

**POLI 4026**  
**Campaigns and Elections**  
**Tuesday & Thursday, 9 AM – 10:20 AM**  
**114 Audubon Hall**  
**Spring 2019**

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Office hours: Monday 1-3 PM & Tuesday 1-3 PM

**Course Overview**

We live in the era of the permanent campaign: politicians' travel, speeches, and fundraising never stop. In order to understand American government today, it is crucial to understand the strategy and factors behind political campaigns. As we approach the 2020 presidential election, we should understand the recent history of campaigns and the current considerations candidates face. We will address a series of questions that are relevant to understanding how elections actually work in America:

- Do campaigns encourage political participation?
- How does economic performance shape election outcomes?
- How has campaign strategy changed in the past several decades?
- What can we learn about the upcoming presidential election in 2020?

Though these questions are discussed often in the media, they are not always discussed well. We will try to understand where the conventional wisdom is helpful, and where it leads us astray. We'll spend a great deal of time discussing the results of the 2016 election, but we'll also try to situate it historically in a broader context.

In addition to the articles posted online and required textbook (see below), students should follow the elections carefully in reputable national news source (*New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, etc.). Politico, Axios, *The Washington Post*, and other major national news outlets offer daily newsletters about the campaign as well. You will be expected to know current events in the 2020 campaign as the primary campaigns take shape.

**Assignments**

There are several requirements for this course, detailed below. Students should note that all assignments must be completed and submitted to the instructor on the dates noted in the syllabus to receive credit. Failure to complete any assignment may result in a failing grade for the class.

Quizzes: 25%  
2018 Senate election report: 10%  
Midterm exam: 20%  
Final exam: 30%  
Attendance and participation: 15%

Quizzes: There will be a combination of Moodle and in-class quizzes throughout the semester. These will be short quizzes to make sure you are doing the readings and paying attention in class (and attending class).

2018 Senate election report: You will be asked to write a report on one of the Senate elections from the 2018 midterm elections, and how the result illustrates the concepts presented in class about advertising, strategy, voter behavior, etc. Further details on this assignment will be distributed shortly into the semester.

Midterm Exam: There will be an in-class midterm exam on the class material to that point, including multiple choice, short answer questions (where you will be asked to define and give the significance of a series of concepts), and a five-paragraph essay.

Final Exam: There will be a cumulative, in-class final exam. The final exam will be a combination of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and essays.

Attendance and participation: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of each class. Excused absences must comply with the policy below. Though most of this grade will be based on attendance, active participation in the in-class exercises and the class discussion is expected. Failure to participate in class – or looking at your phone during class (yes, I can tell) – will be reflected in your grade.

### **Policy on Late Work**

All work is due at the date and time discussed in class. Any late work will be docked one letter grade per day late. A paper due at 12 noon, but submitted at 12:01 PM will be docked one letter grade (an A paper becomes a B, a C paper becomes a D, and so on).

### **Communication**

All students are required to check their LSU e-mail account regularly. I frequently communicate with students via email and Moodle, and not checking your email will not be an excuse for missing an assignment or reading. I will make an effort to reply to all e-mails within 24 hours, and will not reply to e-mails sent after 5PM until the next business day.

### **ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, cognitive, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities. Please contact me at the beginning of the semester to discuss any such accommodations for this course. In order to have any accommodations met, you must be registered with the LSU Office of Disabilities Services. More information on registering and accommodation is available on the ODS website: <http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/ods.nsf/index>

### **Statement of Academic Integrity**

Students are bound to uphold the Code of Academic Integrity. All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at [www.lsu.edu/saa](http://www.lsu.edu/saa). It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand

the academic standards for our community. Students who are suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the office of Student Advocacy & Accountability. A first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. Ignorance of these guidelines is no excuse for failure to comply with them.

### **Technology**

Audio or video recording of the lectures or content of this course is prohibited. Students are permitted to use laptops or tablets in class for note-taking; however, I reserve the right to rescind this permission if your use of technology becomes a distraction. I will note that research argues that laptop usage in class hinders student performance (Sana et al., 2013) and that students take notes more effectively by hand than on laptops (Mueller and Oppenheimer, 2014).

### **Attendance & Excused Absences**

Each student must attend class, and attendance will be taken during each class period. Excused absences will be granted with a signed statement from a doctor or LSU administrator. (Please note that the LSU Student Health Center will not provide medical excuses for short-term illness or injury.) If you know you will miss class with an excused absence, please discuss these planned absences with me well ahead of time. In the event of an excused absence interfering with the due date of an assignment, the assignment will be due on a date agreed upon by the student and myself, depending upon the circumstances of the absence. In the event of a missed exam (with excused absence), a make-up exam will be administered in my office (204 Hodges Hall). Makeup exams will not be administered for exams missed with unexcused absences.

### **Grade Scale**

Grades in this class will follow the scale below.

97.00 and above	A+	77.00–79.99	C+
93.0 – 96.99	A	73.00–76.99	C
90.00–92.99	A-	70.00–72.99	C-
87.00–89.99	B+	67.00–69.99	D+
83.00–86.99	B	63.00–66.99	D
80.00–82.99	B-	60.00–62.99	D-
		59.99 and below	F

### **Readings**

Two books are required for this class and are available at any major retailer.

- Sides, John, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck. (2018). Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Election and the Battle for the Meaning of America. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [STV on the syllabus].
- Sides, John, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossmann, and Keena Lipsitz. (2018). Campaigns and Elections: 3rd Edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. [CE on the syllabus].

## Schedule

Th 1/10: Introduction and course overview.

T 1/15: Understanding the rules.

- CE, ch. 1: Introduction, 2: The American Electoral Process.

Th 1/17: Campaign history I. Overview: 1960-1976.

- CE, ch. 3: The Transformation of American Campaigns.

T 1/22: Campaign history II. Overview: 1980-2000.

- CE, ch. 9: Presidential Campaigns.

Th 1/24: Campaign history III. Overview: 2004, 2008, 2012.

- Kreiss, Daniel. (2015). "Digital Campaigning." In D. Freelon and S. Coleman (Eds.), *Handbook of Digital Politics*. New York, NY: Edgar Elgar.

T 1/29: Money in politics.

- CE, ch. 4: Financing Campaigns.

Th 1/31: Campaign strategy I.

- CE, ch. 5: Modern Campaign Strategies.

T 2/5: Campaign strategy II: Ads.

Th 2/7: Parties and Interest Groups.

- CE, ch. 6: Political Parties, 7: Interest Groups.

T 2/12: Media.

- CE, ch. 8: Media.

Th 2/14: Trump and Earned Media.

- STV, ch. 4: The Daily Donald Show.

T 2/19: Voter participation.

- CE, ch. 12: Voter Participation.

Th 2/21: Voter choice.

- CE, ch. 13: Voter Choice.

T 2/26: Midterm exam review.

Th 2/28: Midterm exam.

T 3/5: Mardi Gras, no class.

Th 3/7: 2016.

- STV, ch. 1.

T 3/12: 2016: What happened?

- STV, ch. 2, 8.

Th 3/14: 2016: Why Trump?

- STV, ch. 5.

T 3/19: 2016: The primaries.

- STV, ch. 3, 6.

Th 3/21: 2016: The general.

- STV, ch. 7.

T 3/26: Congress.

- CE, ch. 10: Congressional Campaigns.

Th 3/28: State and local elections.

- CE, ch. 11: State and Local Campaigns.

T 4/2: Leading up to 2018.

- STV, ch. 9.

Th 4/4: The 2018 midterm elections. **2018 Senate Report due.**

T 4/9: 2020—The primaries.

Th 4/11: 2020—Incumbency (and what to expect).

- Readings for this week TBD.

T 4/16, Th 4/21: Spring break, no class.

T 4/23: Is it broken, and can we fix it?

- CE, ch. 14.

Th 4/25: Final exam review and course wrap-up.

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday, May 2, 12:30-2:30 PM**