

DRAFT COURSE OUTLINE

A final course syllabus will be available on the first day of the class.

TRUMP vs. BIDEN: CAMPAIGN 2020 and the ELECTION OF A LIFETIME

University of California – Washington Program

Steven L. Scully is an adjunct faculty member at UCDC and currently serves as C-SPAN's Political Editor. Scully earned his undergraduate degree from The American University in Washington, D.C and earned a Master of Science from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism in Evanston, Illinois. He is past president of the White House Correspondents' Association, served as the back-up moderator during the 2016 presidential debates, and was recently inducted into the Pennsylvania Broadcasting Hall of Fame.

After stunning the nation, and the world, with his win in 2016, President Trump is facing re-election at a moment of racial unrest, economic uncertainty and a global pandemic.

How did we reach this point? What, if any, lessons from previous presidential elections can be applied to the 2020 Road to the White House? Can President Trump duplicate his efforts this year, bringing together a coalition of voters looking for someone to 'disrupt' the establishment again? Having re-elected four of the last five incumbent presidents, what must Democrats do to win back The White House? This course will frame America's current political environment, while providing historical context and background in order to better understand a divided and highly partisan America.

This course will include:

- **An in-depth examination of the factors which led to Trump's victory and Clinton's defeat in 2016**
- **How the Trump presidency essentially lays the groundwork for his continued 'Anti-Establishment' campaign this year**
- **Historical lessons from some of the most consequential elections in modern American politics, including FDR's win in 1932; JFK in 1960; Reagan in 1980 and Obama in 2008**
- **A study of coalition politics, and how that shapes the message**
- **Reviewing the key elements of 21st century campaigns, including polling, focus groups, media buys, digital messaging and fundraising**

This campaign, as a result of coronavirus, will be unlike any other. As the campaigns chart a new path during these uncertain times, the class will provide context and perspective to better understand how we reached this point, and potentially what to expect moving ahead. We will also bring in via zoom some of the brightest political experts for insights, analysis and robust discussions.

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Reading Requirements:

AMERICAN CARNAGE: On the Front Lines of the Republican Civil War & the Rise of President Trump By Tim Alberta

HOW AMERICA'S POLITICAL PARTIES CHANGE (And How They Don't) By Michael Barone

- Additional handouts and reading material will be distributed throughout the quarter

Course Requirements:

- A 2-3 page 'Issue Memo' examining one aspect of American politics. Instructor will assign specific topics, to include role of the FEC and Money; Targeting voters with digital advertising; the science of polling & focus groups; and related issues.
- Open book quarter exam based on the required readings. Exam will consist of a series of short essay questions.
- Final Research Paper: Based on the winner of the 2020 campaign, an in-depth essay on why Biden or Trump one, the issues which shaped the race, and the state of American politics based on the results. Instructor will provide a detailed prompt in class. (7-9 pages)

Week One: Course Introduction & Overview -
How did we get here: 2016, 2018 and what to expect in November

Week Two: Understanding Money and Politics

Week Three: Understanding the 2020 GOP Strategy: White House and Congress

Week Four: Understanding the 2020 Democratic Strategy: Lessons from the Midterms

Week Five: Do Political Parties still matter?

Week Six: Campaigns that changed America: 1932: FDR & Rise of the New Deal

Week Seven: Campaigns that changed America: 1980 & the Rise of Reagan Conservatives

Week Eight: Polling, Focus Groups and gauging the mood of the Electorate

Week Nine: Campaign 2020 Results: What do they mean for the country

Week Ten: Course Review & Quarter Exam

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