

# Political Science 118-1

## US Elections: Rules, Strategies, and Outcomes

Fall 2017

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30-11:45 AM

Eaton Hall 206

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### Overview

This course examines election laws and political campaigns in the United States. The overall focus of the class will be on how rules, including the US Constitution, public policies, and party norms, affect the ways that strategic campaigns pursue voters. We will also engage questions like: How do voters make up their minds? Why do candidates choose particular strategies? How effective are those strategies at winning votes? We will spend some time diagnosing the 2016 election and the subsequent political climate.

### Readings

All books from which we will read more than two full chapters are available at the bookstore. They are:

1. Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel and John Zaller, *The Party Decides* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 2008.
2. Katherine Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 2016.
3. Eitan Hersh, *Hacking the Electorate*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2015.

### Assignments

1. **Weekly response.** By midnight each Sunday night, each student must post a brief (5-10 sentences) response to the readings on the course website. The response can be a thoughtful question or observation. It can respond to a single reading or synthesize multiple readings. A student may also contribute by responding to another student's post. Evaluations of these responses will count toward the participation grade.

2. **Short paper.** A 4-5 paper that will require students to attend, in person, an actual campaign/election event.
3. **Midterm Exam**
4. **Final Exam**

## **Grading**

Participation/Weekly Responses	15%
Short Paper	25%
Midterm	20%
Final Exam	40%

## **Course Policies**

1. No electronic devices, including laptop computers, are permitted. If you have a special reason why an electronic device is necessary, please see me.
2. On-time attendance is mandatory. If you are to be late or miss a class, you should let me know ahead of time. Unexcused late arrivals or absences will result in grading penalties. Of course, in the event of a personal or family emergency, please see me.
3. Eating in class is not permitted. Beverages are permitted.
4. Late papers will be substantially down-graded unless you have discussed with me ahead of time or in the event of an emergency.
5. Should an illness or other excused absence require a student to miss the midterm exam, a 5-page paper will be assigned in its place.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students must familiarize themselves with the university's policies on academic integrity. Your objective should be to stay so far away from the line of cheating that your work could never possibly be attributed to someone else and no one would ever possibly accuse you of offering someone else's work as your own.

## Schedule

### September 6: Introductory Meeting

### September 11, 13: Foundations

#### Readings

- 1.) U.S. Constitution. I 1-4, II 1, IV4, V  
Amendments 1, 10, 12, 14-15, 17, 19, 22-23, 26
- 2.) *Federalist* 10
- 3.) Nathaniel Persily, "The Place of Competition in American Election Law, in the Marketplace of Democracy," *Scholarship at Penn Law*, Paper 96, 2006.

### September 18, 20: Political Parties

#### Readings

- 1.) Cohen et al (2008), Ch 1-5
- 2.) The 2016 Democratic and Republican Platforms
- 3.) Nelson Polsby, *Consequences of Party Reform* (1983), Ch. 1 and 5

### September 25, 27: Party Nomination Rules

#### Readings

- 1.) Caroline Tolbert and Peeverill Squire (eds.), "Symposium: Reforming the Presidential Nomination Process," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 42 (2009), 27-79.
- 2.) Eric McGhee, et al. "A Primary Cause of Partisanship? Nomination Systems and Legislator Ideology," *American Journal of Political Science*, 58 (2014): 337-351.

### October 2, 4: Money

#### Readings

- 1.) *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010)

### October 9: No Class, Columbus Day

### October 11: Midterm Exam

## **October 16, 18: Redistricting**

### Readings

- 1.) Edward Tufte, “The Relationship Between Seats and Votes in Two-Party Systems,” *American Political Science Review* (67) 1973: 540-555.
- 2.) Excerpts from *Vieth v. Jubelirer* (2004)
- 3.) *Romo v. Detzner* (2014).
- 4.) Nicholas Stephanopoulos and Eric McGhee, “Partisan Gerrymandering and the Efficiency Gap,” *University of Chicago Law Review* (831) 2015.
- 5.) News about *Gill v. Whitford* (2017)

## **October 23, 25: The Voting Rights Act, Racial Gerrymandering**

### Readings

- 1.) Excerpts from *Thornburg v. Gingles* (1986)
- 2.) Excerpts from *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)
- 3.) Stephen Ansolabehere, Nathaniel Persily, and Charles Stewart, “Race, Region, and Vote Choice in the 2008 Election: Implications for the Future of the Voting Rights Act.” *Harvard Law Review* (123) 2010: 1385-1436.
- 4.) Sophie Schuit and Jon Rogowski, “Race, Representation, and the Voting Rights Act,” *American Journal of Political Science* (61) 2017: 513-526.

## **October 30, November 1: Incumbency, Term Limits, and Competitiveness**

### Readings

- 1.) Stephen Ansolabehere and James Snyder, “The Incumbency Advantage in U.S. Elections,” *Election Law Journal* 1 (2002) 315-338.
- 2.) John M. Carey, et al. “The Effects of Term Limits on State Legislature: A New Survey of the 50 States,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 31 (2006): 105-134.
- 3.) Bernard Fraga and Eitan Hersh, “Are Americans Stuck in Uncompetitive Enclaves? An Appraisal of U.S. Electoral Competition.” Working Paper.

## **November 6, 8: Bush v. Gore, Electoral College**

### Readings

- 1.) Excerpts from *Bush v. Gore* (2000)
- 2.) Daron R. Shaw, *The Race to 270* (U Chicago Press, 2006), Ch. 3-4.

## **November 13, 15, 20: Voting Access and Voter Suppression**

### Readings

- 1.) Barry C. Burden, et al, "Election Laws, Mobilization, and Turnout: The Unanticipated Consequences of Electoral Reform." Forthcoming in *American Journal of Political Science*, 2013.
- 2.) Marc Meredith and Neil Malhotra, "Convenience Voting Can Affect Election Outcomes," *Election Law Journal* (10) 2011, 227-253.
- 3.) David Nickerson, "Do Voter Registration Drives Increase Participation? For Whom and When?" *Journal of Politics* 77 (1) 2015, 88-101.
- 4.) Sarah Anzia, "Election Timing and the Electoral Influence of Interest Groups," *Journal of Politics* 73 (2) 2011: 412-427.
- 5.) Zoltan Hajnal, et al, "Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes," *Journal of Politics* 79 (2) 2017, 363-379.
- 6.) Justin Grimmer, et al "Comment on 'Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes,'" Forthcoming in *Journal of Politics*, 2017.

## **NOVEMBER 20: PAPER DUE**

## **November 22 – No Class, Thanksgiving Break**

## **November 27, 29: Data and Targeting in the Ground Campaign**

### Readings

- 1.) Eitan Hersh, *Hacking the Electorate*, Ch 2-3, 5-7.
- 2.) Ryan Enos and Eitan Hersh, "Party Activists as Campaign Advertisers: The Ground Campaign as a Principal-Agent Problem." *American Political Science Review*, 109 (2): 252-278.

## **December 4, 6, 11: The Voter's Eye View and the Constrained Message**

### Readings

- 1.) Donald P. Green, et al., *Partisan Hearts and Minds* (New Haven: Yale UP) 2002, Ch. 1-2.
- 2.) Alan Gerber, et al, "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment," *American Political Science Review* 102 (2008): 33-48.
- 3.) Eitan D. Hersh, "Political Hobbyism: A Theory of Mass Behavior" Working Paper, 2017.
- 4.) Katherine Cramer, *The Politics of Resentment*, 2016.

## **December 19, 3:30: Final Exam**