Politics is “who gets what, when, and how” (Lasswell 1939). In this course we will seek to understand how voting, campaigning, and elections function to determine who gets what, when, and how in American politics. From the voting perspective, we will examine how voters make decisions, such as which candidates to support and how to participate in elections. Considering campaigns, we will examine how candidates and campaigns work together to persuade and mobilize voters to win elections. In thinking about elections, we will explore the purpose of elections, as well as the impact of various electoral institutions. This course is designed to develop (1) your substantive understanding of how voters, campaigns, and elections operate in the U.S., and (2) skills necessary for careers in the broad field of politics. In service of these two goals, all assignments have been carefully crafted in conversation with individuals who actively work in political campaigns, field operations, analytics, communications, and finance to help prepare you for real-world experience.
Ultimate Learning Outcome

Students should be able to develop and communicate in writing a succinct, innovative, and well-researched campaign strategy. Students should be able to design a website for a congressional candidate that accurately reflects such a strategy and communicate the justification for the web design and strategy in a memo. Students should show evidence of anticipating the strategic responses of their opponents in the strategies that they develop, as well as acknowledging limitations of their proposed strategies.

Mediating Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to conduct research on a congressional district and candidate and apply class concepts to explain the patterns.

Students should be able to evaluate the effectiveness of campaign mobilization and persuasion strategies, considering the conditions under which each might be effective.

Students should be able to develop and propose realistic campaign spending plans that anticipate the behavior of their opponents.

Students should enhance their concise writing skills.

Foundational Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to identify, define, and explain the significance of American electoral institutions (e.g. electoral college, laws governing voter eligibility and voting modes, redistricting, primary elections) [Classes 1-2]

Students should understand and execute the basics of web design [Class 1, Class 3]

Students should be able to define and explain the importance of the four theories of voting (sociological, psychological, retrospective, and rational actor) [Class 3]. Students should be able to evaluate the evidence of the four theories and explain which factors contribute most to voter turnout and vote choice [Classes 4-6].

Students should be able to describe the function and purpose of modern campaigns. Students should be able to explain patterns in campaign spending. Students should be able to explain common strategies for mobilization and persuasion [Classes 7-8].
Teaching Philosophy

My approach to teaching is guided by three fundamental goals. First, I aim to foster the development of critical thinking skills. Second, I seek to prepare students to achieve their academic and professional goals by giving them opportunities to enhance the skillsets that most closely relate to their goals. Third, I strive to promote an inclusive classroom in which students of all demographic, ideological, or political backgrounds are comfortable engaging with one another in class discussions.

My Expectations

I have high expectations for my students! This class will be challenging, but I am confident that you can succeed if you take the assignments seriously, actively engage with the material—and each other—in class, and seek help when needed. My goal is to make this course, including lectures and assignments, worth your time. I expect that you read the assigned material and complete short assignments before the beginning of class. I acknowledge that everyone learns differently, which is why I assess learning in a variety of ways. However, if at any point you feel that you are falling behind in the course, I encourage—and expect—you to talk with me so that we can work out a solution together. The sooner you come to me, the better I will be able to help you.

Assessment

Over the course of the session, you will be asked to complete several shorter assignments that will build up to a final project aimed at helping you develop, design, and communicate a campaign strategy for a congressional candidate. The final project is to design a website for your congressional candidate and write a brief, 2-page memo that uses course concepts to justify the decisions you made in creating the website. Throughout the term, you will have ample opportunities to receive feedback from me and your peers. Short descriptions of each assignment are included on the syllabus below, and I will provide detailed guidelines for each assignment on TritonEd.

Class Participation: 15%
Shorter Assignments:
  - Getting to Know Your District: 5%
  - Candidate Bio: 5%
  - Candidate Issue Priorities: 15%
  - Candidate Spending Plan: 10%
  - Response to Opponent Plan Memo: 10%
Final Project:
  - Website Design and Content: 25%
  - Justification Memo: 15%
**Class Participation:** 15% of final grade

Class participation will be key for your learning. My goal is to have you discussing the material and learning from each other much more than I lecture. Perfect attendance is not enough to earn an A for participation – you must also actively participate in class discussions and activities. Class discussions, especially in the beginning of the course, will give you practice using the vocabulary and solidifying your understanding of key concepts. As we move through the course, our class discussions will work on deepening your understanding of the material by challenging you to apply the basic facts to current events and other examples, critically evaluate whether facets of electoral institutions, voting behavior, or campaigns fulfill their role in American representative democracy. I will provide you with a rubric that I will use to evaluate your contributions to our class discussions. Another key component of class participation will be in giving feedback to your peers on the short writing assignments. Providing this feedback will not only help your peers, but it will help you improve your skills evaluated that week.

**Shorter Assignments:** 45% of final grade

**Getting to Know Your District:** 5%, Due Monday, July 9, 2:00pm
Using Social Explorer (https://www.socialexplorer.com/a9676d974c/explore), write a 1-paragraph summary of the demographic characteristics of your congressional district. Compare the demographics of your district to the demographics of the nation as a whole and the demographics of your district prior to the previous election. Write 2-3 bullet-points speculating about how these demographic characteristics might shape your campaign strategy.

**Candidate Bio:** 5%, Due Wednesday, July 11, 2:00pm
Conduct some background research on your congressional candidate. Write a draft of the “About Me” section of your candidate’s website. Note that this should differ from the content on the candidate’s actual website, but should be similar in length (~100-200 words). You should consult news articles, the candidate’s campaign website, the candidate’s .gov website (if currently holding public office), and other sources to learn about your candidate. Write 2-3 bullet-points about what information you hope voters learn about your candidate from reading this bio and the types of voters to whom you are trying to appeal.

**Candidate Issue Priorities:** 15%, Due Monday, July 23, 2:00pm
Choose three political issues to serve as your candidate’s issue priorities. Write a paragraph or so for each issue, explaining your candidate’s position, proposed legislation, previous accomplishments, or other information relevant to the issue. You should write this content as a draft for what will appear in the “Issues” or “Priorities” section of your final project website. At the end of the document, list 3-5 bullet-points explaining why you chose these as your focus issues and any strategies you employed in communicating your candidate’s position.

**Candidate Spending Plan:** 10%, Due Monday, July 30, 2:00pm
Write a 1-page memo explaining your campaign spending plan proposal for your candidate. This memo should first outline how much money your campaign has available and how much your opponent has available (check at opensecrets.org). Discuss how the money has been spent thus far. Next, this memo should summarize your fundraising strategy (e.g. targeting small donations
from many voters, large donations from a few voters, interest groups, parties, etc.). The memo should then move on to proposing a spending plan for the remainder of the campaign. This does not need to be particularly detailed, but it should have realistic cost estimates of expenditures (e.g. approximate costs of airing TV ads, running phone banks, mailing flyers, canvassing, etc.). Include a table to summarize your proposal. This memo will be short, so choose your words carefully!

**Response to Opponent Plan Memo:** 10%, Due Wednesday, August 1, 2:00pm

On July 30th, you will receive a “leak” from your opponent’s campaign. You will get to read the candidate bio, issue priorities, and campaign spending plan from your opponent’s campaign. Your task is to write a 1-page memo addressed to your colleagues within your campaign, explaining how you think you should combat your opponent’s campaign plan. Is your original plan solid enough to defend against your opponent? What modifications to your strategy should you make in light of this new information from your opponent? This memo is designed to (1) get you thinking strategically; and (2) provide you with feedback on your current website content to allow you to make improvements before the final project is due.

**Final Project:** 40% of final grade, Due Friday, August 3, 5:59pm

If you take the short writing assignments seriously and incorporate the feedback from your classmates, you should be making good progress toward your final project throughout the term. While the final project is not long in length, it must be solid in its content and well-written. Concise communication is an essential skill in almost every job sector, and this is an excellent opportunity to develop that skill. I encourage you to look at many examples of websites from successful and unsuccessful congressional campaigns.

**Website Design and Content:** 25%

Your task is to design a campaign website for a congressional candidate running for office in 2018. I will randomly assign each student a candidate. Your website should look professional, but because this is not a web design course, I do not expect perfection and your grade will not be determined solely on your web design abilities. Thus, the content of your website is essential. The short assignments throughout the term build toward this content. At minimum, your website should include the following sections: About Me, Issue Priorities, News, Donate, and Contact. You may include other sections, such as volunteering, endorsements, social media, or other sections you deem necessary. Your website should include strategically selected pictures and may include other content, such as videos as you see fit. The content in each section should be well-researched, accurate, and well-written.

**Justification Memo:** 15%

Your final task is to write a justification memo to accompany your website. This 2-page memo should explain the reasoning behind the decisions that you made in designing the website, citing course concepts and readings. The memo should also discuss any potential drawbacks of your design and your recommendations for addressing those drawbacks.
Course Policies

Quality: Final course grades will be assigned using the following grading scale. Detailed information on expectations for written assignments will be provided. Note that grades will not be rounded up. For instance, if your final percentage is 89.9, your course grade will be a B+.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excellent work</td>
<td>Solid, above average work</td>
<td>Average work</td>
<td>Below average work</td>
<td>Substantially below expectations</td>
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<td>100-98</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>79-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>97-93</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>86-83</td>
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<td>92-90</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>82-80</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>72-70</td>
<td>C-</td>
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Attendance: Attendance in all class sessions is strongly encouraged. Especially in a summer course where there are only nine class sessions, attending each one is critical. I will not take attendance, but participation in class discussions, simulations, and activities makes up 15 percent of your course grade. In addition, exams will draw primarily on material covered in class, most of which is not covered in the course readings.

Late Policies: Late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. Late assignments will receive a five percentage point deduction to the grade on that assignment for each day late. Computer malfunctions will not be considered a legitimate excuse for submitting late assignments. I recommend regularly backing up your work on Dropbox, Google Drive, an external hard drive or flash drive, or some other system to save your work. For longer assignments, you might consider saving multiple drafts and emailing them to yourself as you work. In addition, I recommend that you take screenshots or otherwise document submissions to TritonEd or Turnitin to provide evidence that you submitted your assignment on time.

Extra Credit: Extra credit will rarely, if ever, be available. As a result, it is crucial that you do your best on each and every assignment.

Grade Appeals: I do not communicate about grades over email. If you are not in class the day an assignment or exam is passed back, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with me to pick it up. If you are unsatisfied with your grade on an assignment, you can appeal your grade within one week of the date the assignment was returned. To appeal your grade, you need to write a one-page, double-spaced explanation of why you think your work merits a higher grade. After reviewing the appeal, your assignment will be re-graded. Your grade can go up, stay the same, or go down on the re-grade. After your work is re-graded, I highly recommend that you schedule a meeting with me to discuss your work.

Academic Integrity: I expect that students take academic integrity as seriously as I do and that academic misconduct will not be an issue in this class. That said, instances of cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office. If you are unfamiliar with the University’s policy on academic integrity, please consult this website.
**Learning Disabilities:** Students with University-documented learning disabilities should make arrangements with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) as soon as possible.

**Technology:** Please turn off your cell phones before coming to class. If you are expecting an important call, please tell me before class, keep your phone on vibrate, and leave quietly when you receive the call. I prefer that you do not use your laptop or tablet in class. There is increasing evidence that students perform better academically when laptops are banned from classrooms. If you feel that you must use your laptop, please be courteous to your peers and avoid looking at distracting content that is unrelated to the course.
# Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Course readings will be drawn from academic research articles and books, political blog posts, news articles, video clips, and podcasts. All readings will be made available to you on TritonEd or via links included on the syllabus. Readings should be completed prior to class on the day in which they are assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Key Topics and Learning Outcomes</th>
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| Monday, July 2 | • Skim this website for some background on elections in the U.S. https://www.usa.gov/midterm-state-and-local-elections  
• Engage with the interactive exhibit on the Machinery of Democracy from the Smithsonian National Museum of American History [http://americanhistory.si.edu/vote/index.html](http://americanhistory.si.edu/vote/index.html)  
• Watch: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48EZKXweGDo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48EZKXweGDo) (8 minutes, 46 seconds)  
• What are the “rules” (institutions) governing U.S. elections? Who makes them and why?  
• How do electoral institutions affect voting behavior?  
• How do electoral institutions affect candidate and campaign behavior?  
• What are some of the prominent controversies over electoral institutions?  

By the end of this section, students should be able to:  
1. Explain the purpose of elections and evaluate whether American elections fulfill that goal  
2. Describe the key electoral institutions designed to facilitate elections  
3. Assess some of the current debates over electoral institutions, such as voter identification laws, redistricting, the electoral college, and primary elections.  
4. Connect the challenges and opportunities presented by electoral institutions to candidate and voter behavior |
| Wednesday, July 4 | NO CLASS (Independence Day)  
Recommended: review July 2 reading and/or get a head start on the July 9 reading. |  |
| Monday, July 9 | **GETTING TO KNOW YOUR DISTRICT ASSIGNMENT DUE**  
Choose the readings from 2 of the 4 topics below  
1. Voter ID  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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| **2. Redistricting and Gerrymandering** | Watch: CGP Grey “Gerrymandering Explained” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mky11UJb9AY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mky11UJb9AY) (5 minutes, 26 seconds)  
| **3. Electoral College** | Watch: PBS News Hour “This system calls for popular vote to determine winner” November 6, 2016 [https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/system-calls-popular-vote-determine-winner](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/system-calls-popular-vote-determine-winner), (7 minutes, 4 seconds)  

Total: Read ~15 pages, Skim 5 pages, Watch ~12 minutes

**Voting**

**Wednesday, July 11**

**CANDIDATE BIO ASSIGNMENT DUE**

Choose 2 of 4 to read before class, skim the remaining readings after class

- Why do individuals participate in politics?
- Why do individuals choose to vote for one candidate over another?
- Do voters have enough information to make rational voting decisions?
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<th>Monday, July 16</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Voter Participation</strong></td>
<td>By the end of this unit, students should be able to:</td>
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<td>• Leighley, Jan E. and Arnold Vedlitz. 1999. “Race, Ethnicity, and Political Participation: Competing Models and Contrasting Explanations.” <em>Journal of Politics</em> 61(4): 1092-1114. <strong>Read pages 1092-1097, 1110-1111</strong></td>
<td>3. Explain the theories of why individuals choose to participate (or not) in politics in the U.S., such as the resource model and the psychological models</td>
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<td>• Burns, Nancy, Kay Lehman Schlozman, Ashley Jardina, Shauna Shames, and Sidney Verba. 2018. “What’s Happened to the Gender Gap in Political Participation? How Might We Explain It? Chapter 4 in 100 Years of the Nineteenth Amendment: An Appraisal of Women’s Political Participation eds. Holly J. McCammon and Lee Ann Banaszak. <strong>Read pages 69-75, 84-85, Skim pages 75-84</strong> <a href="https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&amp;lr=&amp;id=VD9FDwAAQBAJ&amp;oi=fnd&amp;pg=PA69&amp;dq=voter+turnout+and+gender&amp;ots=KW7dBw-w0&amp;sig=ri6-fvSlogwL7CerhNQaMszBdhA#v=onepage&amp;q=voter%20turnout%20and%20gender&amp;f=false">https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&amp;lr=&amp;id=VD9FDwAAQBAJ&amp;oi=fnd&amp;pg=PA69&amp;dq=voter+turnout+and+gender&amp;ots=KW7dBw-w0&amp;sig=ri6-fvSlogwL7CerhNQaMszBdhA#v=onepage&amp;q=voter%20turnout%20and%20gender&amp;f=false</a></td>
<td>4. Explain how individuals learn about politics and evaluate whether Americans have enough information to make rational voting decisions</td>
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<td>• Spend some time using this interactive voting and registration map to look at participation patterns <a href="http://thedataweb.rm.census.gov/TheDataWeb_HotReport2/voting/voting.html">http://thedataweb.rm.census.gov/TheDataWeb_HotReport2/voting/voting.html</a></td>
<td>5. Assess the empirical evidence for the four main theories of voting, particularly within the context of the 2016 presidential election</td>
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<td>Total: Read 29 pages, Skim 9, Engage with 1 interactive map</td>
<td>7. Identify and describe patterns of party identification and vote choice over time and across demographic groups in the U.S.</td>
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<th>Wednesday, July 18</th>
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<td><strong>HALF DAY:</strong> class from 2-3:20pm</td>
<td><strong>Vote Choice Part 1</strong></td>
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Carlson, Voting, Campaigning, and Elections
• Take the News IQ Quiz from Pew Research Center http://www.pewresearch.org/quiz/the-news-iq-quiz/
• Take the How Well Do You Know the Candidates quiz by CALmatters (non-profit, non-partisan journalism organization) https://calmatters.org/articles/california-governor-race-candidates-quiz/
• Read the California Voter Information Guide for the June 2018 primary election, Skim candidate statements on pages 37-54, Lightly skim the rest of the guide

Total: Read 32 pages, Take two quizzes, Skim 1 voter guide

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**ISSUE PRIORITY ASSIGNMENT DUE**

Monday, July 23

Vote Choice Part 2
• Mutz, Diana C. 2018. “Status threat, not economic hardship, explains the 2016 presidential vote.” Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences 201718115. Read pages 1-10

Total: Read 25 pages, Engage with one interactive page

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Campaigning
### Wednesday, July 25

- **Sides, Shaw, Grossmann, and Lipsitz, *Campaigns & Elections: Rules, Reality, Strategy, Choice*, Chapter 5, **Read pages 120-129, Skim 130-132, Read 133-144**
- **Ground Game:** Watch [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epa0GO51Nt0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epa0GO51Nt0) (2 minutes, 48 seconds)
- **Impact of presidential election on congressional voting:** Watch [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=44&v=c1UQIT3k7E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=44&v=c1UQIT3k7E) (4 minutes, 24 seconds)
- **Watch Tricks of the Trade: Revealing the Secrets of Modern Campaigns** (1 hour) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sXdTkhrKY8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sXdTkhrKY8)
- **Explore spending in your district:** [https://www.opensecrets.org/races/election?id=CA](https://www.opensecrets.org/races/election?id=CA)

**Total:** Read 20 pages, Skim 3 pages, Watch 1 hour and 6 minutes of video clips

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### Monday, July 30

**CAMPAIGN SPENDING MEMO DUE**

**Mobilization**
- **Optional:** Abrajano, Marisa et al. “When Campaigns Call, Who Answers?” working paper

**Persuasion**
- Watch: Leadership LAB Conversation, example of Broockman & Kalla (2016) in action: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2663J2dVY4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2663J2dVY4)

**By the end of this unit, students should be able to:**
1. Explain the core goals and functions of political campaigns
2. Describe how modern campaigns work and assess the ways in which political science research and practitioners collaborate
3. Identify common sources of campaign contributions and patterns in campaign expenditures. Evaluate the impact of campaign spending on election outcomes
4. Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of mobilization strategies used by campaigns
5. Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of persuasion strategies used by campaigns
6. Develop an argument about the conditions under which campaigns matter (if at all)
7. Describe the connections between electoral institutions, voter behavior, and campaigns and how they work together in American representative democracy
Optional on Ethics of Political Science Experiments:


Total: Read 26 pages, Watch 8 minutes of video

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday, August 1</th>
<th>OPPONENT RESPONSE MEMO DUE</th>
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<td>Total: Read 11 pages</td>
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**FINAL PROJECT DUE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 3, 2018, 5:59PM**