

**Political Science 502
Campaign Politics
Autumn Quarter 2005**

**Professor Asher
2116 Derby Hall
292-0803**

Syllabus

This course will focus on political campaigns both from a practical and an academic perspective. Students should complete the course with the ability to formulate sound campaign tactics and strategies that take into account the constraints and resource problems faced by candidates. In addition, students should develop an understanding of the social science research and techniques that affect the choice of campaign strategies and tactics. Students will also conduct telephone interviews for a public opinion poll of the Franklin County electorate.

Required Texts

Marjorie Hershey, *Party Politics in America*, **11th** edition (New York City: Longman, 2005)

Richard Semiatin, *Campaigns in the 21st Century* (New York City: McGraw-Hill, 2004)

Paul Herrnson, *Congressional Elections*, **4th** edition (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004)

Darrell West, *Air Wars*, **4th** edition (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2005)

A note about the readings: even though the required reading assignments are distributed over the entire quarter, you might be a more useful worker in a campaign if you had certain knowledge and expertise earlier. Thus, feel free to read any assignments earlier as your campaign work and responsibilities dictate. In addition, special materials for which you are responsible will be distributed in class. All of the assigned readings on this syllabus are in the four texts listed above.

Requirements

1. Paper assignment (1/3 of grade).
2. Midterm exam (1/3 of grade).
3. Final exam (1/3 of grade).
4. Six to ten hours of volunteer work per week in a campaign.

When considering candidates for whom you might want to work, I suggest that you take several factors into account. You are likely to learn more about a campaign in a lower level race even though a more prestigious contest may be more exciting and stimulating. The reasons are simple: in a larger campaign, particularly the most glamorous contests, decisions and decision-makers will be more removed. In a lower-level campaign, you are likely to have better access to the candidate and to explanations of campaign strategy that will be useful to you when you write your class paper. Also, lower level campaigns are

less likely to have key positions filled by professionals. This enhances your chances of securing a position in the campaign that carries genuine responsibility. Also, keep in mind that should you ever run for office, you will most likely begin with a lower level office.

Class Meetings

The class will meet Tuesday and Thursday in a general lecture format. In addition, the class will be divided into two recitation groups, each of which will meet in a discussion format once a week. New material will be covered in the recitation sections. Thus, students will have three hours of classroom responsibility each week; class attendance at lectures and recitations is strongly encouraged.

Academic Misconduct

All of the work you do in this class will of course be your own. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the university committee on academic misconduct and will be handled according to university policy.

Disability

Please let me know whether you need any accommodation because of a disability. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodation and in developing appropriate responses. If you have not previously contacted the Office for Disability Services, I encourage you to do so.

Reading Assignments

Week 1 Assignment of students to campaigns

Week 2 The Role of Campaigns in a Democracy/Trends in Political Campaigns

Read: Hershey, chapters 1, 2, 9, 15 and 16
Semiatin, chapters 1, 2 and 9

Weeks 3-4 Factors that Shape Campaign Strategy

Read: Hershey, chapters 3, 4, 5, 10, and 11
Semiatin, chapters 3 and 8
Herrnson, chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 9

Week 5 Information Resources to Plan a Campaign/Polling

Read: Semiatin, chapter 5

Weeks 6-7 Turnout, Vote Choice and the Conduct of Campaigns

Read: Hershey, chapters 6, 7, and 8

Week 8 Campaign Management/The Nuts and Bolts of Campaigns

Read: Semiatin, chapter 4
Herrnson, chapter 3

Weeks 9-10 The Media and Campaign Communications

Read: West, entire book
Semiatin, chapters 6 and 7
Herrnson, chapter 8

Read: Hershey, chapter 12
Herrnson, chapters 6, 10 and 11

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PAPER ASSIGNMENT

The first part of the paper should be a description of the nuts and bolts of the campaign on which you worked. Among the topics you will want to cover are:

1. The organizational structure of the campaign. Include here information about the campaign hierarchy (chain of command), the use of paid and unpaid workers, etc.
2. The resources available to the campaign including money, personal attributes, manpower, party organization, etc. With respect to money, you should discuss the sources of funds, fund-raising tactics, and the like. If relevant, you should discuss the relationship between the campaign organization and the party organization, and detail the kinds of assistance provided by the party organization for the campaign effort.
3. The various techniques employed by the campaign such as mass media (television, radio, print) use, personal contact with voters, etc. Did your campaign use the internet? If so, in what ways? Detail here how the campaign resources were allocated. **Make sure you provide reasonably complete information about the campaign budget – how many dollars were raised, how they were raised, and how they were spent.** For those of you working on a statewide campaign as opposed to a local campaign, you may (if you prefer) write your paper in terms of the local campaign effort rather than the entire statewide effort.

The **second part** of the paper should be more analytical, focusing on the campaign strategy of your candidate or issue campaign and on an evaluation of that strategy. Among the points you should cover in this section are:

1. A summary of the campaign strategy.
2. An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate and his/her opponent or of the issue proponents and opponents.
3. A critique of the strategy in the light of the resources available and the unavoidable constraints imposed on the campaign. Discuss how realistic and effective the strategy was. In retrospect, detail the most and least effective elements of the overall strategy. Explain how you would have done things differently and why; be realistic in your suggestions. Do not automatically conclude that because your candidate won, the strategy was good. Or because your candidate lost, the strategy was bad.

In writing this part of the paper, it most likely will be necessary for you to talk with the candidate

or campaign manager, or some other responsible campaign worker. Information for the paper may also come from newspaper accounts, public records available at the Secretary of State's office and the Federal Elections Commission, and various political websites, including the candidate's own websites. The entire paper should not exceed eight double-spaced typewritten pages. The paper is **due on Tuesday, November 29**. Late papers will be penalized.

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STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

Name:

Address:

Phone(s)

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E-mail address:

Hometown:

Major:

Year in school:

Political Party affiliation (if any):

Do you have access to a vehicle?

Have you had any previous campaign experience? If so, please describe briefly:
Are you currently working on a campaign in which you would like to continue working?
If so, which campaign?

Do you have any preference about the campaign you would like to be assigned to? List your top three preferences: