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THE SCIENCE OF POLITICS: CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO - DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS FALL 2018 UCDC CONSORTIUM ELECTIVE

Professor: Ken Goldstein

E-mail: kmgoldstein@usfca.edu

Class: 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm Thursday

Office Hours: 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm Thursday, Friday 12pm to 1 pm, and by appointment

Office: Room 331

Even though we experienced an election in 2016 where the rules supposedly did not apply, anyone who hopes to pursue a career in politics – or just be a good citizen – should be familiar with some basics about the electorate and the mechanics of election campaigns. Also, although energy, hard work, creativity, and political instinct cannot be taught, there are specific technical skills that are crucial in modern campaigns. These include knowledge of the fundamental factors that drive elections and public opinion as well familiarity with survey research, statistical analysis, and media buying.

This class will teach you how to understand the fundamental factors that drive elections in America and to learn some of the skills employed by political professionals. Your assignments will require you to apply the lessons of this class to real time events. We will take special advantage of the fact that this class is taking place before consequential mid-term elections in November. We are in a data and information rich environment.

The goal in this class is to go beyond the spin and hyperbole of many election commentators about a particular contest. The goal is to help you understand how voters decide and how strategists persuade and to give you some of the technical skills to get an interesting job with a campaign. This class will combine the insights of campaign professionals with insight from the study of previous campaigns and scholarly research. It will combine theory, practice, and exploration, taking the insights of political scientists and political practitioners and rolling them into one.

READINGS

The readings in this class will come from refereed academic journals as well as media and non-scholarly accounts of campaigns and elections. Most of the journal readings are available on JSTOR (jstor.org) and the other readings are widely available on the web. I will send along copies of additional readings by e-mail. Also, you should not take this class unless you are deeply interested in American politics and keep up with it on a daily basis. There are a slew of sites available to follow politics and political news. I typically read *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* every morning. I also check in with Pollster.com to keep up to date on current polling information and subscribe to the Axios and Politico morning news digests.

DRAFT

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

The assignments represent the sort of work product that campaign strategists must do or must prove they can do to get a job in the first place. There will be four short graded take home exercises (each worth 10 points), an in-class mid-term worth 30 points, and a final project worth 30 points. I will outline the assignments and expectations in more detail in class and in written instructions.

Win Number Exercise (10 points) due September 26 at 9pm.

Survey Weighting Exercise (10 points) due October 3 at 9pm.

In-Class Mid-Term Exam – Analytical “Job” Exam (30 Points) October 11.

2018 Mid-Term Elections Analysis (10 points) due November 7.

Media Metrics Exercise (10 points) due November 20

Final Case Study (30 points) Using a hypothetical case you will create a strategic media plan for a public policy issue in a special election. Although the focus of the assignment will be on the particulars of media buying, you will need to bring in information from many different topics from the class and use the analytical tools that have been outlined in lecture and readings. You will do this project in two phases. There will be many more details to follow. The first stage will be due November 28 and the second stage on December 7.

Do not claim someone else’s work as your own – this is plagiarism. Plagiarism and cheating are violations of academic integrity. Such violations will result automatically in course failure.

TOPICS AND READINGS

AUGUST 30

Class Overview - Looking back at 2016 Election, Looking forward to 2018 Election

SEPTEMBER 6

Party Identification and the Nature of the Times

- Bartels, Larry M., and John Zaller. 2001. "Presidential Vote Models: A Recount." *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 34: 8-20. **JSTOR**
- "Forecasting the 2016 American National Elections." *PS: Political Science & Politics* / October 2016.
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/7E2243DBE3892687CE2F1D28B7D08856/S1049096516001591a.pdf/introduction.pdf>
- <http://www.npr.org/blogs/itsallpolitics/2012/08/22/159588275/are-independents-just-partisans-in-disguise>
- Achen, Chris and Larry Bartels. 2016.
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/23/opinion/campaign-stops/do-sanders-supporters-favor-his-policies.html?_r=1
- Pew Research Center. 2017. "Partisan Identification Is 'Sticky,' but About 10% Switched Parties Over the Past Year."
<http://www.people-press.org/2017/05/17/partisan-identification-is-sticky-but-about-10-switched-parties-over-the-past-year/>

SEPTEMBER 13

Voter Turnout, Mobilization, and the Changing Face of the American Electorate

- McDonald, Michael P., and Samuel L. Popkin. 2001. "The Myth of the Vanishing Voter." *American Political Science Review*, 95: 963-974. **JSTOR**
- Gerber, Alan and Donald Green 2000. "The Effects of Personal Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout." *APSR Science Review*, 94: 653-663. **JSTOR**
- Frey, William, Ruy Teixeira, and Robert Griffin. "America's Electoral Future."
<https://www.prii.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/States-of-Change-2018-Americas-Electoral-Future-3.pdf>
- Cohn, Nate. "There are More White Voters than People Think."
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/10/upshot/there-are-more-white-voters-than-people-think-thats-good-news-for-trump.html?_r=0
- Goldstein, Ken. 2015. "The Real Math Behind Hillary Clinton's Candidacy."
http://wowway.net/news/read/category/Politics/article/bloomberg_news-the_real_math_behind_hillary_clintons_candidacy-tea
- Carp, Alex. 2017. *New York Magazine*. "Can the Democrats Still Count on a Demographic Advantage."
<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/03/can-the-democrats-still-count-on-a-demographic-advantage.html>

DRAFT

SEPTEMBER 20

Putting it Together – Share and Performance

- Vavreck, Lynn. 2014. “The Myth of Swing Voters in Midterm Elections,” NYT.com, The Upshot, April 22, 2014.
- Enten, Harry. 2014a. “Mid-Term Election Turnout Isn’t So Different from Presidential Year Turnout,” 538.com, May 7, 2014.
- Goldstein, Ken, Matt Dallek and Joel Rivlin. 2014. “Even the Geeks are Polarized: The Dispute over the Real Driver in American Elections.” *The Forum*. Volume 12, Issue 2 (July 2014) - <http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/for.2014.12.issue-2/for-2014-5006/for-2014-5006.xml>
- Gary Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*” Selections to be provided.

SEPTEMBER 27

Survey Research Fundamentals

- Literary Digest Article from 1936 - <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5168/>
- Trochim, William M. “Probability Sampling” *The Research Methods Knowledge Base*, 2nd Edition. <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampprob.php>
- Coverage Error in Internet Surveys - <http://www.pewresearch.org/2015/09/22/coverage-error-in-internet-surveys/>
- Cliff Zukin, “What’s the Matter with Polling?” http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/21/opinion/sunday/whats-the-matter-with-polling.html?_r=0
- AAPOR. “An Evaluation of 2016 Election Polls.” <http://www.aapor.org/Education-Resources/Reports/An-Evaluation-of-2016-Election-Polls-in-the-U-S.aspx> - Executive Summary
- <http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/11/romney-pollsters-firm-explains-149372.html>
- <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/2340/likely-voters-registered-poll-samples>

OCTOBER 4

Primaries

- Putnam, Josh. 2015. “Everything you need to know about how the presidential primary works” *Monkey Cage* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/12/everything-you-need-to-know-about-how-the-presidential-primary-works>
- Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, “A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics,” *Perspectives on Politics* vol. 10, no. 3 (2012) 571-597. **JSTOR**
- Masket, Seth. 2014 (July 7). “How Can We Fix the Broken Primary Election System?” *PS Magazine*. **JSTOR**

OCTOBER 11 - MID-TERM EXAM

OCTOBER 18

Campaign Effects – Persuasion and Separation

- Zaller, John. 1996. “The Myth of a Massive Media Impact Revived: New Support for a Discredited Idea.” In Mutz, Sniderman and Brody, *Political Persuasion and Attitude Change*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. **COPY OF TO BE PROVIDED**
- Wilner, Elizabeth and Ken Goldstein. 2012. “Network Anchors for Romney.” *Columbia Journalism Review*.
http://www.cjr.org/swing_states_project/romney_ads_brokaw_couric.php?page=all

OCTOBER 25

Message Research, Message Development, and Message Testing

- Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman. 1992. “A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences.” *American Journal of Political Science*, 36: 579-616. **JSTOR**
- Ryan Lizza, “How to Beat Hillary Clinton.”
<http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/how-to-beat-hillary-clinton>
- Brett DiResta, “User Guide to the Dark Arts of Politics.”
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/07/opinion/campaign-stops/a-users-guide-to-the-dark-art-of-politics.html>

NOVEMBER 1

Media Strategy and Buying - Television

- Seeyle, Katherine Q. 2004. “How to Sell a Candidate to a Porsche-Driving, Leno-Loving, Nascar Fan.” *The New York Times* December 6.
- Peters, Jeremy, “For GOP Ads, CSI but Not Letterman.” *NYT* January 29, 2012.
- Ruttenberg, Jim, “Obama Data System Targeted TV Viewers.”
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/13/us/politics/obama-data-system-targeted-tv-viewers-f-or-support.html?ref=politics>

NOVEMBER 8

2018 Mid-Term Election Discussion and Review

NOVEMBER 15

Media Strategy and Buying - Digital

NOVEMBER 22 - Thanksgiving Vacation

NOVEMBER 29

Case Study Review

DECEMBER 6

Case Study Meetings