Course Description & Objectives

This course is designed to provide students with a survey of the rules that govern elections and trends in candidate behavior in America. Additionally, the course will investigate how candidates campaign within those rules to advance to elected office. Through your participation in this course we will discuss the development of electoral reforms by the government, as well as political parties. Furthermore, the course will expose students to elections that do not receive as much attention, such as ballot initiatives, constitutional amendments, or elections with multiple winners. Another goal is to prepare students with the ability to be effective campaign staff or volunteers in future campaigns.

Learning Objectives

The course is designed with the objective that by the end the semester each student will have a comprehensive knowledge of how candidates appeal to a constituency and comprehend what trade-offs are necessary to win. Students who will do the best in the course will have an understanding of how the political context of an election will effect whether the costs of certain campaign tactics are worthwhile.

Required Books

All texts can be found in the bookstore or online.


Student Evaluation

Participation

Active participation in discussion is an important part of a class (250 points). Therefore, class meetings allow for an open forum to ask questions and students are presented with complex questions to spark class discussion. Seven in-class assignments create opportunities to evaluate a student’s ability apply information through class simulations.

I encourage you to **CHALLENGE, RESPOND to, & CRITIQUE** what you read and hear outside of class. Our goal is to learn by challenging what preconceived notions we may have.

The participation grade is a proportion of the high quality contributions to class discussion and reflection of critical thinking shown in assignments throughout the semester. Each activity will correspond with the readings and is designed to assess your ability to understand the material. Moreover, all work must be
original - including only direct quotes without any analysis will result in a 0. All missed assignments will be counted as a zero, if not excused beforehand. The lowest assignment, may be dropped - even a zero, but know that each class meeting is an opportunity to participate.

Service Learning Project

A candidate’s image, campaign’s message, and distribution of voters in the electorate are important. However, each are only effective if you understand the rules, timing, and opportunities for participation in the elections. Therefore this section of the course is focused on participating in the non-political administration of elections.

Each student’s ability to participate and interest in the topic will form teams. All students are expected to be accountable to their teams and participate equally. Each student’s service learning experience is evaluated on the same set of factors:

- Attendance at required community meetings & training
- Participate in the implementation of the election activity
- Complete the Group Assignment (memo, column, or sample ballot)
- Prepare a Public Presentation – to present in class – of how your experiences fit with the course, raise questions about campaign activity, and describe how difficult it is to manipulate the electoral process.

College Poll Worker Program

Partner: Smith County Election Office

Requirements:
1) Attend a training program.
2) Be available for a shift during early voting, on Election Day or Election night (November 8, 2016); Early Voting may be an option depending on a pre-existing conflict.
3) Draft a two-page memo, addressed to the county election office, that analyzes strengths of the program and difficulties that could be improved. Report what you learned, offer a critique, and then follow with a suggestion or set of parameters that would help improve the concern.

Alternate: The Presidential Debates Project

Requirements:
1) Gather research about the rules that govern debates between nominees for president and nominees for vice president.
2) Identify the dates of national and local candidate debates.
3) Submit questions to the host organization that may be considered to be asked during the debate - if such option is available.
4) For each debate: Prepare a column for submission to the Patriot Talon or Tyler Morning-Telegraph that describes how the event highlighted differences between the candidates. Consider whether contrasts are driven by questions from the moderator or were driven by the answers (and even digressions) of candidates.
Optional: Exit-Poll Project - Early Voting and Election Day

Requirements:
1) Be available for a shift during early voting, on Election Day or Election night (November 8, 2016)
2) Identify a strategy of what precincts and locations to conduct the Exit Poll.
3) Prepare a list of common questions to ask each participant that build a systematic study of the elections in East Texas.
4) Compile and Share an Excel file of your results.
5) Draft a memo to explain the results. One strategy is to present cross tabs to compare the opinion of each group on a common question.

Process Expert Reflection Paper

Having gained expertise in aspects of the electoral process, choose one of the topics explored through the Service Learning Projects that interests you. Then prepare a eight-page paper with double-spaced type, one inch margins, size 12 Times New Roman font, including a biography with Chicago style citations. Given the topic you chose, focus on the intersection of the electoral process and how candidates achieve their goals. You may ask, how could a candidate use the electoral process to achieve their own purpose of attracting enough votes to win?

Set forth a well-reasoned argument about your understanding of election rules, candidate behavior, or voter behavior. Justify your viewpoint with a discussion of scholarly expectations (literature review), original research on campaign tactics, and perceptions from your experience. Finally, close with a discussion about what consequences may come if candidates effectively use (or misuse) aspects of these observations.

Exams

The Midterm exam on October 7 is worth 150 points. The final, 150 points, will be cumulative in that it will ask you to draw connections across topics covered throughout the class. Each exam will offer different types of short-answer and essay questions. Each question will hold different point values. Missing an exam without the confirmation of an alternative test date, before the exam date, will result in a zero.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Assignments</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam (Oct 7)</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Learning Participation</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Learning Presentation (Nov 28 &amp; 30)</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process Expert Reflection Paper (Nov 18)</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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Student Conduct

I have high expectations for each student in this class, which are based on your academic performance to get to this point and my belief that you will treat each of your fellow classmates with respect. My goal is to facilitate a supportive and engaging class experience for everyone and one part of that is eliminating disruptive behavior. Using technology in a way that distracts others and demonstrates a lack of respect for the instructor is unacceptable.

1Should the class schedule need to be amended, I will advise the class in advance by email and via the course page
Concealed Handgun Campus Policy

Handbook of Operating Procedures, Section 2.10.1(6-8): “A license holder who carries a handgun on campus must carry it in a holster or other secure weapon case that completely covers the trigger and the entire trigger guard area. The holster must have sufficient tension or grip on the handgun to retain it in the holster even when subjected to unexpected jostling.

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php.

If a person is believed to have improperly displayed a handgun or carried a handgun into a location where concealed carry is not permitted, the campus police should be contacted.

Tobacco-Free University

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. For more information please visit http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Academic Honesty

It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. The University of Texas at Tyler Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs will be strictly followed and can be found here at: http://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf. Tests and assignments are designed to assess your understanding of the material–do not reference another student’s answers.

Violations of academic integrity are serious and will have a negative consequence on your classroom performance. In each instance a violation occurs, a failing grade will be assigned for the assignment or the course, require work to be redone, and have you identify what the cause of the violation was. The matter will be referred to the Dean of Students if institutional action is necessary. Reference the rights and responsibilities of students: http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services:

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance:

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor with official documentation at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructors directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.
If you have any questions or concerns about what is expected or permissible in this course or about academic integrity in general, please contact me.

**Class Schedule**

**Week One**

**Aug 29**  
Class Introduction and Expectations

**Aug 31**  
Elections and Democracy  
*Readings:*  

*Objectives:*  
1) Predict how candidates behave by focusing on voter preferences and behavior of other candidates.  
2) Recognize how rules structure who the median voter is.

**Sept 2**  
*Online Assignment* on Expectations of Candidate Actions

**Week Two**

**Sept 5**  
**No Class:** Labor Day

**Sept 7-9**  
Presidential Nominations and Media Reactions  
*Readings:* Norrander, Ch. 1-3  
*Objectives:*  
1) What must occur for media coverage matter?  
2) Who can participate in a primary?  
3) Who votes in a primary?

**Week Three**

**Sept 12-16**  
Nomination Calendar  
*Readings:* Norrander, Ch. 4-6  

*Resource:* Frontloading HQ  
*Objectives:*  
1) Describe how frontloading influences momentum and winnowing.  
2) What happens at party conventions?  
3) Do actions in the primary have consequences for the General Election?
Week Four
Sept 19-23  Structure of the Electoral College


Objectives: 1) Classify if a state is a Red, Blue, or Battleground state.
2) Describe how candidate can earn every elector possible.
3) Do campaigns matter?
4) Recognize the factors that make the Southern Strategy effective.

Week Five
Sept 26-28  Acquiring and Allocating Resources


Resource: Google’s Compiled Data on Candidates.
Campaign Finance Institute

Objectives: 1) Discern the importance of money, advertising, volunteers, and name recognition.
2) Develop a strategy of implementing resources to get out the vote.
3) Recognize the limitations for fundraising and expenditures that structure how candidates allocate resources.

FYI: First Presidential Debate, September 26, 2016
Ben Carson speaks at Cowan Center, September 27, 2016 at 7:30PM - Free to Students

Week Six

Oct 3-5  Voter Preferences


Hare, Christopher and Robert Lupton. 2016. ”No, Sanders voters aren’t more conservative than Clinton voters. Here’s the data.” Washington Post, Monkey Cage Article.


Objectives: 1) Understand a multi-candidate race changes the composition of coalitions in the electorate.
2) Recognize the benefits of strong party organizations.

FYI: Vice Presidential Debate, October 4, 2016
Second Presidential Debate, October 9, 2016

Oct 7: Midterm Exam

Week Seven

Oct 10-14  Candidate Image and Persuasion
Readings: The Persuadable Voter, Ch. 1-4

Objectives: 1) Explain how voters recognize issues within the context of a campaign
2) Question the consistency of a candidate’s message.
3) Strategize how issues may be presented to encourage voters to reconsider their support for a candidate.
Week Eight

Oct 17-19  General Election Strategy

Readings:  *The Persuadable Voter*, Ch. 5-7

Objectives:  1) Recognize what votes are absolutely necessary to win.
            2) Think about how to turnout voters that support your candidate.
            3) Match issues that persuade to mandates in elections.

FYI:  Third Presidential Debate, October 19, 2016

Oct 21  

*Out of Class Assignment*

Week Nine

Oct 24-28  Election Administration


Objectives:  1) Recognize who votes
            2) Identify differences in early voting and ways to cast a ballot.
            3) Weigh the trade-offs of accuracy in elections and maintaining order in elections.

FYI:  Charles Krauthammer speaks at Cobb Convention Center in Longview October 25, 2016 at 7:30PM - Free to Students

Week Ten

Oct 31-Nov 4  Turnout and Casting Ballots


Objectives: 1) Recall the ways the public participation in elections has expanded in history. 2) Develop ways to contact voters that maximizes your return on investment. 3) Hypothesize when voters may be likely to split their ticket and weaken coat tails.

Week Eleven

Nov 7  Preview for Election Day
Nov 9  Reflection on the Election
Nov 11 Alternative Voting Systems


“Mark Cuban calls the NBA All-Star voting system ‘embarrassing’ and ‘positively broken.’” Washington Post on January 24, 2015.

Objectives: 1) Identify how a specified voting rule can determine what candidate the public chooses.


Week Twelve

Nov 14-18 The Permanent Campaign


Objectives: 1) Anticipate the probability of an electoral outcome given the information you know before the polls close.
2) Recognize the recent innovations in campaigning and what campaign strategies other candidates will adopt.
3) Observe how an institution reacts to the consequences of an election.

Week Thirteen

Nov 21-25  Fall Break

Week Fourteen

Nov 28-30  Trends in Candidate Emergence for the next election


Resource: The Candidate Emergence Study
Objectives: 1) Describe how incumbents build an advantage
2) Recognize the factors that contribute to the strategic entry and retirement of candidates.
3) Define the personal vote.

Dec 2  Service Learning Presentations

Week Fifteen

Dec 5  Service Learning Presentations
Dec 7  Activity: Assess the Impact of a Reform/Innovation.
Dec 9  Final Exam Review

Exam Week

Dec TBA  Final Exam