

POLS 3317 Campaigns and Elections

Fall 2022 - 182 & DW1

Professor Information

Rebecca Larsen

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10AM to 12PM and by appointment

Class Meeting Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 12PM to 1:20PM

Course Description

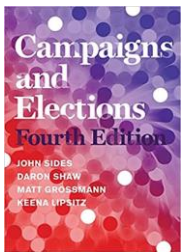
This course will examine campaigns and elections in the United States. We will learn about the basic rules, timelines, and structure of elections; examine how campaigning has changed over time; and explore the theories established and critiqued through scholarship. The goals are to understand the laws and legal process around campaigning and elections, consider policy changes to our process, analyze campaign strategies, consider theories on voter participation and choice, and examine the influences of media, political parties, and interest groups. The 2022 midterm elections offer a unique context to study these areas in real time. Assignments and in-class projects are designed around incorporating active engagement with campaigns and elections as they play out during the semester.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the structure and rules for campaigns and elections.
2. Explain the dynamics of presidential, congressional, state, and local campaigns.
3. Identify how campaign strategies have evolved over time.
4. Examine the role of political parties, interest groups, media, and money in shaping campaigns and elections.
5. Analyze changes in voting access and policy positions.
6. Analyze a specific campaign and election through application of course concepts.

Course Materials

1. Text:



Campaigns and Elections
Sides, Shaw, Grossmann, and Lipsitz
4th Edition, 2022
ISBN: 9780393441680

This text will be supplemented with academic articles. See the Readings folder on Blackboard.

2. Zoom:

Distance students will join the class via Zoom. Please contact me at the beginning of the semester if technology limitations will impact your ability to fully participate in class. Students tend to experience fewer connectivity issues when they are utilizing an Ethernet cable (this cable can be connected straight to your computer from your internet modem). Due to the nature of this course, learning is enhanced when we can see one another's faces during discussions. Feel free to use zoom backgrounds and any other technology to control how much of your private environment we see. If being on video presents an issue, please contact me directly to discuss.

Course Assignments

Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
Course Engagement	15%
Campaign & Election Analysis	35%

Exams – 2 Exams at 25% Each (50% Total):

There will be two take-home exams in this course. They will ask you to recall and apply concepts learned in class. Specific details about the exams will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.

Course Engagement – In-Class Current Events, Debates, Group Work, Ad Analysis, Mock Election, Etc. (15%)

Active learning will be incorporated throughout the semester. You will be asked to debate certain topics, present on current events, hold a mock election, and analyze campaign ads. Everyone's learning is enhanced when we all come to class prepared and ready to engage. Being the most vocal does not necessarily mean being the most engaged. Because there are many ways to participate and care about your own learning, you will submit a form at the end of the semester grading your engagement in the course and supporting that grade. This self-grading form is in Blackboard.

Campaign & Election Analysis (35%)

This is a semester-long assignment that asks you to evaluate a specific campaign and subsequent election through application of course materials. We will discuss these as the semester moves forward and specific pieces of the project will be due throughout the semester. When a section of the paper is due, be prepared to discuss that section in class that same day. I will give you some preliminary feedback on each section and you will submit a final full report on the last day of class.

Sections:

Part 1: Candidate and Party Overview: 5%

Part 2: Pre-Election Environmental Analysis & Campaign Strategy: 10%

Part 3: Post-Election Evaluation & Final Full Report: 20%

Grading Scale

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

D = 60 – 69

F = 0 – 59

Course Plan

Any changes to the course plan will be communicated in class and via email.

Sides refers to the textbook. Check the Reading Folder on Blackboard for other assigned articles. They will be uploaded and available to download within Blackboard.

Week	Date	Read	Topic	Due
Week 1	M 8/29		Course Introduction How to Read Academic Articles	
	W 8/31	Sides, Chapter 1 Sides, Chapter 2	U.S. Elections and Campaigns Primer	Sign up for Current Events
Week 2	M 9/5	No Class – Holiday		
	W 9/7	Sides, Chapter 2	U.S. Elections Primer - Types, Rules, Process	Current Events Briefs Begin – Keep Track of Schedule
Week 3	M 9/12	Sides, Ch 2 pp. 30 – 41 (Who Can Vote/How to Vote) & Ch 12 pp. 347 – 349 (Opportunity) Reading in Folder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burden, et al. 2014 - McGuire et al. 2020 - Cantoni et al. 2019 	All Things Voting - Access, History, Rules, Current Issues	
	W 9/14	Sides, Ch 2 pp. 48 – 57 (Reapportionment to Gerrymandering) Reading in Folder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Texas Tribune Redistricting Map 	Census, Reapportionment, Redistricting, and Gerrymandering	
Week 4	M 9/19	Sides, Chapter 3	Eras of American Campaigns	Part 1 of Analysis Due
	W 9/21	Sides, Chapter 4 Reading in Folder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Familiarize yourself with https://www.fec.gov/introduction-campaign-finance/ 	Finance	
Week 5	M 9/26	Sides, Chapter 5	Modern Campaign Strategies	
	W 9/28	Revisit Sides, pp. 82 – 84 Readings in Folder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Glynn et al. Ch 3 - Voter Study Group 	Political Polls: Types, How to Interpret, Reliability	
Week 6	M 10/3	Sides, Chapter 6 Review National Party Platforms	Political Parties and Partisanship	
	W 10/5	Readings in Folder	Party Competition Impacts	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gamm & Kousser, 2021 - Tausanovitch, & Warshaw, 2018 		
Week 7	M 10/10	Sides, Chapter 11	State and Local	LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE OCT 11
	W 10/12	Sides, Chapter 11	State and Local	
Week 8	M 10/17	No Class – Work on Exam		Exam #1 Due by Midnight
	W 10/19	Revisit Judicial Elections Section of Chapter 11, pp. 321 – 323 Berry, 2015	Judicial Elections	
Week 9	M 10/24	Sides Chapter 10	Congressional	
	W 10/26	Sides, Chapter 10	Congressional	
Week 10	M 10/31	Sides, Chapter 9, pp. 256 - 261 Readings in Folder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debating the Electoral College - Top 3 Pros & Cons 	Presidential Campaigns – How We Select	
	W 11/2	Sides, Chapter 9 Remainder	Presidential Campaigns	
Week 11	M 11/7		In-class activities: Campaign ad analysis and & Mock Election	Part 2 of Analysis Due Bring Campaign Ads from paper to class. We will analyze some of them as a class. TOMORROW IS ELECTION DAY!
	W 11/9	No reading assigned but consume election returns through at least 3 <i>different</i> media sources	Election results discussion and analysis	
Week 12	M 11/14	Chapter 7	Interest Groups	
	W 11/16	Chapter 8 Hayes & Lawless, 2018.	Media	
Week 13	M 11/21	Chapter 12 & Chapter 13	Voter Participation & Choice	
	W 11/23	No Class – Holiday		
Week 14	M 11/28	Chapter 12 & Chapter 13	Voter Participation & Choice	

	W 11/30	Chapter 14	Democracy in Action or a Broken System?	
Week 15	M 12/5		Discussion Recommendations Review Self-Grading Final Class Activities and Resources	Part 3 & Full Combined Report Due Submit Course Engagement Self-Grading
Finals Week		Final Exam		Exam #2 Due 12/12 by 12PM

Course Policies

Late Work

Assignments can be submitted late for a 20% deduction on the original grade. If you experience a life event, illness, or significant issue that you believe will impact your ability to meet deadlines and participate in your classes, you are encouraged to reach out to the Dean of Students for support: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos>. They can help advocate on your behalf, let you know what your best options are, and reach out to each one of your professors.

Use of Class Recordings

Upon request, I will record class. However, to respect each of your classmate's privacy, our policy together will be to not share recorded conversations on any other platform. We want to have open discussions, and your classmates have not signed up to be exposed on the internet.

TTU Policies

Texas Tech Policies on Religious Holy Days, ADA Support, Academic Integrity:
<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpc/RequiredSyllabusStatements.php>

LGBTQIA support and connections & Title IX resources:
<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpc/RecommendedSyllabusStatements.php>

Basic Needs

If at any time during the semester, you face challenges accessing regular food and housing and believe this may affect your performance in the course, you are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students for support, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/>. If you are located at the Waco campus you also have access to MCC's food pantry, <http://www.mclennan.edu/completion-center/food-pantry>. If you are located at the Lubbock campus, you have access to the TTU Food Pantry <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/foodpantry.php>. In addition, if you feel comfortable, please feel open to notifying me so that I can assist in connecting you with university and community resources specific to your area of needed support.