Objectives: Political campaigns provide the most visible connection between elected officials and the individuals and interests they represent. In this course, we will grapple with these questions by exploring the formal and informal procedures that encourage candidates to run, help them secure their party’s nomination, and win elected office. The electoral process is highly dynamic, and so we will look at the unique incentives and behaviors of campaign donors, political parties, the media, interest groups, other candidates, voters, and at times even other countries, as they compete for power and influence. You will become skilled at recognizing the strategies of important actors and analyzing how they impact the electoral process. You will also learn about the components of voter decision-making and the responses of voters to campaigns and underlying dynamics such as demographics, the health of the economy, and public opinion. You should have three primary goals for the course: (1) Gain a thorough understanding of American political campaigns, including their history, structure, and sequence as well as the strategies and behaviors of relevant actors. (2) Develop a practitioner’s sensibility regarding the strategic considerations and constraints associated with running for office or influencing American elections. (3) Practice conducting political science research, including exploring relevant scholarly literature as well as collecting and analyzing your own data.
Course Website:

- https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/19W-POLSCI149-1

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:00pm, Bunche 4262

Textbooks: This is a list of books required for this course. Others will be posted on the website.

- Get out the Vote by Don Green and Alan Gerber. 2nd+ edition.

Attendance Policy:

- Attendance is mandatory. I will not take attendance every day, but I will take attendance occasionally. Pre-scheduled excused absences should be brought to my attention in the second week. Other absences will only be excused for documented medical and family emergencies.

Grading Policy: Participation (15%), Midterm 1 (25%), Midterm 2 (30%), Project (30%).

Final Project: You For Congress 2020

- The purpose of the final project is to demonstrate that you understand the strategic decisions candidates make when running for office. The written assignment is due on March 15th before 11:59:00 pm on the course website. There are two options for the final project:

  1. In a group of 1–5 you can film a one minute campaign advertisement for a hypothetical non-incumbent candidate for Congress in 2020. You will be responsible for filming, editing, and putting together the advertisement. As a group you will also submit a single 7+/-- page write-up justifying the themes, messages, and imagery of the ad, explaining why this approach would be most beneficial for that candidate in that district. We will then watch these advertisements in our penultimate class and evaluate their persuasiveness.

  2. If you would rather not film your own advertisement, you can complete a similar assignment, but you as an individual will write a 10 +/- page write up that both describes the advertisement strategy and explains why it would be effective.

Important Due Dates:

- Midterm #1 ....................February 7, 2019
- Midterm #2 ......................... March 7, 2019
- Final Presentations ................. March 12, 2019
- Final Paper ........... March 15, 2019 by @11:59:59pm

Academic Honesty:

- Any issues with academic dishonesty will be sent directly to the Dean of Students.

- All work you do for this course is expected to be your own. I encourage you to discuss matters relating to this course with other classmates, friends, family members, and students, but your papers and exam answers must be your own ideas and your own words. If you are having trouble completing an assignment, contact me or the UCLA Undergraduate Writing Center for help before you resort to the use of someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution. If you are unfamiliar with the University’s policy on academic dishonesty and associated penalties, see www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu. You are responsible for understanding these standards – not knowing that your actions constitute a violation of these policies is not an excuse.
Classroom Policies:

- Cell phone usage is not allowed in class. Please make sure that they are off or on silent BEFORE coming to class.

- I strongly discourage using laptops to take notes. There is a growing body of research which shows that laptops hinder your ability to learn and taking notes by hand is more effective. I reserve the right to amend course policy to prohibit laptops if they become a distraction.

- That said, I do ask that you download Kahoot! to either your phone or bring your laptop to class for in class activities.

Course Outline & Assigned Readings:

The following outline contains the required readings for the course. It is impossible to receive an A in this course without doing the readings. When you do the readings, take notes! Research shows that re-reading is a terrible studying strategy. In addition to these textbook chapters, I may from time to time post current events articles on the course website. These too are required, but will usually only be a page or two in length.

Overview – The Consent of the Governed ............................................January 8, 2019


Institutions, Procedures, and Norms .....................................................January 10, 2019


The Median Voter Theorem, Duverger’s Law, and Other Helpful Tools ..................January 15, 2019

- NCSL. “Resolving Tied Elections”.

Candidates, Recruitment, and Running for Office .....................................January 17, 2019

- Fox and Lawless. “To Run or Not to Run for Office”.
Campaigns Strategy & Logistics .......................................................... January 22, 2019

- Grey. *How to Win a Local Election*. Chapter 3 (Getting on the Ballot).

Turnout & Mobilization ................................................................. January 24, 2019

- Donald Green and Alan Gerber. *Get Out the Vote*. Chapters 1 (Intro), 2 (Received Wisdom), 3 (Canvassing), 5 (Direct Mail), 8 (Events), 10 (What Works).

Voters ................................................................. January 29, 2019

- Polsby. Chapter 1 (Voters).

Forecasting & Public Opinion .......................................................... January 31, 2019

- Lenz. *Follow the Leader?*. Chapter 1 (Rum Punch or Issue Voting).

Parties on the Ground: Primaries .......................................................... February 5, 2019

- Patterson. Case Studies.
- Hassell. “Party Control of Party Primaries”

Midterm #1 .......................................................... February 7, 2019

- Bring a Scantron!

The Laboratories of Democracy: State & Local Elections .......................... February 7, 2019

- Sides, Shaw, Grossman, and Lipsitz. *Campaigns & Elections*. Chapter 11 (State and Local Elections)
- Grey. *How to Win a Local Election*. Chapters 5 (Financial Reporting); 6 (District Geography); 7 (Campaign Theme); 8 (Party); 14 (The Candidates); 15 (Money); 16 (Winning)

*these are short little chapters, don’t worry.
The Politics of Congressional Elections ........................................... February 12, 2019
• Sides, Shaw, Grossman, and Lipsitz. *Campaigns & Elections*. Chapter 10 (Congressional Elections)

Partners and Rivals: The Politics of Senate Elections ......................... February 14, 2019
• Schiller. *Partners and Rivals*. Chapter 1 (Dual Representation), Chapter 2 (Career Paths), and Chapter 6 (Economic Interests).

Road to the White House 1: The Party Decides ................................. February 19, 2019
• Sides, Vavreck, and Tesler. *Identity Crisis*. Chapter 4 (The Daily Donald Show) & 6 (Cracks in the Ceiling).

Road to the White House 2: The Message Matters ............................. February 21, 2019
• Vavreck. *The Message Matters*. Chapter 3 (Context Matters)

Road to the White House 3: 2012 vs. 2016 ..................................... February 26, 2019
• Sides, Vavreck, Tesler. *Identity Crisis*. Chapter 8 (What Happened?)

Media Coverage, Interest Groups, *Citizens United*, and Outside Influence ........ March 5, 2019
• Sides, Shaw, Grossman, and Lipsitz. *Campaigns & Elections*. Chapter 7 (Interest Groups) and 8 (Media)

OR
Nationalization & Polarization ...................................................... March 5, 2019
• Pew Research Center. “Conflicting Partisan Priorities for U.S. Foreign Policy.”
• Pew Research Center. “Political Polarization in the American Public.”

Midterm #2 ................................................................. March 7, 2019
• Bring a Scantron!
Final Presentations ................................................................. March 12, 2019

- Campaigns Ads must be uploaded to the website by 5:00pm on March 11.

Electoral Reforms & Representation ........................................... March 14, 2019

- Polsby. *Presidential Elections*. Chapter 6 (Appraisals) and 7 (Parties and Democracy).

Midterm Previews

- There will be two close-book midterm exams (25% and 30%, respectively). They will both be *cumulative* to that point in the course. However, the second exam will focus more heavily on the material after the first exam. These exams will test your knowledge of the course material and your ability to apply those concepts to current events. They will consist of a combination of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answers, and/or brief essays.
- There will NOT be a separate study guide for either exams.

Student Resources

- UCLA Consoling and Psychological Services
  - 24/7 Crisis Counseling: (310) 825-0768
  - UCLA CAPS Services
- UCLA Undergraduate Writing Center
  - Appointment Scheduling: (310) 206-1320
  - UCLA Writing Center