

POL 341: CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS IN A DIGITAL AGE
MWF 11 am – 12:05 pm, Colt 120
Fall 2016

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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 1-2:30 pm; Fridays 1:30-3; and by appointment

PLNU Mission: To Teach – To Shape – To Send. Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description:

This course is designed to help you understand and analyze the American electoral process from the perspective of parties, candidates, campaign professionals, the media and voters. Through readings, documentary films, group projects and class discussions, you will become familiar with the structure of American presidential elections, the history and evolution of the political party system, recent trends in partisanship and vote choice, basic techniques of political advertising, and the role of the news media, popular culture, and social media in the electoral process.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, you will be able to

- Situate this year's national elections in the context of U.S. elections historically, particularly in regard to the modern period post-WW2.
- Explain the changes in partisan alignment over the past half century, and how this affects the GOTV and electoral college strategies of each party.
- Analyze the changes in media coverage of politics since the 1960s, and explain how voters find and use political information via news, entertainment, and social media.
- Predict and evaluate the success of this year's presidential and congressional campaigns.
- Be able to plan a campaign strategy for the future, including voter targeting, fundraising & campaign finance, policy message, and media strategy.
- Be able to create an original political advertisement.
- Analyze possible changes and reforms to make the American electoral system function better, and make a persuasive argument for one specific election reform.
- Write and communicate more clearly, persuasively and insightfully.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will develop an appreciation of the field of politics (campaign volunteer experience and reflection).
- Understand and critically assess the processes, theories, and outcomes of political institutions and political behavior (essay exam).
- Demonstrate oral communication abilities, particularly to convey complex ideas, recognize diverse viewpoints, and offer empirical evidence of an argument (final project/presentation).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There are a variety of assignments and activities required for successful completion of this course. The most basic, but most important, is attendance and participation in all class sessions. This class is a seminar and as such, its success depends heavily upon the quality of your reading, thinking and discussion. Much of what you learn in this course will be as a result of thoughtful and energetic interaction with your peers. Therefore it is in your own best interest to come to class well prepared each day. As an added incentive, attendance and participation (including possible quizzes on the readings and discussion of daily news stories on the 2016 elections) will be worth 10% of your final grade in this course. Please also note the university's drop policy: if you miss more than 10% (4 meetings) during the semester, you **may be dropped** from the course for nonattendance. If there are extenuating circumstances that arise during the semester (such as a serious extended illness), please let the instructor know as soon as possible. Obstacles that can be overcome early on may be impossible to address after the fact, and it is your responsibility to be in class and to complete all assignments on time.

Components of your grade include:

Midterm exam one	20%
Midterm exam two	20%
Attendance, participation and quizzes	10%
Streb review/electoral reform paper	15%
Electoral research project & presentation	25%
Campaign volunteer work & analysis (minimum 12 hours)	10%

Please note the exam and due dates listed on this syllabus. Please see the instructor ahead of time if you have a problem meeting any of these deadlines, as no make-up exams will be given. Late papers will be docked 10% for each calendar day beyond the deadline.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	F	0-59%

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

STYLE GUIDELINES

In political science, the most common form of citations is the **"author-date" format** from the **Chicago Manual of Style**. Please use this style in any work for this class. Examples can be found at: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. Because of the changing standards of English usage, language that refers appropriately to all persons (inclusive of gender) should be used whenever possible. Some simple guidelines include replacing "man" or "mankind" with "humanity," "humankind," "persons," or "people." "He," "him" and "his"--when not referring to an actual male person--can be replaced with "he or she," "him or her," or "hers or his," or the singular "they," "them," and "their" is also grammatically appropriate. Gender specific terms may be replaced by their current alternatives: for example, "Congressman" has been correctly replaced by "Congressperson" or "member of Congress," etc. As it is becoming more prevalent and more considerate to refer to persons by the gender pronouns they prefer, when possible, I appreciate your kindness in using gendered language that feels respectful and hospitable to each person.

IN-CLASS EXPECTATIONS

While coming to this class will hopefully be an enjoyable experience, it is not like attending a movie, viewing a sporting event, or watching television; your respectful behavior and engaged attention is expected at all times. Class time is precious. It is our opportunity to interact, discuss, and create knowledge together. It is not a passive experience, but one that you should be ready to participate actively in.

In this spirit, here are a few basic expectations to make the most of our class time together: Please be on time to class each day. Cell phones should be turned off during class time, and no electronic devices (including laptop computers and iPads) may be used to surf the web, check email, text, network on Instagram/Facebook/Twitter/etc., play games, or engage in other multi-tasking activities during class; this is distracting to your classmates and the instructor. Because of this, and because of research showing the greater value of taking notes by hand rather than using a computer

(<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>), **I am asking students NOT to use laptops during class at all.** Please see me privately if there are extenuating circumstances that you feel might necessitate using a computer during class and we can discuss possible limited adjustments to this policy.

Please do not leave the room (for a drink, to use the restroom, etc.) unless it is absolutely necessary. No one is allowed to leave the classroom for ANY reason whatsoever during exam periods. My expectation is that we will all strive to treat one another with respect, kindness and professionalism, which includes listening carefully and responding thoughtfully and with grace to the thoughts and opinions of our colleagues. All of these behaviors will lead to a more fruitful learning environment for all of us.

Course Texts:

Paul R. Abramson, John H. Aldrich, Brad T. Gomez, David W. Rohde, *Change and Continuity in the 2012 & 2014 Elections*, CQ Press, 2016.

Matthew Streb, *Rethinking American Electoral Democracy*, 3rd ed. (2016), Routledge.

Articles as assigned (online at our course Canvas site). For help in accessing our course site, please see <https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides>.

The New York Times or *The Washington Post* (2016 election coverage)

Course Outline (subject to revision as the semester – and campaign – unfolds!):

August 30: Introduction

August 31: Evolution of American Electoral System: Past and Present

Jill Lepore, "Rock, Paper, Scissors: How We Used To Vote," *The New Yorker*, October 13, 2008 at http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/10/13/081013fa_fact_lepore
Change and Continuity Introduction

September 2: Sides, Shaw, Grossmann and Lipsitz, "The Transformation of Political Campaigns"

September 5: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY – no class meeting

September 7: Context of Elections: Campaign Finance

Costas Panagopoulos, "Money and the Modern Campaign"
News and data at <http://www.opensecrets.org/>

September 9: Nominating Process: Presidential primaries

Change and Continuity chapter 1

September 12: Presidential Elections

Change and Continuity chapter 2

September 14: *Change and Continuity* chapter 3

September 16: Who Votes? Turnout and participation

Change and Continuity chapter 4

September 19: Documentary in class: *So Goes the Nation* (2006)

September 21: Voting Rights Act and Voter ID Laws

Readings on current court challenges TBA

September 23: Social Identities and the Vote

Change and Continuity chapter 5

September 26: Gender and Race Gap

Readings TBA

September 28-30: Religion and Politics

Smidt, *Disappearing God Gap* (excerpt)

With God on Our Side (documentary)

Pew Research Forum, "Evangelicals Rally to Trump,"

<http://www.pewforum.org/2016/07/13/evangelicals-rally-to-trump-religious-nones-back-clinton/>

October 3: MIDTERM EXAM ONE

October 5: Candidates and Issues: Prospective Voting

Change and Continuity chapter 6

October 7: Retrospective Voting

Change and Continuity chapter 7

October 10: Political Partisanship

Change and Continuity chapter 8

October 12: Congressional Campaigns and Elections

Change and Continuity chapter 9

October 14: *Can Mr. Smith Get to Washington?* (documentary)

October 17: *Change and Continuity* chapter 10

October 19: Redistricting

Streb chapter 7

October 21: Fall Break – No Class Meeting

October 24: The News Media

Dotty Lynch, "How the Media Covered the 2012 Election"

October 26-28: Mediated Elections: Political Ads

Costas Panagopolous, "Get Out the Word"

Frontline documentary online, *The Persuaders*

- October 31: Social Media and Campaigning**
Schill and Kirk, "Issue Debates in 140 Characters: Online Talk Surrounding the 2012 Debates"
Monica Ancu, "Here Comes Everybody, or Not: An Analysis of the Social Media Consumer of Campaign Content"
- November 2: Entertaining Politics? News, Comedy, Democracy**
Jeffrey Jones, excerpt from chapter 1, *Entertaining Politics*
- November 4: MIDTERM EXAM TWO**
- November 7: ELECTION EVE – readings TBA**
- November 9-11: Who Won? Assessing and Explaining 2012 Election Results**
- November 14: Framing and Narrative in Campaigns: Political Cognition & Popular Culture**
Beail and Longworth, "Puritan or Pit Bull? The Framing of Female Candidates at the National Level," in *Women and the White House*, ed. Vaughn and Goren
- November 16: Rethinking American Elections?**
Streb chapter 1 -2
- November 18: Streb chapters 3-4**
****Campaign Volunteering Reflections due no later than Friday Nov.18 ****
- November 21: Electoral Research Project Work Day**
- November 23-25: Thanksgiving Break – No Class Meetings**
- November 28: Streb chapter 5**
(*Uncounted* documentary)
- November 30: Streb chapter 6**
- December 2: Streb chapters 8-9**
- December 5: Streb ch. 10-11**
****Electoral Reform Paper Due****
- December 7-9: Electoral Research Project Work Days**
- ***FINAL CUMULATIVE EXPERIENCE: PRESENTATION OF ELECTORAL RESEARCH PROJECTS – WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14, 10:30 am-1 pm *****