry versus forecasting

November 28, 2018. Guest speaker

- Required reading for Week 15: “Are You Smarter Than a Television Pundit?” and “Economic Pessimism and Political Punishment” (Blackboard)
- Video: Selected video clips

### **Week 16. Assessing American Democracy**

December 3, 2018. Debating reform proposals

**\* 12-page paper is due.**

- Required reading for Week 16: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 14

### **Week 17 (December 10). Exam #3**

Your final exam (Exam #3) will cover all material from Weeks 1-16. The exam is scheduled from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. If you submitted a paper on December 3, you do not need to take the final exam.

## 12-PAGE PAPER ASSIGNMENT

The book, *Chasing Hillary: Ten Years, Two Presidential Campaigns, and One Intact Glass Ceiling*, provides a reporter's perspective of covering the 2008 and 2016 presidential campaigns of Hillary Clinton. After reading *Chasing Hillary*, what major factors does the author, Amy Chozick, suggest played a critical role in Clinton's two defeats? Please use specific examples from the book. Based on your reading of the book and your own independent analysis, do you think Donald Trump "won" the 2016 election, or do you believe that Clinton "lost" the 2016 election? Or, alternatively, was the outcome of the election outside of the control of the candidates and their campaigns? Please defend your position using information covered in the course readings and lectures. In addition, I expect all papers to utilize outside material, including election statistics, polling data, and any relevant research on campaigns and elections from academic sources. An "A" paper will be based on how well you defend your arguments with supporting materials. The final paper is due on December 3.

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### *Tips for Preparing the Paper:*

- The best outside sources are academic books and journal articles (e.g., *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, etc.). To earn a grade higher than a "D," your paper should include a minimum of five different academic sources.
- Please note that any papers without citations and/or a bibliography are guilty of plagiarism. These papers will receive an **automatic "F"** and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.
- ALL PAPERS MUST FOLLOW THE APSA STYLE MANUAL FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE. The basics of the APSA Style Manual for Political Science can be downloaded at: <https://www.csuchico.edu/lref/pols/APSA.pdf>.
- All papers should be double-spaced with one-inch margins in Times New Roman font (please use a 12-point font size). Page numbers also should be included.
- A well-written paper requires a thesis. You should state your thesis in the beginning or introduction of the paper. Readers should have a good idea of what the entire paper will show by the end of the second page or earlier.
- The introduction should tell the reader what exactly you are going to say in the paper. The introduction also should arouse the interest of the reader.
- The body of the paper should provide evidence that convinces the reader of your central argument. Citations from books, articles, and other sources are necessary to make your argument as convincing as possible.
- The conclusion should summarize your major arguments and consider any implications related to your thesis. It also should tie together your central points in a coherent manner.