

POL 310 – Voting and Elections  
Fall 2016  
Monday-Wednesday, 3:35 – 4:50  
Schroeder 208

**Instructor:** Dr. Carl L. Palmer  
**Office:** 433 Schroeder Hall  
**Office Hours:** MW 1:00-2:00, Tuesday 4-6, or by appointment  
**Email:** clpalme [at] ilstu [dot] edu

**Course Objectives:**

The right to vote is an inalienable right of citizens in a democracy. The goal of this course is to familiarize students with an understanding of the underpinnings of elections and electoral behavior. This course will cover a wide range of topics under the heading of voting behavior and elections. How do the institutions of American democracy affect the choices citizens make? Who votes? Who doesn't? What do citizens know about politics? What does this mean for democratic outcomes? As part of this discussion, we will discuss a number of topics, which include American government, voting, political behavior, democracy, and polling and public opinion.

By the end of the course, students should be able to critically evaluate theoretical arguments regarding the measurement of and factors that influence citizen voting behavior, articulate arguments about these issues both orally and in writing, identify normative concerns regarding citizen behavior based upon the arguments we have read, and be capable of synthesizing research literature on a given topic in order to identify lacunae in the literature and conduct a research study to bridge those gaps.

To accomplish these goals, it is expected that students will attend class having already done the required reading for that day's class. Coming prepared to engage the material is imperative in order to get the most out of lecture.

**Required Readings:**

- Sides, John, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossmann, and Keena Lipsitz. 2015. *Campaigns and Elections: Rules, Reality, Strategy, Choice*. Second Edition. New York NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Additional readings will be made available via the course website on ReggieNet (or may be downloaded from [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org), or from the Milner Library website: <http://library.illinoisstate.edu/>).

**Course Policies:**

1. Exams must be taken at the times specified in the syllabus; makeup exams will be given only in the most extreme circumstances, with provided documentation of the absence.

Makeup exams will consist of four essay questions. If you know you cannot make any one of the exam dates listed in the syllabus, you should not take this class.

2. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please see the university's policies regarding plagiarism and cheating online at the Dean of Students Office website.
3. All assignments must be submitted *at the beginning of class* on the due date in the syllabus; late assignments will lose 10% credit per day late. All assignments *must* be typed unless otherwise instructed.
4. To be considered for a re-grade assignments or exams must be accompanied by a no greater than 1 page (single spaced) memo detailing your claim. Memos must provide justification for a change of grade using examples from course material, and will only be accepted after a 24-hour *cooling-off* period. Memos must be submitted within one week of the initial return date for the assignment or exam.
5. Usage of cell phones in lecture will not be permitted. Please silence all cell phones before coming to class. If I see anyone using a cell phone in class I will administer a pop quiz. Laptop computers and tablets are permissible so long as they are used for *academic* uses during lecture.
6. If you have special needs that require accommodation for exams, please let me know early on so that the appropriate measures can be taken. You will be required to provide documentation of your requirements.
7. If you have any questions at any point in the class, PLEASE ask. I will be happy to answer any questions about the course material. This includes if lecture is moving too quickly, or simply do not understand something. Keep in mind that this is YOUR responsibility.
8. Email: I strongly encourage email questions and comments. However, when you write
9. you are expected to write as you would in any professional correspondence: Capital letters to start the first word of a sentence, "Dear Professor Palmer" (or "Hi Professor Palmer") to open the email, correct spelling, capital letters in the correct places, punctuation, etc. ("Hey" is not appropriate.) It is likely that I will not answer emails phrased inappropriately or that include misspellings, etc., or I may give you a two word response, "Course Expectations," meaning that you should re-write your email in a more appropriate form and resend it. I will not answer questions that can be answered if you read the syllabus. I will either not answer or write back a one word response: "syllabus". See <http://www.phdcomics.com/comics.php?f=1795>.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### Assignments (15%):

There will be a series of exercises that will walk you through analyzing and interpreting empirical data in preparation for the final paper assignment. On these assignments, you are welcome to work with other students; however, each student must turn in their own assignment. Assignments unless otherwise noted must be typed. Due dates for these problems sets are listed in the syllabus.

#### Final Paper (25%):

There will be a required 10-12 page (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font) research paper, due on the day of the final exam. In preparation for the research paper, you are required to submit an annotated bibliography and research design. The paper topic will be of your own choosing, but must somehow relate to elections. The final paper should consist of a literature review, testable hypotheses based upon your review of the literature, a research design, and data analysis based upon either existing opinion data, or data from a survey that you conduct. Due dates are listed in the syllabus. Final papers will not be accepted from students failing to complete all assignments related to the paper. Assignments will not be accepted any later than two weeks after the original due date.

Midterm 1 (20%): Multiple choice, identification, and short answer questions.

Midterm 2 (20%): Multiple choice, identification, and short answer questions.

Final Exam (20%): The final exam *will not* be cumulative, and will consist of multiple choice, identification, and short answer questions.

### **Course Schedule:**

#### **Week 1**

Aug. 22 – Introductions and syllabus

Aug. 24 – Methods for studying elections and voting behavior

- Sides et al., Ch 1

#### **Week 2: Rules of the Game**

Aug. 29 – Electoral processes

- Sides et al., Ch 2

Aug. 31 – **APSA Meeting – no class**

#### **Week 3: Evolving American Campaigns**

Sept. 5 – **Labor Day Holiday – no class**

Sept. 7 – American campaign history

- Sides et al., Ch 3

#### **Week 4: Campaign Strategy – Paper Topics due Sept. 14**

Sept. 12 – Campaign finance

- Sides et al., Ch 4
- Ridout, Travis N., Michael M. Franz and Erika Franklin Fowler. 2015. “Sponsorship, Disclosure and Donors: Limiting the Impact of Outside Group Ads.” *Political Research Quarterly* 68(1): 154-166.

Sept. 14 - Strategies

- Sides et al., Ch 5

### **Week 5: Parties and Interest Groups – Assignment 1 due 9/21**

Sept. 19 – Sept. 10 – Parties

- Sides et al., Ch 6
- Dominguez, Casey B. K. 2011. “Does the Party Matter? Endorsements in Congressional Primaries.” *Political Research Quarterly*. 64(3): 534-44.

Sept 21 – Interest groups

- Sides et al., Ch 7
- Franz, Michael M., Erika Franklin Fowler and Travis N. Ridout. 2016. “Loose Cannons or Loyal Foot Soldiers? Toward a More Complex Theory of Interest Group Advertising Strategies.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 60(3): 738-51.

### **Week 6: Exam 1**

Sept. 26 – Exam 1 review

Sept. 28 – Exam 1

### **Week 7: Mass Media – Annotated Bibliographies due Oct. 5**

Oct. 3 – Media and campaigns

- Sides et al., Ch 8
- Fowler, Erika Franklin and Travis N. Ridout. 2009. “Local Television and Newspaper Coverage of Advertising.” *Political Communication*. 26(2): 119-136.

Oct. 5 – Negative campaigning

- Krupnikov, Yanna. 2014. “How Negativity Can Increase and Decrease Voter Turnout: The Effect of Timing.” *Political Communication*. 31(3): 446-66.
- Ridout, Travis N. and Erika Franklin Fowler. 2012. “Explaining Perceptions of Advertising Tone.” *Political Research Quarterly*. 65(1): 62-75.

### **Week 8: Campaigns**

Oct. 10 – Presidential Campaigns

- Sides et al., Ch 9
- Lipsitz, Keena, and Costas Panagopoulos. 2011. “Filled Coffers: Campaign Contributions and Contributors in the 2008 Election.” *Journal of Political Marketing* 10(1): 43-57.

Oct. 12 – Congressional Campaigns

- Sides et al., Ch 10
- Milita, Kerri, John Barry Ryan, and Elizabeth Simas. 2014. “Nowhere to Run, Nothing to Hide, or Nothing to Lose? Candidate Position-Taking in U.S. House Elections.” *Political Behavior* 36 (2): 427-49.

### **Week 9: Turnout and Participation**

Oct. 17 – Turnout

- Knack, Stephen and Martha Kropf. 1998. “For Shame! The Effect of the Community Cooperation Context on the Probability of Voting.” *Political Psychology*. 19(3): 585-99.
- Parry, Janine, Jay Barth, Martha Kropf and E. Terrence Jones. 2008. “Mobilizing the Seldom Voter: Campaign Contacts and Effects in High-Profile Elections.” *Political Behavior*. 30(1): 97-113.

Oct. 19 – Participation

- Sides et al., Ch 12
- Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review*. 89(2): 271-94.

### **Week 10: Partisanship, Ideology, and Public Opinion**

Oct. 24 – Partisanship and Ideology

- Klar, Samara. 2014. "Identity Importance and Political Engagement among American Independents." *Political Psychology*. 35(4): 577-591.
- Norrander, Barbara, and Clyde Wilcox. 2008. "The Gender Gap in Ideology." *Political Behavior*. 30(4): 503-523.

Oct. 26 – Public Opinion

- Kam, Cindy D. 2006. "Political Campaigns and Open-Minded Thinking." *Journal of Politics*. 68(4): 931-45.
- Kam, Cindy D. 2007. "When Duty Calls, Do Citizens Answer?" *Journal of Politics*. 69(1): 17-29.

### **Week 11: Exam 2 – Assignment 2 due 10/31**

Oct. 31 – Exam 2 review

Nov. 2 – Exam 2

### **Week 12: Political Information**

Nov. 7 – Who knows what?

- Luskin, Robert C. 1990. "Explaining Political Sophistication." *Political Behavior* 12 (4):331-61.

Nov. 9– Heuristics

- Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts Versus Encyclopedias." *The American Political Science Review* 88 (1):63-76.

### **Week 13: Voting – Research Design due 11/14**

Nov. 14 – Vote determinants

- Sides et al., Ch 13

Nov. 16 – Vote determinants continued

- Atkinson, Matthew D., Ryan D. Enos, and Seth J. Hill. 2009. "Candidate Faces and Election Outcomes: Is the Face-Vote Correlation Caused by Candidate Selection?" *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*. 4(3): 229-49.

### **Week 14: Thanksgiving Holiday**

Nov. 21 – **no class**

Nov. 23 – **no class**

### **Week 15: Divided America**

Nov. 28 – Elite polarization

- Claassen, Ryan L., and Benjamin Highton. 2009. "Policy Polarization among Party Elites and the Significance of Political Awareness in the Mass Public." *Political Research Quarterly* 62 (3):538-51.

Nov. 30 – Media polarization/citizen polarization

- Iyengar, Shanto, and Kyu S. Hahn. 2009. "Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use." *Journal of Communication* 59 (1):19-39.
- Mason, Lilliana. 2013. "The Rise of Uncivil Agreement: Issue versus Behavioral Polarization in the American Electorate." *American Behavioral Scientist* 57(1): 140-159.

**Week 16: Elections and Democracy – Assignment 3 due 12/5**

Dec. 5 – Do elections work?

- 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):127-40.

Dec. 7 – Wrap-up and connections

- Sides et al., Ch 13