

GVPT. 423
 Spring 2017
U.S. Elections and Electoral Behavior

W 2-4:45 pm (Tydings 1118)
 Office: 1106C Morrill

Professor: Jim Gimpel
 Office hours: Th 9-11, and by appointment

This course is about elections and political campaigns in American politics. Topics to be covered include: recent electoral history and change; voting and political behavior; political regionalism and geography; the social psychology of persuasion; how much campaigns matter to who wins; political microtargeting; campaign organization, strategy and finance; the conduct of campaign research and polling; advertising; volunteer recruitment; and other relevant topics.

Given the heavy reading load in this class, and given that the lectures expand upon and elaborate rather than repeat the readings, it is essential that you attend class and that you not fall behind. The major work product of the course will be four homework assignments and two exams. More information about the exams and the homework assignments will be given to you after the start of the course.

Homework assignments (4)	40%
Mid-term exam	25%
Final exam	25%
Attendance/participation	10%

All grades are non-negotiable. Homework is due on the date that is listed on the syllabus. *Late homework is not accepted.*

Final Exam:

The final exam is scheduled for Wed, May 17th, 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Required Books:

1. Jonathan Haidt. *The Righteous Mind*.
2. J.D. Vance. *Hillbilly Elegy*.
3. Sam Gosling. 2008. *Snoop: What Your Stuff Says About You*.
4. Daniel M. Shea and Michael John Burton. 2014. *Campaign Craft: The Strategies, Tactics and Art of Political Campaign Management, 5th edition*
5. Donald P. Green and Alan Gerber. 2015. *Get Out the Vote! 3rd Edition*

Pieces of the following books will be available for free download on the University's Online ELMS System.

Elms is available for login at: <http://www.elms.umd.edu/>

1. Bill Bishop. *The Big Sort*. Chaps. 1-4.
2. Gerard DeGroot. *The Sixties Unplugged*. Chaps. 7-9.
3. D. Sunshine Hillygus and Todd G. Shields. 2006. *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns*.

The MIT *Technology Review* article by Issenberg, "A More Perfect Union" is available on line here: <http://www.technologyreview.com/featuredstory/508836/how-obama-used-big-data-to-rally-voters-part-1/>

Below is a calendar of reading assignments to help you keep pace with the flow of lectures and discussion topics. It will be to your advantage to follow this calendar. Students who keep up with the reading on a week-by-week basis do far better on the exams than those who try to read everything two days beforehand.

Calendar of Class Meetings and Reading Assignments		
<i>Mon</i>	<i>Lecture/Discussion/Exam</i>	<i>Reading</i>
Jan 25	U.S. Electoral Behavior to 2016	No Reading
Feb 1	Party Identification; Forces for Continuity in Electoral Behavior	Haidt, Chaps 1-7
Feb 8	Forces for Electoral Change	Haidt, Chaps 7-8
Feb 15	Social Psychology and Political Polarization; Homophily, Sorting	Haidt, Chaps 10-12
Feb 22	1960s, Moral Unraveling; Film clips from the late-60s HW 1 handed out, due March 1	Bishop, Chaps 1-4; Hillbilly Elegy Chaps 1-4
March 1	Political Cultures; Religion, Economic Grievance and Voting	Hillbilly Elegy, Chaps 5-Conclusion

<i>Date</i>	<i>Lecture/Discussion/Exam</i>	<i>Reading</i>
March 8	Personality Psychology and Political Preference, Microtargeting, Exam Review	Gosling, Chaps 1-8
March 15	Exam 1	Exam 1
March 22	Spring Break	Spring Break
March 29	How Persuasion is Thought to Work HW 2 handed out, due April 5	Hillygus and Shields (see Elms) Gerber and Green, Chaps 1-3
April 5	Voter Turnout; Field Experiments	Gerber and Green; Chaps 4-6
April 12	Field Experiments; GOTV Strategies; Turnout and Volunteers HW 3 handed out, due April 19	Gerber and Green; Chaps 7-9 Issenberg; MIT Review article. "A More Perfect Union"
April 19	Campaign Research; Use of Polling; Surveys; Targeting Tools	Issenberg, Gerber and Green; 10-12.
April 26	Campaign Research; Opposition Research HW 4 handed out, due May 3	Shea and Burton, Chaps 1-3
May 3	Campaign Money and Fundraising	Shea and Burton, Chaps 4-5
May 10	Campaign Media and Advertising; Campaign Ads; Exam Review	Shea and Burton, Chaps 6-11, Chap 13
May 17	Final Exam	1:30-3:30 pm