

GVPT. 423H
 Spring 2018
U.S. Elections and Electoral Behavior

Tu 2-4:45 pm; TYD 1114
 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 Saturday, Dec 16, 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Required Books:

1. T.M. Holbrook. 2016. *Altered States*.
2. J.D. Vance. 2016. *Hillbilly Elegy*.
3. Sam Gosling. 2008. *Snoop: What Your Stuff Says About You*.
4. Barton Swaim. 2015. *The Speechwriter*.
5. Michael John Burton, William J. Miller and Daniel M. Shea. 2015. *Campaign Craft: The Strategies, Tactics and Art of Political Campaign Management, 5th edition*
6. Donald P. Green and Alan Gerber. 2015. *Get Out the Vote! 3rd Edition*

Chapters 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. 2008. *The Big Sort*. Chaps. 1-4.
2. D. Sunshine Hillygus and Todd G. Shields. 2006. *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns*.
3. Charles Murray. 2012. *Coming Apart*.

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/>

Also, check this out, quite a good read:

<http://www.cracked.com/blog/6-reasons-trumps-rise-that-no-one-talks-about/>

Below is a calendar of reading assignments. 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, Reading Assignments, Homework and Exams		
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Lecture/Discussion/Exam</i>	<i>Reading</i>
Jan 30	U.S. Electoral Behavior to 2016	No Reading
Feb 6	Party Identification; Forces for Continuity in Electoral Behavior Forces for Electoral Change	Holbrook, <i>Altered States</i> , Chaps 1-2
Feb 13	Social Psychology and Political Polarization; Homophily, Sorting	Holbrook, <i>Altered States</i> , Chaps 3-6; Bishop, Chaps 1-4; Semuels article (see Elms)
Feb 20	1960s, Moral Unraveling Film clips from the late-60s	Vance, <i>Hillbilly Elegy</i> , Chaps 1-4; Murray, <i>Coming Apart</i> , Chaps. 1-12 (short chapters)
Feb 27	Political Cultures; Urban-Rural Division HW 1 handed out, due March 6	Wong article from <i>cracked.com</i> (see URL above) Vance, <i>Hillbilly Elegy</i> , Chaps 5-Conclusion
March 6	Personality Psychology and Political Preference, Microtargeting, Exam Review	Gosling, <i>Snoop</i> , Chaps 1-8

Calendar of Reading Assignments, Homework, Exams		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Lecture/Discussion/Exam</i>	<i>Reading</i>
March 13	Exam	Exam
March 20	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>
March 27	How Persuasion Works; HW 2 handed out, due April 3	Hillygus and Shields (see Elms)
April 3	Field Experiments; GOTV Strategies; Turnout and Volunteers HW 3 handed out, due April 10	Gerber and Green; Chaps 1-9; Burton, Miller and Shea, Chap. 10; Issenberg; MIT Review article. "A More Perfect Union"
April 10	Campaign Research; Use of Polling; Surveys; Targeting Tools	Gerber and Green; Chaps. 10-12.
April 17	Campaign Research; Opposition Research HW 4 handed out, due May 1	Burton, Miller, Shea, Chaps. 1-4
April 24	Campaign Money and Fundraising	Burton, Miller, Shea, Chaps. 5-7
May 1	Campaign Communications	Swaim, <i>The Speechwriter</i> , entire book; Burton, Miller, Shea, Chap. 8
May 8	Campaign Media and Advertising; Campaign Ads; Exam Review	Burton, Miller and Shea, Chap. 9
May 16 Wednesday	Final Exam	10:30-12:30