

Professor: Markus Prior
Spring Semester 2004
T 1-4:10

WWS 532
Political Campaigning

This class examines strategy and effects of modern election campaigns. The main goal is to introduce students to scholarly analyses of how campaigns are conducted and what their effects are on people's political reasoning and their vote choices. As part of the class, students will apply existing theories of campaigning and public opinion to the ongoing 2004 campaigns. The class presents an overview of the different explanations of how people make voting decisions, from stable long-term factors (such as partisan identification and socioeconomic status) to short-term influences of campaigns, media and interpersonal communication. Emphasis will be given to the interaction between stable personal characteristics and campaign strategy (issue ownership, resonance model of campaigns, indirect media effects). The premise of this class is that people's political behavior is best understood by examining short- and long-term factors at different electoral levels (local, congressional, presidential), in different communication environments (large vs small districts, media markets), and for different groups of people (politically interested/uninterested).

Course Requirements

Readings and Discussion

The course will be conducted as a seminar. You will be expected to do the assigned readings *before* each class and come prepared for discussion. Some of the readings are technically demanding. It may therefore take you as long to read and understand a short journal article than to read some of the longer readings. Plan accordingly.

At the beginning of each class (~ 30 mins.), I will provide a brief overview of the week's topic. This will not be a summary of the readings. My goal is to relate the readings to the overall structure of the class and tell you why we are reading the particular pieces.

Most of the class is reserved for discussion. You will be responsible for leading the discussion of one week's readings. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the end of the first class session. Discussions should focus both on the way we study campaigns (What do we need to know? What research designs are appropriate? How valid are the results?) and on the conclusions we can draw for the ongoing campaigns.

Written Assignments

There are two types of written assignments for this class. First, you will be required to write **four brief (3-page) papers** in which you discuss how the set of readings for a particular week can help us (or not help us) understand the current campaign. The purpose of these assignments is give to you opportunities to connect the scholarly literature with the realities of Campaign '04. For example, you could compare the implications suggested in our readings with the interpretations emphasized in the popular media. These short papers are not the place to summarize the week's reading (or the week's campaign events). In fact, you should assume that the people who read your paper are familiar both with the readings and the campaign. The short papers will be graded based on logical clarity of your analysis and the originality of your argument.

You may pick whichever four weeks you like (but not the week for which you serve as discussion leader), but must hand in the short paper *at the beginning of class* on the day on which we discuss the particular readings.

The second writing assignment is a **term paper (15-25 pages)**. In your term paper, you are asked to apply the insights gained from the scholarly literature to the presidential election 2004. Based on what you have learned in this class, how do you expect this campaign to be conducted by the candidates/parties and how will voters react? Who is going to win and why? (You may hedge your bets and assign probabilities to different scenarios.)

Depending on your analysis of both the campaign and the research on campaigns, you may also devote your paper to an important aspect of the presidential race that we ignored in this class and that, in your view, deserves more scholarly attention. Why and how should we study these more?

Some additional reading and gathering of campaign data will likely be necessary for term paper. I am happy to assist you in selecting the relevant materials. A **one-page paper proposal** is due **in class** on **April 20**. The final term paper is due **at 10 a.m** on **May 11**. Please submit a hardcopy to me personally or my administrative assistant (Helene Wood, Robertson 326) or leave it in my mailbox on the fourth floor of Robertson. Late papers will be penalized by one grade for each day they are overdue.

All coursework should be double-spaced and in 11- or 12-point font with a 1.5 inch margin on one side for my comments.

Grading

Grading will be based upon class participation (25%), discussion leadership (10%), the four short papers (20%), the one-page term paper proposal (5%), and the term paper (40%).

Readings

Readings in the following schedule are marked **(J)** if they are available online through www.jstor.org. Direct links for all (J) readings are posted in Blackboard.

Readings marked **(E)** are available as pdf files in Blackboard.

Readings marked **(COPY)** were scanned by the library and are available from the library e-reserve. Blackboard links to the library website (but not directly to the particular readings—you have to navigate the site yourself.)

Finally, the following books are available for purchase at the bookstore. Readings from these required texts are marked **(TEXT)**.

Iyengar and Kinder (1987). *News that Matters*.

Gronke (2000). *The Electorate, the Campaign, and the Office*.

Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995). *Citizens, Politics, and Social Communication*.

Patterson (1993). *Out of Order*.

Weekly Schedule

Note: For each topic, readings are listed in the recommended order.

Week 1 – Introduction and Overview (Feb 3)

Week 2 – Primaries (Feb 10)

We are in the middle of the '04 primary season. What better way to start this class than reviewing what we know about the nomination process.

Bartels, Larry. *Presidential Primaries*. Pp. 57-135 **(COPY)**

Mutz, Diana C.: Mechanisms of Momentum: Does Thinking Make It So? *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 59, No. 1. (Feb., 1997), pp. 104-125. **(J)**

Abramson, Paul R.; John H. Aldrich; Phil Paolino; David W. Rohde:

"Sophisticated" Voting in the 1988 Presidential Primaries. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 86, No. 1. (Mar., 1992), pp. 55-69. **(J)**

Hagen, Michael et al. (2000). Dynamics of the 2000 Presidential Primaries. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. **(E)**

Week 3 – Campaigning in the U.S. (Feb 17)

After a week on primaries, we turn to the fall campaign. This week introduces the topic of the class more systematically and presents an overview of the rest of the class.

Gelman and King (BJPS 1993). *Why Are American Presidential Election Campaign Polls So Variable When Votes Are So Predictable?* **(J)**

Wlezien, Christopher. On Forecasting the Presidential Vote. *PS 34* (1): 25-31. **(E)**

Holbrook, Thomas M. Forecasting with Mixed Economic Signals: A Cautionary Tale. *PS 34* (1): 39-44. **(E)**

Zaller (1992). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Ch. 1. **(COPY)**

Week 4 – Party Identification, Economic Voting and Stable Determinants (Feb 24)

The most important individual-level variable in research on voting behavior is party identification. The class starts by introducing different models of party identification. This week reviews other long-term factors, focusing mainly on economic voting and in particular the difference between pocketbook and sociotropic economic voting. More long-term influences, such as socioeconomic status and religion, will be mentioned more briefly.

Miller and Shanks (1996). *The New American Voter*. Ch. 6 (COPY)

Rahn (AJPS 1993) *The Role of Partisan Stereotyping in Information Processing About Political Candidates*. (J)

Bartels (AJPS 2000). *Partisanship and Voting Behavior, 1952-1996*. (J)

Markus, G. (AJPS 1988) *The impact of personal and economic conditions on the presidential vote*. (J)

Petrocik (AJPS 1996). *Issue ownership in presidential elections*. (J)

Week 5 – Covering Campaigns (Mar 2)

How do media cover campaigns? This week looks at descriptive accounts of election coverage.

Crouse (1973). *The Boys on the Bus?* Pp. 3-46. (COPY)

Patterson (1993). *Out of Order*. 53-175. (TEXT)

Jamieson and Waldman (2003). *The Press Effect*. Pp. 41-73. (COPY)

Week 6 – Media Effects I: News (Mar 9)

Having examined what media coverage of campaigns looks like, we move on to ask how this coverage affects potential voters. This week begins to focus the class on how we study media effects and what they are.

Neuman, Just and Crigler (1992). *Common Knowledge*. Pp. 78-109. (COPY)

Iyengar and Kinder. *News that Matters*. (TEXT)

Dalton et al. (APSR 1998). *Partisan Cues and the Media: Information Flows in the 1992 Presidential Election*. (J)

Shaw (BJSP, 2000) *Campaign Events, the Media, and the Prospects of Victory*. (E)

MARCH 9: IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Week 7 – Media Effects II: Advertising (Mar 23)

This week reviews the effects of political advertising, candidate visits, and campaign events such as conventions and debates.

Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) *Going Negative*. Pp. 37-98. (COPY)

Goldstein and Freedman (JOP 2000). *New evidence for new arguments: Money and advertising in the 1996 Senate election*. (J)

Shaw (APSR 1999). *The Effect of TV Ads and Candidate Appearances on Statewide Presidential Votes, 1988-96*. (J)

Week 8 – Communication Environment & Campaign Intensity (Mar 30)

This week emphasizes that elections take place in very different communication environments. In addition to candidate strategies, the political environment and the structure of media markets affects what kind of election people experience.

Gronke (2000). *The Electorate, the Campaign, and the Office*. Ch. 3, 4. (TEXT)
Stewart and Reynolds. (LSQ 1990). *Television Markets and U.S. Senate Elections*. (J)
Baum and Kernell (APSR 1999). *Has cable ended the golden age of presidential television?* (J)
Anolabehere et al. (1999, manuscript). *Television costs and greater congressional campaign spending: Cause-and-effect or coincidence?* (E)

Week 9 – Candidate Strategy (Apr 6)

This week takes up the more complex question of candidate behavior. By acting strategically and reacting to other actors, candidates create large difference in the intensity of campaigns at all electoral levels.

Shaw (JOP 1999). *The Methods behind the Madness: Presidential Electoral College Strategies, 1988-1996*. (J)
Goldstein and Freedman (Political Communication 2002). *Lessons Learned: Campaign Advertising in the 2000 Elections*. (E)
Simon (2002). *The Winning Message*. Ch. 5. (COPY)
Gronke (2000). *The Electorate, the Campaign, and the Office*. Ch. 5, 6. (TEXT)
Sellers (APSR 1998). *Strategy and background in congressional campaigns*. (J)

Week 10 – Political Sophistication, Interest, and Information (Apr 13)

Having reviewed the most important determinants of people's political decision-making, this week introduces the idea that different people use different criteria in making vote choices. The implications of difference in voters' information levels and attention to politics are discussed. Emphasis is given to the ways in which heterogeneity among voters conditions the impact of economic evaluations and media messages on vote choice.

Zaller (1992). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Chs. 3, 9, 10. (COPY)
Sniderman et al. (1993). *Reasoning and Choice*. Pp. 164-178. (COPY)
Bartels (AJPS 1996). *Uninformed Votes: Information Effects in Presidential Elections*. (J)
Gomez and Wilson (AJPS 2001). *Political Sophistication and Economic Voting*. (J)

Week 11 – Interpersonal Influences and Political Socialization (Apr 20)

(no class on Apr 15 because of Midwest Political Science Meeting)

Week 10 reviews the impact of interpersonal discussion on people's voting decisions. Moreover, the indirect impact of political socialization on voting behavior will be discussed.

Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995). *Citizens, Politics, and Social Communication*. (TEXT)
Mutz and Martin (APSR 2001). *Facilitating communication across lines of political difference*. (E)

Week 12 – Putting it all Together: Lessons for Campaign '04? (Apr 27)

Report of the Task Force on Campaign Reform. *Campaign Reform. Insights and Evidence*. Hagen/Johnston. Annenberg Study 2000.