CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS
POLS 3037
Fall 2014

Classroom: Brewster C-101
Class time: Wed., 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Office hours: Tues. and Thurs. from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Peter L. Francia
Office: Brewster A-105
Telephone: 252-328-6126
E-Mail: franciap@ecu.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW

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.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Classes begin with a lecture on the topic listed in the course outline. Everyone should come to class prepared to ask questions and to contribute to class discussions. The best classes are those with an interactive classroom environment. Keeping up with the assigned weekly readings and attending class regularly throughout the semester will allow for more informed classroom discussions and for more interesting debates, as well as improve your ability to contribute to and learn from the class interactions. To help generate additional thought and discussion on the subjects covered in the course, I will show video material in class followed by a short writing assignment. The video material will include televised news footage of various historical events and documentary films. Please feel free to ask questions during class or to raise any subjects for discussion from the lectures, readings, or videos. A classroom with open discussion creates a learning environment that should challenge and engage you to think critically about the topics presented and the questions raised in this course.
READINGS


EVALUATION

Your final grade in the course will be based on class attendance, class participation, and your performance on various in-class assignments, two exams, and a research paper/final exam. The weight assigned to each is:

(1) Exam 1 on October 1 = 20% 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 17. The paper/exam is worth 30% of your overall grade. Please note that if you do not submit your paper by the December 3 deadline, then you will have to take the final exam on December 17. No extensions will be granted for the paper assignment.

(4) In-class writing assignments = 15% of your overall grade.

(5) Class attendance is worth the remaining 10% of your overall grade.

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

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<tr>
<th>Course Average</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 and above</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>73 to 76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>90 to 92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>70 to 72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87 to 89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>67 to 69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83 to 86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>63 to 66</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 to 82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>60 to 62</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77 to 79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
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IN-CLASS WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

At the end of each class, you will be required to write a short two-page essay that will be graded as “pass” or “fail.” Those earning a grade of “pass” will receive 1 point. Please come to class prepared with a pen or pencil and paper to write your essay. There will be a total of 12 assignments. I will drop your two lowest grades, leaving 10 assignments for a maximum of 10 points. The grade you receive for this portion of your overall grade is based on the percentage of points you earn out of 10 (i.e., 10 points = 100%, 9 points = 90%, 8 points = 80%, etc.).
CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

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 RULES AND POLICIES

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 or pencil. 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; and (5) participation in a religious holiday. You must present 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: 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.

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 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.
CLASSROOM RULES

The classroom is a learning environment. I expect all students to observe some basic rules of courtesy, 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 eating during class; (6) no reading the newspaper or listening to music through headphones during class; (7) no sleeping during class; (8) no carrying on private conservations with others in the classroom while someone else is speaking; and (9) 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.

INFORMATION ABOUT UNIVERSITY CLOSINGS

If you have questions about a possible school closing due to severe weather or other reasons, please call the University Emergency Telephone Number at 252-328-0062 or visit the ECU emergency alert website (http://www.ecu.edu/alert).

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.

APPOINTMENTS

My office is located in the Brewster Building, Room A-105. My office hours are from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday. If you cannot meet with me during office hours, please see me after class or contact me by telephone or e-mail to schedule an appointment.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (August 27). The Struggle for Voting Rights and the Importance of Elections
- Readings: Campaigns and Elections, chapter 1
- Video: 10 Days That Unexpectedly Changed America: Freedom Summer

Week 2 (September 3). Primaries and the Evolution of the Presidential Nomination Process
- Readings: Campaigns and Elections, chapter 5
- Video: Assassination and Chaos: The Death of Robert Kennedy and the ’68 Convention

Week 3 (September 10). The Electoral College and the Single Member Plurality System
- Readings: “The Electoral College” (Blackboard) and Campaigns and Elections, chapter 2
- Video: Gerrymandering
Week 4 (September 17). Campaign Finance Laws and Outside Money in Elections
- Readings: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapters 3 and 6
- Video: Selected video clips and campaign advertisements

Week 5 (September 24). Ballot Access and the Rules for Minor Party Candidates
- Readings: “The Case for a Multiparty System” and “In Defense of the Two-Party System” (Blackboard)
- Video: *An Unreasonable Man*

Week 6 (October 1). Exam #1

Week 7 (October 8). Consultants and the Professionalization of Campaigns
- Readings: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 4
- Video: *Boogie Man: The Lee Atwater Story*

Week 8 (October 15). The Media, Press Relations, and Rapid Response
- Readings: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 7
- Video: *The War Room*

Week 9 (October 22). Campaign Strategies and Voting Behavior
- Readings: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapters 8-9
- Video: *...So Goes the Nation*

Week 10 (October 29). Mid-Term Election Theories and Incumbency Advantages
- Readings: “Surge and Decline,” “Presidential Popularity and Negative Voting,” and “Congressional Elections: Why Some Incumbent Candidates Lose” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Can Mr. Smith Get to Washington Anymore?*

Week 11 (November 5). State and Local Elections
- Readings: “State and Local Campaigns” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Street Fight*

Week 12 (November 12). Importing American Campaigns Abroad
- Readings: “The Worldwide Proliferation of American Campaign Techniques” and “There Goes the Neighborhood” (Blackboard)
- Video: *Our Brand is Crisis*

Week 13 (November 19). Exam #2

Week 14 (November 26). No Class: Thanksgiving Break
Week 15 (December 3). Forecasting Elections

- Readings: *Campaigns and Elections*, chapter 10; and “Economic Expectations and Election Outcomes” and “Incumbency, National Conditions, and the 2012 Presidential Election” (Blackboard)
- Guest speaker

* 12-page paper is due.

Week 16 (December 10). No Class: Reading Week

Week 17 (December 17). Exam #3

Your final exam (Exam #3) will cover all material from Weeks 1-15, including the book, *Double Down: Game Change 2012*. The exam is scheduled from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Brewster C-101. If you submitted a paper on December 3, you do not need to take the final exam.
12-PAGE PAPER ASSIGNMENT

The book, *Double Down: Game Change 2012*, provides an insiders’ perspective of the 2012 presidential election. After reading *Double Down*, what major factors do the authors suggest played a critical role in the outcome of the election? Please use specific examples from the book. Based on your reading of the book and your own independent analysis, do you think Obama “won” the election, or do you believe that Romney “lost” the 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 APSA Style Manual for Political Science can be downloaded at: http://citesource.trincoll.edu/apsa/apsa.html.

- 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.