

NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE
Fall 2007
PO 3140: CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS

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Office Hours: Mon 10 to 1
Wed 11 to 1
Thurs 11 to 1
Or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the election process. Specific attention will be focused on the role of money, the media, political parties, voter demographics, and how voters make decisions through the course of a campaign cycle.

Course Outcomes

Students successfully completing this course can expect the following outcomes:

1. Understand important election laws and processes in the United States;
2. Become familiar with the basics of campaign organization, strategy and tactics;
3. Know more about the role of interest groups, political parties, and the media in American elections;
4. Understand the role of elections in the New Hampshire Presidential Primary and American politics;
5. Become familiar with major political science findings on U.S. presidential campaigns & elections;
6. Become interested and informed observers of the 2008 elections.

Textbook(s)

Stephen J. Wayne. Is this Any Way to Run a Democratic Election?, Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2007.

Political Science Writing Manual – available in the bookstore

Any national or international newspaper. Many of these are available for free on the internet.

This semester, in addition to the reading and course lectures, we will take advantage of the opportunities afforded us by the New Hampshire Presidential Primary by bringing to campus candidates, campaign staff, and media personalities associated with the election.

Popular Base of American Electoral Politics: Suffrage and Turnout Week 4
How Representative are American Elections? Week 5 Has Money Corrupted our Electoral Process? Week 6
News Media: Watchdog or Pitbull? Week 7 Are American Parties Still Representative? Week 8
The Nomination Process: Whose is it Anyway? Week 9 Campaign Communications: How Much Do They Matter? Week 10

Grading

The grading scale for this course will follow the parameters established in the New England College Catalogue. No late work will be accepted.

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Participation/Current Events	20%
Candidate Bio	20%
Issue Brief	20%

Assignments

Exams: Students will take two non-comprehensive exams. Testable material includes information found in the readings, lectures, current events and class discussions. Exam format will be a combination of short answers and essays.

Current Events: Students are expected to be current on the presidential campaigns. Each week, students will submit a summary of one news article that relates to the candidate you've been assigned to follow.

The format for article summaries are as follows:

Paragraph One: Summarize the facts of the article you have read. Be sure to include the full citation for where you found your article. (John Smith. "Europe Faces Environmental Crisis," New York Times 12 December 2000, p. A3.)

Paragraph Two: Tell me why you chose this article?

Candidate Bio

The Candidate Bio paper is a 5-7 page study of one of the presidential candidates and his/her campaign. The paper should answer the following questions:

1. Who is this candidate?
2. What is his/her background?
3. What experiences, views, attitudes, assets and deficits does the candidate bring to the election?
4. Identify at least three issues the candidate has taken a strong stance on.
5. Where is the candidate's office?
6. Who is the campaign manager? State office manager?

7. How much money has the candidate raised for the election?

Issue Brief

The Issue Brief paper is a 7-10 page study of a major campaign issue to be approved in advance by Prof. Lesperance. Examples include: gun control, military spending, social security, abortion, campaign finance, veterans benefits, death penalty, the economy, taxes, and education. Obviously, there are many more issues than these select few.

The Issue Brief should cover the following issues:

1. An introduction and definition of the issue.
2. An historical overview of the issue.
3. The contemporary issue.
4. Future challenges associated with the issue.
5. Which candidate has, in your opinion, the best plan for dealing with your issue? Why?

Special Needs Students

Any student with a documented learning need should see Anna Carlson in the Pathways Center. She will help you determine possible accommodations for this class. Once you have completed the needs assessment form with Ms. Carlson, we can meet to decide how I can best help you overcome any barriers to your academic success. Please be aware that you must be able to demonstrate competency in this class. This means that with the accommodation you can meet all the educational objectives of the course. For more information, see the Policy on Accommodations listed in the NEC catalog.