Course Description

This course focuses on the roles of parties, campaigns, and elections in American politics. It is intended to provide students with the opportunity to read, talk, and think about how democracy in the U.S. works. We will focus on the structure of political parties both within the electorate and within government, the decisions underlying candidates’ decisions during campaigns, and the consequences of these decisions in the form of election outcomes and policy outputs.

Graduate Research Consultant

In this research-exposure course, you will be working with a Graduate Research Consultant, [John Cluverius], who will assist you with your research project. The GRC Program is sponsored by the Office for Undergraduate Research (www.unc.edu/depts/our), and you may be able to use this research-exposure course to meet a requirement of the Carolina Research Scholars Program (http://www.unc.edu/depts/our/students/students_crsp.html). I encourage you to visit the OUR website to learn about how you might engage in research, scholarship and creative performance while you are at Carolina.

Required Textbooks

The required reading materials are as follows and are available at the university bookstore. You may also be able to find them online at a substantial discount.


Any readings that are not contained within either of these books will be made available for students to download from the course’s Sakai page.
Grading

Your grade in this course will be determined by each of the following components:

1. 30% – Midterm exam
2. 30% – Final exam
3. 30% – Analytical essay
4. 10% – Participation

Below is a description of UNC’s grading system.

A Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The A grade states clearly that the student has shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue.

B Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.

C A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The C grade states that while not yet showing any unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.

D A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The D grade states that the student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in the academic field.

F For whatever reasons, an unacceptable performance. The F grade indicates that the students performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content. A grade of F should warrant questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken.

The table below describes this course’s grading scale. Grades will be rounded to the nearest percentage point and will be posted on Sakai in a timely manner. I will return tests, essays, and other assignments to you as quickly as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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</tbody>
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Expectations and Procedures

Discussions and the participation grade

The in class discussions we will have are designed to explore a topic in greater depth than in the lecture. I expect everyone to be well-prepared and respectful to one another during these discussions. Your participation grade will be based on both the quantity and the quality of your contributions to our discussions. It is incumbent upon students to finish the daily reading before class begins so that we may have fruitful discussions.

Analytical Essays

You will write a ten page — not counting headers and footers — analytical essay for this course. The text should be double spaced and in 12 point Times New Roman font. Please justify your text; justified text is easier for me to read. You should use margins of either 1 or 1.25 inches. I expect you to use parenthetical citations each time you cite material from a reading. You will need to include a properly formatted works cited page. Do not include direct quotes in your papers.

You will — with my approval — select the topic of your paper. This topic should be framed as a research question. For example, what determines people's vote choices? Once a research question has been approved, students should perform a literature review. This review should make up a large portion of the papers. What have previous studies found? What are the limitations of the literature? What remains unanswered or inadequately answered? You should then develop a brief research design — including a properly formulated hypothesis that is falsifiable — that addresses the deficiency you uncovered in prior work. You will work closely with both myself and the Graduate Research Consultant on this portion of the project.

Your grade will be determined by (1) the completeness of your argument, (2) the strength of your analysis, and (3) the strength of your writing. Hard copies of your papers are due in class on 4/25. Papers will be docked 10 percentage points for each day they are late. If you turn in your paper after but on the same day as class, that is considered one day late.

Exams

There will be two exams in this class: a midterm and a (somewhat) cumulative final. Approximately half of the points in each test will come from the readings while the remainder will come from my lectures and our discussions.

Technology

Silence your phone’s ringer or turn it off entirely. I know what it looks like when students attempt to text during class, so do not bother trying to hide it. If I see you texting during class, your participation grade will suffer. You will be able to access my slides on Sakai. You are free to bring your laptops, but be aware that I will not allow them if they become a distraction to either me or to your classmates.
Disabilities
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (1) contact the office of Learning Disabilities at UNC (http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds/index.html) and (2) bring a letter to the instructor (me) indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first few days of class.

Honor Code
You may not give or receive any assistance while taking any examinations or completing any of the class assignments. Sentences, ideas, etc. cannot come directly from the Internet or any other reference material unless they are properly cited. For further details, please refer to the University Honor Code at http://honor.unc.edu/.

Communication
I make every effort to communicate to you my expectations, your responsibilities, and the substantive information covered in this course. I will send e-mails to the entire class. I maintain a Sakai site for the class, and I will make announcements and issue some reminders in class. Note that I will only send e-mail out to your UNC e-mail accounts as listed on the course roster in Sakai. I will not keep track of any other e-mail addresses that you might use. I am also very easy to reach if you need to communicate with me. Come to my office hours or even better, send me an email. It is important for you to stay in touch, particularly if any problems arise.

I don’t like to change exam schedules. If a situation arises where I need to give a make-up exam, I reserve the right to give it during the final week of the semester. I reserve the right to give a make-up exam that differs substantially from the normal exam in order to protect the integrity of the exam process. I (and probably most other instructors) will be much more understanding if you just communicate with me early and up front.

Tentative Course Outline
The course outline described below is tentative and subject to change at my discretion. The readings from Campaigns & Elections are marked “Sides” while those from New Directions in American Political Parties are marked “Stonecash.” The rest of the readings are available on Sakai.

- **1/10:** Course introduction
  - “Reading Guide for Social Sciences”
- **1/15:** Why parties?
  - Sides ch. 1
- **1/17:** Electoral systems
  - Sides ch. 2 and 6
- **1/22**: Party organizations
  - Stonecash ch. 5
- **1/24**: Party activists
  - Stonecash (not the reader) “Political Parties: Tensions Between Unified Party Images and Localism”
- **1/29**: Parties in government
  - Stonecash ch. 12 and 13
- **1/31**: Party coalitions and realignments
  - Stonecash ch. 1-3
  - Mayhew chapter 2-3 “Electoral Realignments”
- **2/5**: The party in the electorate: partisanship
  - Stonecash ch. 6
- **2/7**: The party in the electorate: ideology
- **2/12**: Party and candidate positioning
  - Sides ch. 3
- **2/14**: Party polarization
  - Stonecash ch. 8
- **2/19**: Catch up and review
- **2/21**: Midterm exam
- **3/21**: Philosophy of science
  - TBD
- **2/28**: Political participation and mobilization
  - Sides ch. 11
- **3/5**: Voting behavior
  - Sides ch. 12
- **3/7**: Campaign strategy
  - Sides ch. 5
- **3/12**: No class (spring break)
- **3/14**: No class (spring break)
- **3/19**: Campaign financing
• 3/21: New media
  – Sides ch. 7
  – Stonecash ch. 4

• 3/26: Political advertising
  – Corrigan and Brader “Campaign Advertising”
  – Franz et al “Campaign Advertising and American Democracy” ch. 1-2

• 3/28: Incumbency and candidate quality

• 4/2: Primary Elections
  – Sides ch. 8

• 4/4: General elections
  – Sides ch. 9

• 4/9: Presidential debates
  – Sides ch. 10

• 4/11: The electoral college
  – Sides ch. 13

• 4/16: The consequences of elections
  – Stonecash ch. 14

• 4/18: Do campaigns matter?
  – Gelman and King “Why Are American Presidential Election Campaign Polls So Variable When Votes Are So Predictable?”
  – Kaufman, Shaw, and Petrocik “Unconventional Wisdom” chapter 8

• 4/23: Voter fraud

• 4/25: Catch up and review
  – Turn in your essay

• 5/7: Final exam - 8:00 AM