

## **MODERN AMERICAN POLITICAL CAMPAIGN**

### **Spring, 2023 Syllabus**

Professor: Hon. Karl Rove

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Date: M: 10–12, W: 10-11

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### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course will explore how modern American political campaigns are organized and operate. Although we focus primarily on presidential campaigns, we'll also look at how these activities and methods are replicated at the local and state level.

This course will be interactive – students should be prepared to speak publicly, develop well-researched interview questions, work collaboratively, and express their thoughts in writing, clearly and concisely.

Students should expect a substantial weekly reading load. The assigned books and articles will explore each week's theme and help students develop ideas for their final paper. Students are expected to actively participate in class by attending both the Monday and Wednesday sections of the class and turning in weekly writing assignments.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES**

#### **Attendance/Participation (10% of course grade)**

Students will be required to attend, stay and participate throughout the duration of the two-hour class periods on Monday and Wednesday. TA's will track each student's questions and comments throughout each class: this will affect their final grade.

### **Weekly Campaign Memo (30% of course grade)**

Each week, you'll be assigned a campaign problem related to that week's topic. You'll write a memo of no more than 750-words providing your solution. The problem will be presented during Wednesday's discussion section. Your written response is due Sunday at 11:59pm via Canvas.

### **Book Briefing/Interview (35% of course grade)**

Each student will be required to either conduct an interview (along with another student) with each week's special guest(s) **or** read a pre-selected book and brief the class on it.

#### *Interview*

Each week, two students will conduct a Zoom interview with one or more of that week's guests. Volunteer interviewers will be provided background on the guest(s) to help draft questions about their career and views on the week's topic. A draft list of 20 questions (15 favorites and 5 "backups") must be turned into the TA's via Canvas the Monday a week in advance of the interview for review, comment, and approval. It is very likely your questions will need to be revised. If that is the case, part of your grade will be your diligence in editing and re-submitting your questions.

A sheet of bios has been posted to Canvas; introductions will NOT be necessary. The two interviewers must work out which of them will welcome the guest, starts the questions, and thank the guest to close the session. Interviewers Should divide the questions roughly in half. Interviewers will have to handle the transitions. We have uploaded an interview guide to "keep the ball rolling." We hope to have time for Q&A from other students.

#### *Book Briefing*

If you choose to do a book briefing, you'll read all of it and then prepare a 5–10-minute PowerPoint presentation and write a written book report of no more than 1,500-words.

The PowerPoint and written paper must be submitted to TA's via Canvas before the Monday class of your assigned week. You'll then make a presentation to the class Wednesday, explaining what you learned by sharing the author's main points and observations. Be brief, pointed and crisp. One slide must include a quote from the book that best summarizes its theme. Explain your reaction –opinions, questions, agreements or disagreements – to the author's work.

### **Final Paper (25% of course grade)**

In lieu of a final exam, you'll produce research paper on a topic of your choosing related to American presidential campaigns. Prior to drafting your paper, you'll submit a topic for approval. Once your topic is approved, you'll submit a research prospectus, listing the question or questions you want to explore and a preliminary list of secondary and primary materials you'll use. At the semester's end, you'll submit a final paper 15- to 20-pages in length, double-spaced and in 12-point type that presents your research question, your thesis and uses primary and secondary sources to back-up your conclusions.

The topic of your final paper must fall within one of the twelve themes of the course, or, alternatively, you may elect to a study of a specific presidential campaign, looking at its strategic approach and subsequent execution.

### **CLASS DISCUSSION**

Classroom discussion is a major component of this course. As such, I will be employing the rules about only using laptops or personal electronic devices when announced in class.

### **CLASS RECORDINGS**

This class is using the Lectures Online recording system. This system records the audio and video material presented in class for you to review after class. Links for the recordings will appear in the Lectures Online tab on the Canvas page for this class. You will find this tab along the left side navigation in Canvas.

To review a recording, simply click on the Lectures Online navigation tab and follow the instructions presented to you on the page. You can learn more about how to use the Lectures Online system at

<http://sites.la.utexas.edu/lecturesonline/students/how-to-access-recordings/>.

### **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

I strongly encourage you to use the University Writing Center's services. The UWC offers 45-minute, one-on-one consultations with UT students on any writing assignment. You may visit up to three times per assignment. The consultants are well trained, and the cost is covered in your tuition. If you want an appointment, do so through the UWC website: [uwc.utexas.edu](http://www.utexas.edu/uwc).

Carefully proof-read your assignments before submitting them to Canvas. I recommend that you proof-read by hand and do not solely rely on a spellchecker. I find it helpful to

read my weekly writing assignments (columns for the Wall Street Journal) out loud to myself.

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness and respect toward peers. I hope it goes without saying that cheating is unacceptable and the work you submit should be your own. I direct you to the UT Honor Code and an explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism ([Link to University Honor Code](#)):

#### DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty is not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

#### EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY

In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759) with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" in the subject line.

## **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance learning opportunities. Please regularly check your email and the Canvas page for any updates.

Date	Topics of Discussion
Jan. 11 - Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Description of structure</li><li>● Participation options<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Interviews</li><li>○ Book report</li></ul></li><li>● Mandatory Attendance</li><li>● Weekly writing: case study memos</li><li>● Do campaigns matter?</li></ul>
Jan. 23 - Campaign Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Creating a culture<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Aligning responsibility with authority</li><li>○ Nurturing loyalty</li></ul></li><li>● Structure<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Chair/Kitchen cabinet</li><li>○ Manager</li></ul></li><li>● Functions<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Political/field</li><li>○ Data</li><li>○ Research</li><li>○ Communications</li><li>○ Scheduling/advance</li><li>○ Coalition groups</li><li>○ Fundraising</li><li>○ Media</li><li>○ Administration</li><li>○ Finance/Accounting/Compliance</li></ul></li></ul>
Jan. 30 - Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Why your candidate?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Why them? Fundamental reason they should be elected</li><li>○ Strengths, weaknesses</li></ul></li><li>● Electoral College: Paths to Victory</li><li>● Winning Coalition<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Who do you need to vote for you?</li><li>○ Who don't you need?</li></ul></li><li>● Opposition research<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Your opponent</li><li>○ Your candidate</li></ul></li></ul>

Feb. 6 - Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Policy</li> <li>● Vision - Issues, Stories</li> <li>● Speeches           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Announcement</li> <li>○ Frame key issues</li> <li>○ Stump speech</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Issue research           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Trackers/Yours and theirs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Feb. 13 - Paid Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TV</li> <li>● Digital</li> <li>● Relative effectiveness</li> <li>● Management of media team</li> </ul>
Feb. 20 – Earned Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social Media</li> <li>● Rapid response</li> <li>● Planning your message matrix</li> <li>● Responding or don't respond?</li> <li>● Scandals</li> </ul>
Mar. 6 - Polling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Types of polls           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quantitative vs. Qualitative</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Does it work anymore?</li> <li>● Values of polls</li> <li>● Social media monitoring</li> </ul>
Mar. 20 – Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Microtargeting</li> <li>● Modeling</li> <li>● Data-driven campaign</li> </ul>
Mar. 27 - Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Small Dollar: Digital, mail and phone</li> <li>● Bundling and events</li> <li>● Compliance</li> </ul>
Apr. 3 - Primaries & Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Primary strategy</li> <li>● Survival and durability</li> <li>● “Your lane”</li> <li>● Debate/Joint appearances</li> <li>● VP selection</li> <li>● Convention           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Travel into convention</li> <li>○ Delegates</li> <li>○ Platform</li> <li>○ Acceptance</li> <li>○ Travel out of the convention</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Transition planning</li> </ul>

Apr. 10 - Debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key moments in debate history</li><li>• Dos and Don'ts</li><li>• Debate Prep</li></ul>
Apr. 17- Ground Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registration</li><li>• Identification</li><li>• Persuasion</li><li>• GOTV</li></ul>
Apr. 24 - Fall Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The controlled chaos that's the final months of a general election</li></ul>

## ASSIGNED READINGS

Date	Topic and Assigned Readings
Jan. 23	Campaign Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peter F. Drucker, <i>The Effective Executive</i> (esp. Chapters 6 and 7)</li></ul>
Jan. 30	Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Daron Shaw, <i>The Race to 270: The Electoral College and the Campaign Strategies of 2000 and 2004</i></li><li>• Memo, <i>Clark Clifford to Harry S. Truman, November 19, 1947</i></li><li>• Karl Rove, "Rove - Clements Memo (1985)." Scribd.</li></ul>
Feb. 6	Messaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Costas Panagopoulos, <i>Bases Loaded: How US Presidential Campaigns Are Changing and Why it Matters</i></li><li>• Karl Rove, <i>The Triumph of William McKinley</i>, Chapters 23-27</li></ul>
Feb. 13	Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tony Schwartz, <i>The Responsive Chord</i></li></ul>
Feb. 20	Earned Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thomas E. Patterson, <i>Out of Order</i>.</li></ul>
Mar. 6	Polling <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Courtney Kennedy, "Key Things to Know about Election Polling in the United States," Pew Research Center, 15 Oct. 2020.</li><li>• Nate Silver, "The Death of Polling Is Greatly Exaggerated," FiveThirtyEight, 25 Mar. 2021.</li></ul>
Mar. 20	Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sasha Issenberg, <i>Victory Lab</i> (Chapter 9-Epilogue).</li></ul>

Mar. 27	Fundraising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● David B. Magleby, <i>Financing the 2016 Election</i> (Chapters 4 and 5).</li> </ul>
Apr. 3	Primaries and Conventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dan Balz and Haynes Johnson, <i>The Battle for America</i> (Chapters 5-16).</li> <li>● Karl Rove, <i>The Triumph of William McKinley</i> (Chapters 7-18).</li> <li>● Thomas M. Holbrook, <i>Do Campaigns Matter?</i> (Chapter 4)</li> </ul>
Apr. 10	Debates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kim L. Fridkin, et al, "Capturing the Power of a Campaign Event: The 2004 Presidential Debate in Tempe," <i>Journal of Politics</i>, vol. 69, no. 3, 2007, pp. 770-785.</li> <li>● Thomas M. Holbrook, <i>Do Campaigns Matter?</i> (Chapter 5)</li> </ul>
Apr. 17	Ground Game <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Donald Green, <i>Get Out the Vote!</i></li> </ul>
Apr. 24	Fall Campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dan Balz, <i>Collision 2012: Obama vs. Romney and the Future of Elections in America</i> (Chapters 19-27).</li> <li>● Evan Thomas and the Staff of <i>Newsweek</i>, <i>Election 2004: How Bush Won and What You Can Expect in the Future</i>.</li> <li>● Karl Rove, <i>The Triumph of William McKinley</i> (Chapters 28-29).</li> </ul>

## Book Briefings

### **1) Jan. 23 - Campaign Organization**

- a) Quintus Tullius Cicero, *How to Win an Election*
- b) George Washington Plunkitt, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*

### **2) Jan. 30 – Strategy**

- a) Sun Tzu, *Art of War*
- b) Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*

### **3) Feb. 6 - Messaging**

- a) Theodore White, *The Making of the President 1960*
- b) Joseph Napolitan, *The Election Game and How to Win it*

### **4) Feb. 13 - Media**

- a) Joe McGinnis, *The Selling of The President 1968*
- b) Edwin Diamond, *The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television*

### **5) Feb. 20 – Earned Media**

- a) Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*
- b) Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*

### **6) Mar. 6 – Polling**

- a) Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion*
- b) Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer*

### **7) Mar. 20 – Data**

- a) Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority*
- b) John Judis and Ruy Teixeria, *The Emerging Democratic Majority*

### **8) Mar. 27 – Fundraising**

- a) Billy Lee Brammer, *The Gay Place*
- b) Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men*

### **9) Apr. 3 - Primaries and Conventions**

- a) Geoffrey Cowan, *Let the People Rule: Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of the Presidential Primary*
- b) Charles Peters, *Five Days in Philadelphia: The Amazing "We Want Willkie!" Convention of 1940 and How It Freed FDR to Save the Western World*

**10) Apr. 10 - Debates**

- a) Alan Schroeder, *Presidential Debates: Forty Years of High-Risk TV*
- b) Jim Lehrer, *Tension City: Inside the Presidential Debates, from Kennedy-Nixon to Obama-McCain*

**11) Apr. 17 - Ground Game**

- a) Daron R. Shaw and John R. Petrocik, *The Turnout Myth: Voting Rates and Partisan Outcomes in American National Elections*
- b) Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, *Ground Wars: Personalized Communications in Political Campaigns*

**12) Apr. 24 - Fall Campaign**

- a) John Heilemann and Mark Halperin, *Game Change*
- b) John Heilemann and Mark Halperin, *Double Down: 2012*

WEEKLY GUEST INTERVIEWS:

1/23 - Campaign Organization - **Sec. James A. Baker, III (Pre-Recorded)**

1/30 – Strategy - **James Carville and Mary Matlin**

2/6 - Messaging - **David Axelrod**

2/13 - Media - **Mark McKinnon**

2/20 – Earned Media - **Dana Perino/ Jonathan Swan**

3/6 – Polling - **Brenda Gianiny**

3/20 – Data – **Sara Fagen and Tom Bonier**

3/27 – Fundraising – **Anna Rogers Duncan/Reid Vineis**

4/3 - Primaries and Conventions - **Maria Cino/Barry Jackson**

4/10 - Debates – **Brett O'Donnell/Robert B. Barnett**

4/17 - Ground Game - **Donna Brazile/Betsy Ankeny**

4/24 - The Fall Campaign - **Jim Messina/Ken Mehlman**