

Political Science 390: Campaigns and Elections

Dickinson College, Fall 2018
Wednesday 1:30-4:30, Denny – 204

Professor Sarah Niebler

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Office Hours: Monday 10:30-12:00; Thursday 3:00-4:30; and by appointment

Course Description

This course is a senior research seminar on Campaigns and Elections. The readings consist of a mix of contemporary and classic scholarly works on various aspects of American elections including candidate emergence; the role of money in elections; polling; and media coverage of campaigns, among others. Since this seminar occurs during an election season, students should expect to actively engage with current events, relating course topics to what they are observing in the day-to-day campaigns of midterm elections, specifically congressional and gubernatorial races. Political pundits and commentators generate a tremendous amount of analysis, commentary, and predictions about American elections; however, in this class we will move beyond these types of comments in an attempt to understand how voters decide and how campaigns persuade.

Successful students will: demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of campaigns and elections; apply and evaluate theories and evidence; actively participate in, and help to lead, class discussion; identify unresolved questions in the existing literature; and produce and present an original piece of scholarly research that contributes to our knowledge of elections in the United States.

This course has three major learning objectives. By the end of the class, students should be able to:

- Recognize the central thesis of books and articles assigned in the seminar, while also explaining how the authors develop and defend their arguments. Students should also be able to critically analyze authors' work.
- Identify, use, and apply the concepts and theories essential to the subject of the seminar and discussed in the assigned readings, resulting in substantive knowledge of political science.
- Formulate a clear research question, examine what other scholars have said about it, and conduct their own research to address the question at hand, both orally and in writing.

Course Materials

There are three required books for the course. The following two are available at the bookstore:

- Asher, Herbert. 2017. *Polling and the Public: What Every Citizen Should Know*. Ninth Edition. Sage, CQ Press.
- Streb, Matthew J. 2016. *Rethinking American Electoral Democracy*. Third Edition. Routledge.

The third book will not be published until October 2018. I have page proofs which I will send to you by chapter, but I encourage you to purchase the book when it comes out. It is one of the better, more scholarly accounts of the 2016 presidential election that I have read.

- Sides, John, Michael Tesler and Lynn Vavreck. 2018. *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America*.

Additional readings are available on Moodle, online, or through the Dickinson College Library as specified in the syllabus.

Please note that the reading for this course is substantial. Many of the readings are scholarly articles that can be dense and will take some time to read carefully and thoroughly. Given that this class meets only one time per week, you MUST plan ahead. You will not be able to do all the reading, writing, and preparation required for each class period if you wait until the last minute to start the work. The approximate number of pages of reading assigned for each week is in parentheses next to the week's topic on the syllabus.

Requirements and Grading

Active participation in this course is essential. Since we are a seminar and meet only once per week, your attendance is mandatory. If you miss class, you will be expected to write a paper analyzing the week's readings. We will thoroughly analyze and discuss the readings each week, and you will be expected to contribute to that discussion frequently and thoughtfully. I expect students to answer questions that are posed, ask questions about concepts that are not clear, (respectfully) challenge viewpoints that are presented, and think critically.

Each graded assignment is briefly described below the table, but we will talk about all of them more in-depth on the first day of class and throughout the semester. The relative weight and due date of each component is as follows:

Attendance and Participation	20%	
Statement of Purpose	5%	September 12
Discussion Leader	10%	September 19; September 26; October 10; October 17; October 24; October 31; or November 7
Election Papers	20%	September 19; September 26; October 10
Exit Poll Analysis	10%	November 28
Research Paper Presentation	5%	December 5 or December 12
Final Paper	30%	Saturday, December 22 @ 5:00 p.m.

Statement of Purpose: This 1-2 page document should outline your rationale for taking this senior seminar and what you hope to learn from the class. It should also include a potential topic you are interested in researching over the course of the semester, why you are attracted to this particular area of study and what, if any, knowledge you already have of that topic.

Discussion Leader: You will work in groups of 2-3 to lead discussion for one of the weeks listed above. You will be responsible for coming up with thoughtful questions and topics for us to consider as a class.

Election Papers: Since there is an election occurring this fall, we will be closely following what is happening in gubernatorial, Senate, and House elections across the country. Each of you will choose a contest that is of particular interest to you, and write about the day's class topic and how it is related to the contest you are following.

Exit Poll Participation and Analysis: We will be conducting an exit poll as part of the class. After conducting the exit poll, we will learn some basics of quantitative data analysis and you will write a paper analyzing the results of the exit poll.

Paper Presentation & Final Paper: This is a senior research seminar and, as such, you will be expected to write a substantial research paper. You will have some leeway as to what your topic is and we will discuss this more extensively within the first couple weeks of the semester.

Final letter grades will be assigned in the following way:

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

Academic Integrity

From Dickinson College's Community Standards... "Respect for ideas — our own and others' — is a hallmark of academic integrity. We show respect by acknowledging when we have used another's words or ideas in our work. We expect others to acknowledge when they use our ideas or words in their work. Students are expected to do their own work on quizzes, papers, examinations, class assignments, etc. Normally, a paper may be submitted in fulfillment of an assignment in only one course. Exceptions require permission from the instructors. Collaboration must be noted in writing and requires the consent of all instructors."

(http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20273/dean_of_students/867/community_standards/2)

Students must complete their own work. You may certainly discuss your ideas with your colleagues, but the work you hand in must be your own. In the election papers and the final research paper, you must properly cite all of your sources. I prefer for you to use Chicago style with in-text citations (as opposed to footnotes). As seniors preparing to write a significant research paper, you should already know how to do this. If you do not, please consult the library's research guides and/or the library liaison for political science, Ian Boucher

boucheri@dickinson.edu). If you ever have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please ask questions sooner rather than later.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an equal opportunity to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment– that would impact your educational experience in this class, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to schedule a meeting with Director Marni Jones. She will confidentially discuss your needs, review your documentation, and determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ODS, email DisabilityServices@dickinson.edu, call (717) 245-1734, or go to ODS in 106 Dana Hall.

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can meet to review your Accommodation Letter and complete your "Blue Form" Implementation Plan. If you will need test proctoring from ODS, remember that you will need to provide them with at least one week's notice.

I am committed to including all students in this course and am happy to discuss accommodations with students, provided that this conversation happens **early** in the semester and definitely before any papers are due or exams are scheduled.

Technology in the Classroom

This is a seminar. As such, we will speak to one another about the course readings – analyzing them, critiquing them, and thinking about what questions they raise in addition to what questions they answer. I expect you to bring all the assigned readings to class every time we meet. Since some of them may be online or in electronic formats, you are permitted to bring laptops and tablets to class. However, your use of technology should be limited to accessing your readings and/or notes. If the use of laptops or tablets is distracting to you or to others in the class, I will ask you to discontinue your use of that technology.

With respect to audio recording, Pennsylvania is a "two-party consent" state, meaning that it is a crime to "intercept or record a telephone call or conversation **unless all parties to the conversation consent**" (<http://www.dmlp.org/legal-guide/pennsylvania/pennsylvania-recording-law>). Practically, what this means is that you should not be using any device to record class lectures or discussions. If a student with an accommodation from ODS is permitted to record class, all members of the class will be informed, but the student doing the recording will not be identified; students with ODS accommodations agree to strict guidelines with respect to how they use class recordings.

Outline of the Course

September 5 – Introduction & Elections in the United States (57)

- Streb, Chapters 1-3, pages 1-57

September 12 – Fundamentals Versus Campaigns (65)

- Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck, Chapters 1-2, pages 1-32
- MacKuen, Michael B., Robert S. Erikson, and James A. Stimson. 1992. "Peasants or Bankers? The American Electorate and the U.S. Economy" *The American Political Science Review* 86(3): 597-611 (Available via Dickinson College Library)
- Brader, Ted. 2005. "Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions" *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): 388-405 (Available via Dickinson College Library)

September 19 – Apportionment, Redistricting, and Candidate Emergence in Congressional Elections (102)

- Streb, Chapter 7, pages 117-138
- Chen, Jowei and Jonathan Rodden. 2013. "Unintentional Gerrymandering: Political Geography and Electoral Bias in Legislatures" *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 8: 239-269 (Available on Moodle)
- McCarty, Nolan, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2009. "Does Gerrymandering Cause Polarization?" *American Journal of Political Science* 53(3): 666-680 (Available via Dickinson College Library)
- Fox, Richard L. and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2010. "If Only They'd Ask: Gender, Recruitment, and Political Ambition" *The Journal of Politics* 72(2): 310-326 (Available via Dickinson College Library)
- Karpowitz, Christopher F., J. Quin Monson, and Jessica Robinson Preece. 2017. "How to Elect More Women: Gender and Candidate Success in a Field Experiment" *American Journal of Political Science* 61(4): 927-943 (Available via Dickinson College Library)

September 26 – Money (116)

- Streb, Chapter 10, pages 181-204
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M. de Figueiredo, and James M. Snyder Jr. 2003. "Why is There So Little Money in US Politics?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(1): 105-130. (Available on Moodle)
- Powell, Lynda. 2013. "The Influence of Campaign Contributions on Legislative Policy" *The Forum* 11(3): 339-355. (Available on Moodle)
- Mutch, Robert. 2014. "From Reform to Reaction: Since 1996" Chapter 9 in Buying the Vote: A History of Campaign Finance Reform, pages 162-185 (Available on Moodle)
- Fowler, Erika Franklin, Travis N. Ridout, and Michael M. Franz. 2016. "Political Advertising in 2016: The Presidential Election as Outlier" *The Forum* 14(4): 445-469 (Available on Moodle)

October 3 – Polling (140)

- Asher, Chapters 1, 3, 5, and 7, pages 1-41, 75-106, 139-160, and 191-235

October 10 – Primaries and General Elections for Congress (113)

- Jacobson, Gary C. 2013. The Politics of Congressional Elections. 8th edition. “Congressional Candidates”, pages 29-63. (Available on Moodle)
- Mayhew, David. 1974. Congress: The Electoral Connection. "The Electoral Incentive", pages 13-77. (Available on Moodle)
- Fairdosi, Amir Shawn and Jon C. Rogowski. 2015. “Candidate Race, Partisanship, and Political Participation: When Do Black Candidates Increase Black Turnout?” *Political Research Quarterly* 68(2): 337-349 (Available via Dickinson College Library)

October 15 (Monday) – “Congress to Campus” talk by Jim Kolbe (R-AZ, 1985-2007) and Betsy Markey (D-CO, 2009-2011) – ATS, 7:00 p.m.

October 17 – Presidential Primary Elections (123)

- Streb, Chapter 8, pages 139-159
- Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck, Chapters 3, 5-6, pages 33-46, 69-129
- Bawn, Kathleen, Martin Cohen, David Karol, 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 (Available via Dickinson College Library)

October 24 – Presidential General Elections (92)

- Streb, Chapter 9, pages 160-180
- Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck, Chapters 7-8, pages 130-200

October 31 – Media Coverage of Elections (108)

- Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck, Chapter 4, pages 47-68
- Iyengar, Shanto, Helmut Norpoth, and Kyu S. Hahn. 2004. “Consumer Demand for Election News: The Horserace Sells” *The Journal of Politics* 66(1): 157-175 (Available via Dickinson College Library)
- Young, Dannagal. 2013. “Laughter, Learning, or Enlightenment? Viewing and Avoidance Motivations Behind *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*” *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*. 57(2): 153-169 (Available on Moodle)
- Hardy, Bruce W., Jeffrey A. Gottfried, Kenneth M. Winneg, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. 2014. “Stephen Colbert’s Civics Lesson: How Colbert Super PAC Taught Viewers About Campaign Finance” *Mass Communication and Society* 17: 329-353 (Available via Dickinson College Library)
- Bode, Leticia. 2016. “Political News in the News Feed: Learning Politics from Social Media” *Mass Communication and Society* 19(1):24-48 (Available via Dickinson College Library)

November 6 (Tuesday) – **Election Day – Work Exit Poll Shifts as Assigned**

November 7 – Minor Parties and Independent Candidates; Ballot Initiatives and Referenda (74)

- Abramson, Paul R., John H. Aldrich, Phil Paolino, and David W. Rohde. 1995. "Third-Party and Independent Candidates in American Politics: Wallace, Anderson, and Perot" *Political Science Quarterly* 110(3): 349-367.
- Southwell, Priscilla Lewis. 2003. "The Politics of Alienation: Nonvoting and Support for Third-Party Candidates Among 18-30-Year-Olds" *The Social Science Journal* 40: 99-107. (Available on Moodle)
- Chalabi, Mona. 2016. "Did Third-Party Candidates Jill Stein and Gary Johnson Lose Clinton the Election?" *The Guardian* November 10, 2016. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/10/third-party-candidate-gary-johnson-jill-stein-clinton-loss> (and on Moodle)
- Streb, Chapter 4, pages 58-80
- Bowler, Shaun and Todd Donovan. 2010. "Direct Democracy in the United States" in *The Oxford Handbook of American Elections and Political Behavior*. Jan E. Leighley, ed. Oxford University Press, pages 1-22 (Available on Moodle)

November 13 (Tuesday) – "How Democracies Die" talk by Daniel Ziblatt – ATS, 7:00 p.m.

November 14 – Data Analysis of Exit Poll (42)

- Asher, Chapter 8, pages 237-278

November 21 – **Thanksgiving Break**

November 28 – **Exit Poll Analysis Paper Due**; The Future of American Political Campaigns (43+)

- Streb, Chapter 11, pages 205-212
- Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck, Chapter 9, pages 201-220
- Kam, Cindy. 2006. "Political Campaigns and Open-Minded Thinking" *Journal of Politics* 68(4): 931-945 (Available via Dickinson College Library)
- Additional Readings TBD

December 5 – Student Presentations and Paper Workshop

December 12 – Student Presentations and Paper Workshop

(Saturday) December 22 @ 5:00 p.m. – Final Papers Due