

*Wright State University***Professor:** Lee Hannah, Ph.D.**Location:** 286 Millett Hall**Office:** 317 Millett Hall**Twitter:** @LeeHannahWSU #PLS4030**Dates:** August 29 - December 17, 2018**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:20 PM**Email:** lee.hannah@wright.edu**Office Hours:** Tuesdays (1:00 - 3:00) and by appointment (set up via e-mail)**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course focuses on campaigns and elections. We will primarily focus on elections in the United States and use the 2018 Midterm elections and statewide elections in Ohio as motivating examples. However, many of the principles that we will learn in class will be applicable to other countries. This is not a class in punditry. In this course, you will be exposed to leading scholarship on political campaigns while becoming a more effective and discriminating consumer of political information.

While many of us are likely to have a rooting interest in who wins the election, the primary focus will be on developing a deeper understanding of how electoral rules structure the political process, how broader economic, political and historical realities shape electoral outcomes, how campaigns make strategic choices to win elections, and how voters ultimately decide. The course will culminate with the class creating an exit poll, conducting the exit poll on Election Day, and analyzing the data from the poll.

Learning Goals and Objectives:

By the conclusion of the course:

- 1) Students will evaluate the historical and constitutional origins of campaigns and elections.
- 2) Students will learn how and why campaigns and elections have changed over time.
- 3) Students will examine different theories related to vote choice, mobilization, and the persuasive effects of campaigns.
- 4) Students will compare and contrast the 2018 election to historical elections and to scholarly theories of elections.
- 5) Students will learn about the different strategies candidates employ to win elections. These include: fundraising, advertising, and mobilizing voters.
- 6) Students will develop research and writing skills related to analyzing exit polls and testing theories related to opinion formation and voting.

Reading Materials:

- There is no required text in this class. We will read several book chapters and articles from newspapers and academic journals. Many of your assignments will be tied to the readings.
- Additional readings related to specific events in the 2018 election will be assigned throughout the course

Additional readings will be available online, posted on Pilot, or available through the Wright State University library.

Methods for Learning and Teaching: This class will include a mix of lecture, discussion, and group activities. Your attendance is critical for succeeding in this class.

Make-Up Assignments: These absences may include missing class for a University-sanctioned activity (with proper documentation), illness, religious observance, or family emergency. In case of an emergency, please contact me and we can work together on keeping you on track in the class. If you have children and have any days where childcare falls through, you are welcome to bring them to class.

Late Work Policy: Assignments turned in late will be penalized 5% per day.

EXPECTATIONS

Academic Honesty: All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. Please consult the [Code of Student Conduct](#) for academic integrity.

Be Flexible: While the syllabus represents an agreement between us, I reserve the right to revise and modify it throughout the course if it is necessary to achieve our goals. Situations beyond either of our control can also emerge that require changes to the course. I will notify you of any changes made throughout the course.

Civility: Each of us in the classroom will have differing opinions about the candidates standing for election. And given recent elections and events, it's likely that many of these races will become negative and personal. Regardless, class discussions should be conducted with civility. Feel free to disagree with others, but personal attacks on your classmates will not be tolerated. "Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected."¹

DISABILITY

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated. It is your responsibility to notify me during the first week of the semester if such accommodations are needed. If you have questions about this, contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) at 937-775-5680 or disability_services@wright.edu.

ASSIGNMENTS

Homework Assignments (30% of final grade) These assignments will be brief and are primarily intended to have you bring material in for group and in-class discussions. These will be graded for completion. We will have 6 of these over the term worth 5% each.

Midterm Exam (20% of final grade) The midterm exam material will be drawn from class discussions and the readings from weeks 1 through 7. The exam is intended to assess your knowledge of class content and your ability to apply relevant concepts. You will receive a review guide during Week 6 that will go over the format of the exam and key concepts.

Exit Poll Project (40% of final grade) The exit poll project is the most significant project for the course and is designed to give you first-hand experience in campaigns and elections. The prompt for the exit poll project is posted on Pilot and available [online](#).

¹Source: <https://civility.utk.edu/principles/>

Participation and Engagement (10% of final grade) Your participation in class discussion and group assignments is expected. Your grade will also reflect your engagement in class. If the instructor observes that you are consistently off task (working on other materials, playing on computer or phone, etc.), you will lose attendance credit for the day.

CLASS SCHEDULE:²

The class schedule includes information on the class content for the week. Required readings should be read before the start of the week and will be used to motivate class discussion and illustrations. I include suggested readings for your own reference. You may find that you want to access some of these readings as you are preparing your exit polling project. You will not be evaluated on any information from the suggested readings. Each of the readings that are available online have hyperlinks attached that will take you to the web link or to the link associated with Dunbar Library. If you are logged in to the library, you should be able to download PDFs from there. If a reading does not have a hyperlink, the PDF of the reading is posted on Pilot.

Week 1 - August 28 and 30

Course Introduction - Why study campaigns and elections?

Required Readings:

- 1) U.S Constitution [Article I: Sections 1-5](#).³
- 2) Hamilton, Alexander. (1788 February 22). [Federalist #59](#). *The Federalist Papers*.

Week 2 - September 4 and 6

How do electoral rules shape campaigns and elections?

Required Readings:

- 1) Anzia, Sarah F. 2013. "Timing and Turnout: The Basics." Ch. 1 in *Timing and turnout: How off-cycle elections favor organized groups*. University of Chicago Press.
- 2) Wasserman, David. (2018, January 25). "[Hating Gerrymandering is Easy. Fixing it is Harder.](#)" *FiveThirtyEight*.

DUE: Homework #1 submit to Dropbox before class on Tuesday, September 4.

Suggested Readings:

- Abramowitz, Alan I., Brad Alexander and Matthew Gunning. 2006. "[Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections.](#)" *Journal of Politics* 68(1): 75-88.
 - Campbell, James E. 1987 "[The revised theory of surge and decline.](#)" *American Journal of Political Science* 31(4): 965-979.
- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/polp.12235>

Week 3 - September 11 and 13

How have campaigns changed over time? Do campaigns matter?

Required Readings:

- 1) Sides, John, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossman, and Keena Lipsitz. 2015. "The Transformation of American Campaigns." Chapter 3 in *Campaigns and Elections. Second Edition* (pp. 52-81). New York: W.W. Norton and Company.
- 2) Feltus, William J., Kenneth M. Goldstein, and Matthew Dallek. 2018. "Political Math: How Campaigns Matter." Ch. 2 in *Inside Campaigns: Elections through the Eyes of Political Professionals. 2nd Edition* Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.

²Students are responsible for knowing both university and course schedules.

The academic calendar is available at: <https://www.wright.edu/registrar/academic-calendar>.

³The link takes you to an annotated Constitution that includes commentary.

Week 4 - September 18 and 20

The 2018 Midterm Elections - What's at stake?

Required Readings:

- 1) Silver, Nate. (2018, August 18). "[How FiveThirtyEight's Model Works.](#)" *FiveThirtyEight*.⁴
- 2) Balmert, Jessie. (2018, August 13). "[Ohio governor's race: How Mike DeWine navigates the GOP battlefield of Trump versus Kasich.](#)" *Cincinnati Enquirer*.
- 3) Green, Joshua. (2018, July 9). "[The Progressive Populist Who Wants to Help Democrats Win Back the Rust Belt.](#)" *Bloomberg Businessweek*.
- 4) Tobias, Andrew J. (2018, June 19). "[Jim Renacci has spent his election bashing his 'career politician' opponents, Republican and Democrat alike.](#)" *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.
- 5) Wartman, Scott. (2 July 2018). "[In Ohio, Democratic U.S. Senator Sen. Sherrod Brown may ride Trump country to re-election.](#)" *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

DUE: Homework #2 submit to Dropbox before class on Tuesday, September 18.

Suggested Reading:

- Wasserman, David. (2015, July 19). "[Urban Resurgence is a Double-Edged Sword for Democrats.](#)" *FiveThirtyEight*.

Week 5 - September 25 and 27

Who runs?

Required Readings:

- 1) Fox, Richard L. and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2005. "[To Run or Not to Run for Office: Explaining Nascent Political Ambition.](#)" *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 642-659.

Suggested Readings:

- Herrnson, Paul S., J. Celeste Lay, and Atiya Kai Stokes. 2003. "[Women Running as Women: Candidate Gender, Campaign Issues, and Voter-Targeting Strategies.](#)" *The Journal of Politics* 65(1): 244-255.
- Maestas, Cherie D., Sarah Fulton, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone. 2006. "[When to Risk It? Institutions, Ambitions, and the Decision to Run for the U.S. House.](#)" *American Political Science Review* 100(2): 195-208.
- Shames, Shauna L. 2015. "[American women of color and rational non-candidacy: When silent citizenship makes politics look like old white men shouting.](#)" *Citizenship Studies* 19(5): 553-569.

Week 6 - October 2 and 4

Can data analysts win an election?

Required Readings:

- 1) Issenberg, Sasha. (2012 December 19). "[How Obama's Team Used Big Data to Rally Voters.](#)" *Technology Review*.
- 2) Johnson, Eliana. (2016 September 13). "[Why Rob Portman is Crushing His Opponent.](#)" *National Review*.
- 3) Kilgore, Ed. (2016 December 14). "[Clinton Campaign May Have Been Too Smart to Win.](#)" *NY Times Magazine*.
- 4) Dove, Edward-Isaac. (2016 December 14). "[How Clinton lost Michigan - and blew the election.](#)" *Politico*.

DUE: Homework #3 submit to Dropbox before class on Tuesday, October 2.

Suggested Reading:

- Campbell, J. E., Norpoth, H., Abramowitz, A. I., Lewis-Beck, M. S., Tien, C., Erikson, R. S., ... Jerme-Speziari, V. (2017). "[A recap of the 2016 election forecasts](#)". *PS: Political Science Politics*, 50(2), 331-338.

⁴You can also access the accompanying podcast [here](#)

- Silver, Nate. 2012. "Are You Smarter Than a Television Pundit?" Chapter 2 in *The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail - But Some Don't* (pp. 47-73). New York: Penguin.

Week 7 - October 9 and 11

What role do the parties play in elections?

Required Readings:

- 1) Azari, Julia. (2017 December 12). "[How could Roy Moore win? Because parties are weak and partisanship is strong.](#)" *Vox*.
- 2) Mason, Lilliana. (2016 March 10). "[Why are Americans so angry this election season? Here's new research that helps explain it.](#)" *The Washington Post*.
- 3) Mason, Lilliana. 2018. "Identity-Based Democracy." Ch. 1 in *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

DUE: Homework #4 submit to Dropbox before class on Tuesday, October 9.

Suggested Readings:

- Karol, David. 2009. "Explaining Party Position Change: Theory and Method." Chapters 1 and 2 in *Party Position Change in American Politics*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Theriault, Sean. (2014, January 10). "[Polarization we can live with. Partisan warfare is the problem.](#)" *Washington Post*.
- Yglesias, Matthew. (2018, May 3). "[4 political science lessons from Kanye West's embrace of Donald Trump.](#)" *Vox*.

Week 8 - October 16 and 18

October 16 - MIDTERM EXAM

October 18 - No class

Week 9 - October 23 and 25⁵

Designing an Exit Poll

Required Reading:

- 1) DeSilver, Drew. (2016, November 2). "[Just how does the general election exit poll work, anyway?](#)" *Pew Research Center*.
- 2) Cohn, Nate. (2018, February 27). "[Trump Losing College-Educated Whites? He Never Won Them in the First Place.](#)" *The New York Times*.
- 3) Montanaro, Domenico. (2018, May 21). "[Election Night Shakeup: Here Come the New 'Exit' Polls.](#)" *NPR*.

DUE: Preliminary Exit Poll Assignment - Bring to class on Tuesday, October 23.

Week 10 - October 30 and November 1

Final preparations for exit poll.

Required Reading:

TBA

Week 11 - November 6 and 8

November 6 - **Election Day - No class for exit polling**

November 8 - Election and exit polling recap

Required Reading:

TBA

⁵Wright State's College of Liberal Arts is hosting a panel on the midterm election on Tuesday, October 23 from 3:30 to 5:00 PM in Fawcett 101. Your attendance can substitute for one homework assignment

Week 12 - November 13 and 15

Learning to analyze and evaluate exit poll data

Required Reading:

1) Kellstedt, Paul M. and Guy D. Whitten. 2013. "Getting to Know Your Data: Evaluating Measurement and Variations." Ch. 5 in *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

DUE: Homework #5 - submit to Dropbox before class on Tuesday, November 13.

Week 13 - November 20

Learning to analyze and evaluate exit poll data (Continued)

November 22 - Thanksgiving Day

Required Reading:

TBA

Week 14 - November 27 and 29

How do presidential elections differ from other races?

Required Reading:

1) Streb, Matthew J. 2016. "The Electoral College." Chapter 9 in *Rethinking American Electoral Democracy, Third Edition*. (pp. 160-180.). New York: Routledge.

2) Shaw, Daron. 2006. "The Truth About Electoral College Strategies." Ch. 3 in *The Race to 270: The Electoral College and the Campaign Strategies of 2000 and 2004*. (pp. 41-60). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

DUE: Homework #6 - submit to Dropbox before class on Tuesday, November 27.

Week 15 - December 4 and 6

What is the legacy of this election? What should we expect in 2020?

Required Reading:

TBA

Suggested Readings:

Sulkin, Tracy. 2005. "A Theory of Issue Uptake." Chapter 2 in *Issue Politics in Congress*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Canes-Wrone, Brandice, David W. Brady, and John F. Cogan. 2002. "[Out of Step, Out of Office: Electoral Accountability and House Members' Voting](#)." *American Political Science Review* 96(1): 127-140.

DUE: Exit Poll Project - submit to Dropbox by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, December 11.

No Final Exam.