

PSC 210-02: Congressional Elections
Fall 2018
Baxter Hall 201
MWF 11:00-11:50
Professor: Dr. Theodore J. Masthay
Office: 127 Baxter Hall
Office Hours: 2:30-3:30 MW
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One of the few iron laws of politics is the loss of seats by the president's party in midterm House elections

Every four years, the U.S. presidential election occupies the airwaves of television, ad space on web pages, and the thoughts of citizens all over this country. However, coinciding with the meta-event that is a presidential election, at least 468 other federal elections take place on the same first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Congress is a co-equal branch of the federal government, without which the president cannot conduct much business. This semester we will focus on the less often glamorized races for election to the House of Representatives and the Senate; both elite clubs that require a lot of resources and hard work to gain entry to. During this semester we will learn about when, why, and most importantly, how the path from candidate to member of Congress is navigated. We will have discussion about the power of incumbency, the polarizing effects of primary elections, gerrymandering, advertising, and many other pertinent topics in the study of congressional elections. Lucky for us, election day falls near the end of this semester, so we will be able to follow the journeys of candidates from around the country in real time, observing how so many of the concepts we discuss are applied.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change at any time throughout the semester. You will be informed of all changes and a revised copy of the syllabus will be available on Canvas.

Textbooks

Jacobson, Gary C. and Jamie L. Carson. 2016. *The Politics of Congressional Elections, 9th Edition*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Adkins, Randall E. and David A. Dulio. 2012. *Cases in Congressional Campaigns: Riding the Wave*. New York: Routledge.

Grading

The semester will consist of two exams, weekly quizzes, an 8-10 page campaign analysis paper, a multimedia advertising project, and class participation.

Midterm Exam	20% of final grade
Final Exam	20% of final grade
Quizzes	10% of final grade
Campaign Analysis Paper	20% of final grade

TV Advertisement Project	20% of final grade
Attendance/Participation	10% of final grade

A: 93-100 B: 83-87.99 C: 73-77.99 F: 0-59.99
A-: 90-92.99 B-: 80-82.99 C-: 70-72.99
B+: 88-89.99 C+: 78-79.99 D: 60-69.99

Attendance/Participation

Attendance is not required in this course; but your performance this semester will suffer greatly if you are not regularly in class, both physically and mentally. 10% of your final course grade will be weighted towards your engagement during the 150 minutes a week we are together. You are expected to read the assigned texts and be able to discuss them during class. This does not mean you have to have mastered the entire reading list; your participation can include proposing questions for the class (including yourself) to discuss. But it is of paramount importance that you be constantly engaged with the material during class time.

Exams

There will be two exams throughout the semester. The midterm exam be administered in Baxter 201, during our regularly scheduled class time. The final exam will still be administered in Baxter 201, but will occur during the time assigned by the college. Green books will be provided to you for both exams.

You may challenge the grade of your exams. However, you may not contact me until 24 hours after the exam has been handed back. While I will review your grade with the potential for it to increase, I reserve the right to lower your grade as well.

Makeup Exams

There will be no makeup exams administered without ample cause and notice. Valid excuses include significant illness, death in the family, or required attendance at a college sponsored event (including athletics). I must receive notice of these issues *before* the scheduled date of the exam. Documentation for your absence must be given to me within one week after the exam is administered. If you miss an exam without fulfilling these duties, you will receive a 0.

Quizzes

Weekly quizzes will be administered throughout the semester at the end of class on Fridays unless otherwise noted. Missed quizzes will be assigned a grade of 0 (unless there is a valid excuse). I will drop your two lowest quiz grades at the end of the semester. The quizzes will focus on the previous week's readings and lectures.

Campaign Analysis Paper

This individual project requires you to choose a current congressional race deemed to be "competitive" by the Cook Political Report and write an 8-10 page paper analyzing the campaign

from multiple perspectives and providing a prediction and rationale of the result. The race can be for a seat in the House or the Senate, but no two students will write a paper about the same campaign. There *might* be a grade bump in store for you if your prediction turns out to be correct. An assignment sheet with greater details about this project will be provided deeper into the semester.

TV Advertisement Project

This group project requires you to produce a professional looking and sounding, 30 or 60 second television commercial for one of the major party candidates for the U.S. Senate in Indiana (Democratic incumbent Joe Donnelly and Republican challenger Mike Braun). Support for using video editing software will be provided. During the final week of class, a group presentation will be required to show you classmates your work and explain the rationale behind the editorial decisions you made in the crafting of your commercial. An assignment sheet with greater details about this project will be provided deeper into the semester.

Classroom Rules

No electronic devices are to be used during class time. This includes laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc. I impose these restrictions because, not only does it lead to better academic outcomes (Fried 2008), it actually leads to higher satisfaction among students (Wurst et al. 2008). Use of electronics is not only distracting to the user, but also those around him/her.

Fried, Carrie B. 2008. "In-class Laptop Use and Its Effects on Student Learning." *Computers & Education* 50 (3): 906-914.

Wurst, Christian, Claudia Smarkola and Mary Anne Gaffney. 2008. "Ubiquitous Laptop Usage in Higher Education: Effects on Student Achievement, Student Satisfaction, and Constructivist Measures in Honors and Traditional Classrooms." *Computers & Education* 51 (4): 1766-1783.

Be courteous of your peers. College is a place where ideas should and do flow freely, but all discussions should remain respectful.

Class ends at 11:50, not 11:49...or 11:48...or 11:47, etc. Please do not begin packing your things until I have indicated that class has ended. I will do everything in my power to make sure that class does not extend past 11:50.

A note about emails: Do not expect to receive any correspondence from me between the hours of 6 pm and 8 am on any day, including the night before an exam. Do not email me to ask about grades, I am not allowed to discuss those over email per FERPA regulations. If you have questions, come to my office hours or set up an appointment. You must email me from your @wabash.edu account; I will not respond to any other addresses. **Do not email me any questions about the course without first consulting the syllabus.**

The Gentleman's Rule

As with all other facets of Wabash life, the Gentleman's Rule applies to your interactions with me and your colleagues inside and outside the classroom, as well as to the completion of all academic requirements of the course. Except for leading an article discussion and data collection for the minilabs, all assignments and exams are to be completed independently, with no assistance from other people or other students' work. Remember the Wabash mission statement: "Wabash College educates men to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely." Acting responsibly includes not cheating. *If there are any questions about how the standards of academic integrity apply to a specific assignment or test, please do not hesitate to talk with me for clarification before handing in the assignment.* Uncertainty about the application of these principles will not excuse a violation. Remember that you can be expelled for academic dishonesty!

The general principle is that you should **always submit work that is entirely your own**. Here are some specific examples of academic dishonesty:

- Copying another student's exam or assignment – either a current or past student.
- Copying any text from the internet (or other resource) on an assignment.
- Paraphrasing any text from any resource without providing a reference.
- Extensive paraphrasing of text from any resource even when providing a reference.
- Turning in the same assignment to multiple courses, in the same or different semesters, without prior consent from both professors.
- Taking another student's graded assignment without his permission.
- This is not an exhaustive list of violations. If you have a question, ask before you turn in the assignment.

If I find out that you have cheated on an assignment, you will receive ZERO points for that assignment, and I will turn you into the Dean for an academic dishonesty strike.

Writing Center

Do you have questions about how to start a paper? Are you struggling to get all of your ideas to fit? Do you have a draft but want someone to review it? Did you get a lower grade than expected on your last paper and want to do better?

Then you need to visit the Writing Center!

No matter what your writing questions or needs, the Wabash Writing Center Consultants are eager and able to help you! Located on the second floor of the Lilly Library, the Wabash Writing Center is open to all students, faculty, and staff.

To make an appointment, go to <https://www.wabash.edu/ace/writing>, select the button labeled "Click HERE to make an appointment," and register in the scheduling system.

If you have any questions, please email the director, Prof. Koppelman, at koppelmz@wabash.edu.

The Office of Student Enrichment

Succeeding at Wabash College takes a great deal of effort and planning. Life is complex, assignments are time consuming, and staying involved keeps you running. When you have

questions about how to make everything fit into your schedule, how to study more efficiently, how to take better notes, or any other question about developing your college skill, visit the Office of Student Enrichment (OSE).

Got to <https://koppelman.youcanbook.me> to arrange a one-on-one, personalized meeting with Prof. Koppelman. No matter your questions, Prof. Koppelman will work with you to find a solution that helps you achieve your goals.

ADA Statement

Students with disabilities (apparent or invisible) are invited to confidentially discuss their situation with the disability coordinator, Heather Thrush, Director of Student Engagement and Success. If a student wishes to receive an academic accommodation, it is required that his documentation of the disability be on file with Heather Thrush, who can, in confidence, provide information and guidance. Early notification helps us all work together in the most effective ways. Heather Thrush can be reached at her office (Center Hall 112A), by phone (x6347), or by email (thrushh@wabash.edu).

Counseling Center

Garden Level of Chapel, Kevin Swaim (swaimk@wabash.edu, x6252) & Jamie Douglas (douglasj@wabash.edu, x6252). It's free! It's confidential, and this guarantee is taken seriously. Your contact with the counseling center is confidential between you and the counselor to the fullest extent of the law (confidentiality may be breached in cases such as when there is imminent danger to someone or a report of current abuse of a child or elder). Reasons Wabash students go to the counseling service include personal and academic questions, advice for family problems, stress, anger, grief and loss, conflicts with family or friends or guys in their living units, alcohol and other drugs, feeling edgy and anxious, relationships, motivation problems, sexuality, concerns about friends, just wanting someone neutral to talk to. Walk-ins 11-1 M-Th (knock if they are in session during those hours) or by appointment.

Baxter Hall Emergency Procedures

In case of a fire, we are to proceed from the classroom, out the nearest exit, and move at least 50 yards away from the building, on the mall side. You should join the professor and class outside to make sure that everyone got out of the building. Then move as a group into the Chapel to report to the emergency personnel in charge. In the event of a severe weather storm, we are to proceed to the basement via the SOUTH stairwell and shelter in the basement hallway near the elevator.

Course Schedule

All readings that are not from the required texts will be provided on Canvas

Week 1 (Aug 23): Introduction; What to Expect

- Course Overview; no readings

Week 2 (Aug 27, 29, 31): The Concept of Representation

- Pitkin, chapters 8, 9, and 10 in *The Concept of Representation*

Week 3 (Sep 3, 5, 7): The Geographic Landscape; Gerrymandering

- p.7-23, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*
- “The Minority Majority,” *The Economist*
- Cox and Katz, Chapter 2, “The Reapportionment Revolution” in *Eldridge Gerry’s Salamander: The Electoral Consequences of the Reapportionment Revolution*
- **PODCAST:** “Ditching the Politics in California,” FiveThirtyEight series *The Gerrymandering Project*, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/even-a-gerrymandering-ban-cant-keep-politicians-from-trying-to-shape-their-districts/>

Week 4 (Sep 10, 12, 14): Candidate Entry

- p.73-77, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*
- Price, Chapter 2, “Getting Elected” in *The Congressional Experience*
- Maisel et al., “Quality Challengers to Congressional Incumbents: Can Better Candidates Be Found?” in *Playing Hardball: Campaigning for the U.S. Congress*
- Canon, Chapter 1 “Theory: When Amateurs Appear” in *Actors, Athletes, and Astronauts: Political Amateurs in the United States Congress*

Week 5 (Sep 17, 19, 21): Incumbency Advantage

- Boxer v. Fiorina, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- p.35-60, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*
- Cox and Katz (2002), “The Growth of the Incumbency Advantage”
- Jacobson (2015), “It’s Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections
- Desposato and Petrocik (2003), “The Variable Incumbency Advantage: New Voters, Redistricting, and the Personal Vote”

Week 6 (Sep 24, 26, 28): Primaries Part I

- Galderisi and Ezra, “Congressional Primaries in Historical and Theoretical Context” in *Congressional Primaries and the Politics of Representation*
- Maisel, Chapter 6, “State and Local Nominations” in *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*
- Boatright, Chapter 2, “When and Why Congressional Primary Challenges Happen” in *Getting Primaried: The Changing Politics of Congressional Primary Challenges*
- Hassell, Chapter 6, “Winning the Nomination” in *The Party’s Primary: Control of Congressional Nominations*
- **Choice for Campaign Analysis Paper Due on Wednesday, September 26**

Week 7 (Oct 1, 3, 5): Primaries: Part II

- Reid v. Angle, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- Burden, “The Polarizing Effects of Congressional Primaries”
- Conroy, Rakich, and Nguyen, “We Looked at Hundreds of Endorsements. Here’s who Democrats Are Listening to.” <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-establishment-is-beating-the-progressive-wing-in-democratic-primaries-so-far/>
- **Midterm Exam on Friday, October 5**

Week 8 (Oct 8, 10): Midterm Elections

- Riding the Wave, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- Chabot v. Driehaus, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- Burden and Kimball, Chapter 5, “Midterm Elections & Divided Government” in *Why Americans Split Their Tickets: Campaigns, Competition, and Divided Government*
- Abramowitz et al., “The President’s Party in Midterm Elections: Going from Bad to Worse”

Week 9 (Oct 15, 17, 19): The Electoral Connection

- Marshall v. Scott, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- Mayhew, Chapter 1, “The Electoral Incentive” in *Congress: The Electoral Connection*
- Fenno, Chapter 1, “Perceptions of the Constituency” in *Home Style: Legislators in their Districts*
- Price, Chapter 10, “Serving the District” in *The Congressional Experience*

Week 10 (Oct 22, 24, 26): Money in Congressional Campaigns

- Bass v. Kuster, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- p.79-104, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*
- Webster et al., Chapter 3, “The Individual Financiers of Congressional Elections” in *Playing Hardball: Campaigning for the U.S. Congress*
- Garrett (2012), “Seriously Funny: Understanding Campaign Finance Policy through the Colbert Super PAC”

Week 11 (Oct 29, 31, Nov 2): Advertising

- p.110-133, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*
- Brader, Chapter 5, “Emotion and the Persuasive Power of Campaign Ads” in *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Emotional Appeals in Political Ads Work*
- Geer, Chapter 3, “The Information Environment and Negativity” in *In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns*
- Druckman et al., “Timeless Strategy Meets New Medium: Going Negative on Congressional Campaign Web Sites, 2002–2006”
- Peterson (2012), “To Tweet or not to Tweet: Exploring the Determinants of Early Adoption of Twitter by House Members in the 111th Congress”

Week 12 (Nov 5, 7, 9): Election Week; 2018 Recap

- The Wave Recedes, but Which Way Will the Tide Turn?, *Cases in Congressional Campaigns*
- Kohut, “The Real Message of the Midterms”
- Pew Research Center, “Little Enthusiasm, Familiar Divisions After the GOP’s Big Midterm Victory”
- **Campaign Analysis Paper due MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5**

Week 13 (Nov 12, 14, 16): No Class from November 17-25: Enjoy Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (Nov 26, 28, 30): The Permanent Campaign; Post-mortem politics

- Steger, “The Permanent Campaign: Marketing from the Hill” in *The Handbook of Political Marketing*
- Heberling and Larson 2005, “Redistributing Campaign Funds by U.S. House Members: The Spiraling Costs of the Permanent Campaign”

Week 15 (Dec 3, 5, 7): Presentations; Review

- **TV Advertisement Presentations**

FINAL EXAM on Tuesday, December 11 at 1:30 PM