

POLS 322: American Parties and Elections

Spring 2019

Tuesday/Thursday 4:00-5:15 p.m.

407 Ford Hall

Professor: Adam Enders

Office: 105 Ford Hall

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-3:00 p.m. (or by appointment)

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Course Description

This course will provide a broad overview of the structure, effects, and general nature of American political parties, campaigns, and elections. Topics we will consider range from formal election rules and regulations to messaging and advertising tactics, and from party organization to voter mobilization. Students will also learn about the role of major players – including candidates, parties, interest groups, donors, and the media – in campaign events and the construction of strategies. The ultimate goal of the course is for students to emerge with a foundational sense not only of the details of the many components of political campaigns and elections, but of how these components interact to influence voters and, ultimately, election outcomes.

In order to accomplish this goal, we will take a scientific approach to our investigation of the aforementioned topics. Together, we will ask whether campaign advertisements really have an effect on voter turnout or public opinion, consider what role the media plays in shaping the central debates of campaigns, and weigh the effects of discussions of public policy issues versus ones centered on symbolic appeals to emotions and identities on vote choice. At the end of the course, students will be able to competently and completely discuss when, how, why, and to what extent campaigns “matter” for modern day elections and politics, in general.

Course Materials

We will primarily be using the textbook listed below. This is the only text that students are required to have regular access to.

Campaigns & Elections (3rd Edition). Sides, John, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossmann, and Keena Lipsitz. 2018. W.W. Norton. ISBN: 978-0393640533.

Note that during some weeks textbook information will be supplemented by additional journal articles or book chapters. All of this supplementary is available via the course Blackboard webpage. See the course schedule below for details about this material.

Course Requirements

Participation: Since the class is a relatively small one, regular participation will be important in ensuring lively and productive meetings. Students are expected to regularly contribute to class discussions, in-class simulations and exercises, and attend class. While attendance will not be formally recorded, systematic absences and lack of participation will be obvious in such a small class, and those absences will be reflected in the participation component of the student's final grade.

Exercises and Quizzes: Quizzes designed to test students' comprehension of the material assigned for that class meeting will occasionally be administered at the very beginning of class. Quizzes will not be announced prior to class, and absent students or those arriving to class late will not be allowed to make them up. Students will also frequently engage in group activities in class. There will be many opportunities to engage with fellow classmates and earn points.

Discussion Papers: Students will be required to complete 2 short discussion papers throughout the course of the semester. The goal of these papers is to apply the systematic, scientific knowledge we learn about campaigns and elections to the "real world" of campaigns and elections. Students will be provided with more details about the expectations for these papers after some material has been covered. Papers should be between 3-4 double-spaced pages in length.

Midterm and Final Exams: The exams will consist of both multiple choice and short answer questions. The final exam is cumulative. That is, it will cover material from the entire semester, not just the second half of the course.

Additional Information and Expectations

Respect in the Classroom: Because of the nature of partisanship and the values that underwrite it, tensions can sometimes be created throughout the course of class discussions. Students must be particularly mindful of their own political predispositions and respectful of the fact that others may not share their views so that class meetings can be as productive as possible. Students should also note that the professor will do his best present material objectively and respectfully. If students have any concerns regarding this general policy, or feel that they are not being respected in the classroom, they are strongly encouraged to contact the professor directly.

Grades

Distribution

Participation	10%
Exercises & Quizzes	20%
Discussion Papers (2)	30% (15% each)
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

Scale

94-100 = A	75-78 = C+
90-93 = A-	71-74 = C
86-89 = B+	68-70 = C-
82-85 = B	60-67 = D
79-81 = B-	60 and below = F

Class Schedule

All of the following reading assignments are to be completed *before* attending class on the associated date. The material not included in the main text (journal articles and book chapters) are available for download on the course Blackboard webpage.

Week 1 (Jan 8 & 10): Introduction

Go over syllabus

Sides et al., Chp. 1

Week 2 (Jan 15 & 17): American Electoral Institutions

Sides et al., Chapter 2

No class on Thursday, January 17

Week 3 (Jan 22 & 24): More Basics & Candidates

Sides et al., Chapter 3

Jacobson, Gary C. 2015. "It's Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in US House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 77(3): 861-873.

Week 4 (Jan 29 & 31): Political Parties

Sides et al., Chapter 6

Hershey Chapter 1

Week 5 (Feb 5 & 7): Political Parties cont'd

Hershey Chapter 2

Bawn, Kathleen, Martin Cohen, David Carol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2012. "A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands, and Nominations in American Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(3): 571-597.

Week 6 (Feb 12 & 14): Polarization & Party Politics

Layman, Geoffrey C., Thomas Carsey, and Juliana M. Horowitz. 2006. "Party Polarization in American Politics: Characteristics, Causes, and Consequences." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 83-110.

Fiorina, Morris P., and Samuel J. Abrams. 2008. "Political Polarization in the American Public." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 563-588.

Week 7 (Feb 19 & 21): Forces in the 2016 Election

Oliver, J. Eric, and Thomas J. Wood. 2018. *Enchanted America: How Intuition and Reason Divide Our Politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Introduction and Chapters 1 & 5.

Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Ypthach Lelkes. 2012. "Affect, Not Ideology A Social Identity Perspective on Polarization." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(3): 405-431.

Week 8 (Feb 26 & 28): Money in Politics

Sides et al., Chapter 4

Barber, Michael J. 2015. "Ideological Donors, Contribution Limits, and the Polarization of American Legislatures." *Journal of Politics* 78(1): 296-310.

"Big Sky, Big Money" Frontline episode

Week 9 (Mar 5 & 7): Interest Groups

Sides et al., Chapter 7

Franz, Michael. 2013. "Interest Groups in Electoral Politics: 2012 in Context." *The Forum: A Journal of Applied Research in Contemporary Politics* 10(4): 62-79.

Midterm Exam: Thursday, March 7

Week 10: Spring Break!

No class

Week 11 (Mar 19 & 21): Campaign Messaging & Advertising

Sides et al., Chapter 5

Gerber, Alan S., James S. Gimpel, Donald P. Green, and Daron R. Shaw. 2011. "How Large and Long-lasting are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads? Results from a Randomized Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 105(1): 135-150.

"Boogie Man: The Lee Atwater Story" documentary

Discussion Paper 1 due March 21

Week 12 (Mar 26 & 28): The Media

Visit from [Perry Bacon, Jr.](#)

Sides et al., Chapter 8

Prior, Markus. 2013. "Media and Political Polarization." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 101-127.

Week 13 (Apr 2 & 4): Turnout

Sides et al., Chapter 12

Putnam, Robert P. 1995. "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28: 664-683.

"Street Fight" documentary

No class on Thursday, April 4

Week 14 (Apr 9 & 11): Mobilization & Voting Behavior

Sides et al., Chapter 13

Bartels, Larry. 2010. "The Study of Electoral Behavior." In Jan E. Leighley, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of American Elections and Political Behavior*. New York: Oxford University Press, 239-261.

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102(1): 33-48.

Discussion Paper 2 due April 11

Week 15 (Apr 16 & 18): Polling and Public Opinion

Lewis-Beck, Michael S. 2005. "Election Forecasting: Principles and Practice." *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 7: 145-164.

Mercer, Andrew, Claudia Deane, and Kyley McGeeney. 2016. "[Why 2016 election polls missed their mark.](#)" *Pew Research Center*.

FINAL EXAM

Thursday, April 25, 5:30 PM–8:00 PM

Class Policies

Title IX/Clery Act Notification: Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain **confidential** support from the PEACC Program (852-2663), Counseling Center (852-6585), and Campus Health Services (852-6479). To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students (852-5787) or University of Louisville Police (852-6111).

Disclosure to **University faculty or instructors** of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is **not confidential** under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University's Title IX officer.

For more information, see the **Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide**.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty is prohibited at the University of Louisville. It is a serious offense because it diminishes the quality of scholarship, makes accurate evaluation of student progress impossible, and defrauds those in society who must ultimately depend upon the knowledge and integrity of the institution and its students and faculty. For more information, see the **Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities**.

Disabilities Accommodation: The University of Louisville is committed to providing access to programs and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and require accommodation to participate and complete requirements for this class, notify me immediately and contact the Disability Resource Center (Stevenson Hall, 502-852-6938) for verification of eligibility and determination of specific accommodations. For more information, visit the **Disability Resource Center**.

Religious Observation Policy: Federal law and university policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of religious belief. It is the policy of the University of Louisville to accommodate students, faculty, and staff who observe religious work-restricted holy days. Students who

need to alter a quiz/exam deadline due to religious observations must, however, bring the matter to the attention of the instructor during the first week of the semester.

Final Caveat: While this course has been devised carefully, the instructor does reserve the right to amend the assignments or schedule as presented above.