

GVPT 423H

Fall 2016  
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MW 2-4:45 p.m.  
Chincoteague 4121, x54151

This is an honors seminar on the 2016 election. The course will cover both the literature on voting behavior in the United States and also literature, mostly from online sources and political science blogs, specifically about the 2016 election—and the Donald Trump phenomenon.

The course requirements are:

- A research paper of no less than 25 pages on some aspect of the 2016 election or about the electoral process. If you have skills working with survey data and doing quantitative analysis with Stata, the American National Election Study (ANES) did a pilot survey early in the year that has lots of good questions on the candidates running in the Democratic and Republican primaries. I am happy to work with you to design a paper in which you will test your own hypotheses using this data set. Other topics may include the rise in polarization in American politics, reform of the nominating system, comparing the Trump or Sanders movements to earlier movements in American political history, or whether the 2016 election will change the direction of politics in this country. Other topics are, of course, possible.
- Serving as a discussion leader for the readings. Discussion leaders will prepare three questions for class discussion and lead the discussions.
- Writing short papers analyzing the readings for the weeks in which you are a discussion leader. Discuss at least one key question in the readings and then analyze its importance for the 2016 elections. These papers should be approximately 5 pages double-spaced.
- Serving as a reporter for the current state of the campaign. Reporters will make brief statements to the class as to what has happened in American politics (reporting major events and new polls and trends in the nation and the state). These statements should take 5-10 minutes.

There is no final examination. Grades will be based upon:

- The course paper: 40 percent
- The two short papers: 10 percent each
- Serving as discussion leader: 15 percent each (7.5 percent each)
- Serving as reporter: 5 percent
- Class participation: 20 percent

For all written work: Any citation style is fine, but: Any citations to a web page must

give the full URL, not just [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) (for example). And Wikipedia references are not allowed and will be penalized.

All work must be turned in in hard copy. No emailed attachments under any circumstances. Emailed papers will be automatically deleted. There are NO exceptions to this policy. Do not send an assignment by email just to show that you have completed it.

Required books:

Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde, Change and Continuity in the 2012 and 2014 Elections (AAR below)

Achen and Bartels, Democracy for Realists (AB below)

Abramowitz, The Polarized Public

Other readings on ELMS

8/29 Introductory Meeting

9/5 NO CLASS LABOR DAY

9/12 The American Voter Model and Rational Choice

Campbell, The American Voter on ELMS

Downs, Economic Theory of Democracy, on ELMS

Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics" on ELMS

AAR, 8

AB 1, 2

Aldrich and Griffin, "Parties, Elections and Democratic Politics" on ELMS

Petrocik, "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study" on ELMS

Discussion leader: Jasmine

Reporters: Savannah, Sawyer

9/19 Retrospective Voting and Predicting Elections

AAR 7

AB 4, 5, 6, 7, 10

Linn et al. "Economics Elections and Voting Behavior" on ELMS

Holbrook, "Forecasting U.S. Presidential Elections" on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Melin, Allison

Reporters: Sam, Kelsey

9/26 Do Campaigns Matter? Part I

Video, "Game Change"

10/3 NO CLASS ROSH HASHANAH

10/10 Do Campaigns Matter? Part II

AAR, 1-2 (skim), 3

Brady et al., "The Study of Political Campaigns" on ELMS

Jacobson, "How Do Campaigns Matter?" on ELMS

Wattenberg, "The Declining Relevance of Candidates' Personal Traits" on ELMS

Brox and Cassells, "The Contemporary Effects of Vice Presidential Nominees" on ELMS

Heersink and Peterson, "This Research Shows that Vice Presidential Candidates...." on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Ella, Chrissy, Savannah

Reporters: Jasmine, Eleanor

10/17 Polarization

Abramowitz, Polarized Public

AAR 6, 8

AB, 10

Fiorina and Abrams, "Political Polarization in the American Public," Annual Review of Political Science, 2008:11-563-588 on ELMS

Layman, Carsey, and Horowitz, "Party Polarization in American Politics: Characteristics, Causes, and Consequences," Annual Review of Political Science, 2006, 9:83-110, on ELMS

Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes, "Affect Not Ideology," Public Opinion Quarterly, 76:405-431, on ELMS.

Discussion leaders: Melam, Sawyer

Reporters: Allison, Luke

10/24 Turnout

AAR, 4

Plutzer, "Becoming a Habitual Voter" on ELMS

Gerber et al, "Why People Vote" on ELMS

Pew Research Center, "Can Likely Voter Models Be Improved?" on ELMS

Silver, "Measuring the Effects of Voter Identification Laws" on ELMS

Abramowitz, "Higher Turnout Alone is Unlikely to Change the Outcome of the 2016 Presidential Election," on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Jasmine, Kelsey, Allison  
Reporters: Chrissy, Ella

10/31 Party Coalitions

Pew Research Center, "Millennials in Adulthood" on ELMS  
Valentino and Sears, "Old Times There Are Not Forgotten," American Journal of Political Science, 49 (2005):672-688 on ELMS  
AAR 5  
AB 8, 9  
Frey Texiera Griffin, "America's Electoral Future" on ELMS  
Tesler, and Sides. "How Political Science Helps Explain the Rise of Trump: The Role of White Racial Identity and Grievances" on ELMS  
Confessore, "How the GOP Elite Lost Voters to Trump" on ELMS  
"The Roots of Trumpismo" on ELMS  
Rahn and Oliver, "Trump Voters Aren't Authoritarians" on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Sam, Kelsey, Luke, Ella  
Reporters: Melin

11/7 NO CLASS

11/14 What Happened?

11/21 Media and Negativity

Geer, "The News Media and the Rise of Negativity in Presidential Campaigns" on ELMS  
Lau and Rovner, "Negative Campaigning" on ELMS  
Gentzkow and Shapiro, "Ideological Segregation Online and Offline," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 126 (2011), 1799-1839 on ELMS  
Puglisi and Snyder, "The Balanced U.S. Press." on ELMS  
Grossman and Hopkins, "The Not-So-Great Debate" on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Sawyer, Chrissy, Eleanor

11/28 Congressional Elections

AAR, 9, 10, skim 11-12  
Burden, "Local and National Forces in Congressional Elections" on ELMS  
Jacobson, "It's Nothing Personal" on ELMS  
Lapinski, Levendusky, Winneg, and Jamieson, "What Do Citizens Want from Their Member of Congress?" Political Research Quarterly, on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Sam, Savannah

12/5 Do Elections Matter?

Berelson et al, "Democratic Practice and Democratic Theory" on ELMS

Schattschneider, Party Government, ch. 3, on ELMS

AB 1-3

AAR 13

Key, "A Theory of Critical Elections" on ELMS

Mayhew, "Patterns in American Elections" on ELMS

Discussion leaders: Eleanor, Luke

