
POLI 316 Parties and Elections

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, Fall 2017

Instructor:	Dr. Saemyi Park
Class Location & Time:	CCC 324 & Tu/Th 2:00PM - 3:15PM
Instructor's Office:	CCC 468
Office Hours:	W 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM & by appointment
E-mail:	spark@uwsp.edu
Phone:	715-346-4107

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the electoral process in contemporary American politics. Campaigns and elections are the cornerstone of American democracy because it allows citizens to choose their representatives. Without free and fair elections, there can be no government of the people, by the people, and for the people. The purpose of this course is to examine the key issues, questions, and controversies that surround the study of campaigns, elections, and parties in the United States.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will understand and evaluate the basic rules and structure of the American electoral system.
2. Students will understand and analyze the strategic decisions of candidates, political parties, the media, interest groups, and then apply their understanding to advise a specific candidates.
3. Students will understand the decisions of voters, and whether those decisions are affected by campaigns.
4. Students will compare election campaigns for different levels of office within the United State as well as to those waged in other countries.

REQUIRED READINGS

The following book has been ordered at University Bookstore for textbook rental:

- **"Campaigns & Elections: Rules, Reality, Strategy, Choice"** by John Sides Daron Shaw, Matt Grossmann, Keena Lipsitz [W.W. Norton, 2015, Second Edition]

Besides the textbook, relevant articles are assigned for each week's topic. Please see the course calendar. All assigned readings will be uploaded in the course website at [D2L](#), so you can download them. Please keep in mind that you are required to read the assigned articles BEFORE the relevant lecture.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Weight	Due Date
Midterm Exam	25%	October 24 (T)
Final Exam	25%	December 20 (W)
Film Analysis Paper	15%	Within two weeks after showing
Election Assessment Paper	25%	December 17 (Sun) by 11:59PM
Attendance & Participation	10%	Every class
Total:	100%	

GRADING SCALE

Grades will be determined according to the university's standard scale. I have incredibly high standards for my grades. If you meet the basic requirements for an assignment, you will get a C. If you want a A or B, you need to go above and beyond the exact requirements for an assignment. For individual assignments, I will define the A-F grade base in the following way:

Criteria						
Outstanding	A	93-100	A-	90-92		
Above average	B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
Average	C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
Below average	D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
Unsatisfactory	F	Below 60				

Note: students must complete ALL the required work in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. **You do NOT have the option to "take a zero" on an assignment.** Not completing all the required work will result either in a final grade of incomplete until the work is submitted or an F for the course. You are NOT allowed to submit and complete the required course assignments late unless you receive my permission to do so. Students with serious illness or family emergencies may be considered to be given for late submission, but I will need to see an official evidence to verify the seriousness of the situation.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

A. Exams

You have online exams in this course. The mid-term exam will be given online on October 24 (T). It will contain material covered in the first part of the course. The final exam will be given online on December 20 (W). It will NOT be cumulative, and questions will cover the second half of the course. The exam will be open at 9AM and close at 11:59PM on each scheduled date. You will be given two hours to take the test. Once you start taking the test, you are NOT

allowed to take a break for return. **Because it is an online exam that is open for a day, students would not have a make-up exam opportunity for whatever reasons.** The format of exams is a combination of multiple choice and short identification questions. We will have a review session before midterm and final exam. I will also distribute a study guide a week prior to the exam day.

Note: If you are required to attend the university-sponsored activities (athletic games etc.) or if you are seriously ill and incapable of taking the exam, I may consider you to take the test early or late. However, you must provide an official document to prove your excuse and I reserve the right to determine if you will be given the make-up exam opportunity or not. Make-up exam is all short identification essays, which is a lot harder for students to do well on it. And, you will take it on the final day of class in my office (in case for the university-sponsored activities) or on the date I chose to give you.

B. Film Analysis Paper

You will analyze ONE of three documentaries shown in class in light of the lecture materials and assigned readings for this course. You are free to write on any topic related to parties, campaigns, and elections addressed in the documentaries, as long as they are able to incorporate and demonstrate your thorough understanding of the different assigned course readings. A separate worksheet will be distributed in class for more details. You have two weeks to complete this assignment after watching the film in class.

C. Election Assessment Memo

You will be responsible for writing a memo for your chosen candidate (1,200-1,500 words; single-spaced). It should focus on explaining the outcome of the 2016 presidential election to the candidate. Why do you think the candidate won or lost the campaign? What would you have done differently had you been running the campaign? A good memo should make reference to class concepts and materials, and you have to do some research for outside sources. I will distribute separate worksheets containing detailed information regarding this assignment.

D. Attendance and Participation

Regular and prompt attendance, active participation, and mature attentiveness during lecture meetings are MANDATORY. I will NOT distribute lecture notes via e-mail for students who miss a lecture. The student is responsible for finding out what he/she missed and obtaining class notes or assignments from someone else in the class. **A student who has Eight or MORE absences will automatically receive an "F" for the course for inadequate class attendance.** It is also expected that you will be on time for class. Three tardies are the equivalent of one absence. In the unlikely event that you are late for class, it is YOUR responsibility to let me know that you came in immediately after class. Otherwise, your tardy will be recorded as an

absence. It is also your responsibility to keep track of how many absences and tardies you have accumulated. The instructor reserves the right to determine whether an absence should be recoded depending upon the amount of time a student is present during a class meeting. This policy will be revised as needed.

Excusable Exceptions (evidence/document is required to submit at the beginning of the semester)

- Documented participated in school-sponsored activities
- Religious holiday

COURSE POLICIES

A. Readings

Students are required to complete each week's required readings BEFORE that lecture. You need to bring your books, assigned readings, and lecture notes to each class.

B. D2L

I maintain a page for this course at the D2L site. The site contains copies of some of the material distributed in class (this syllabus, for example), outlines of class material, the separate worksheet for the group oral presentation, and many more. You must check this site before every class.

C. Lectures

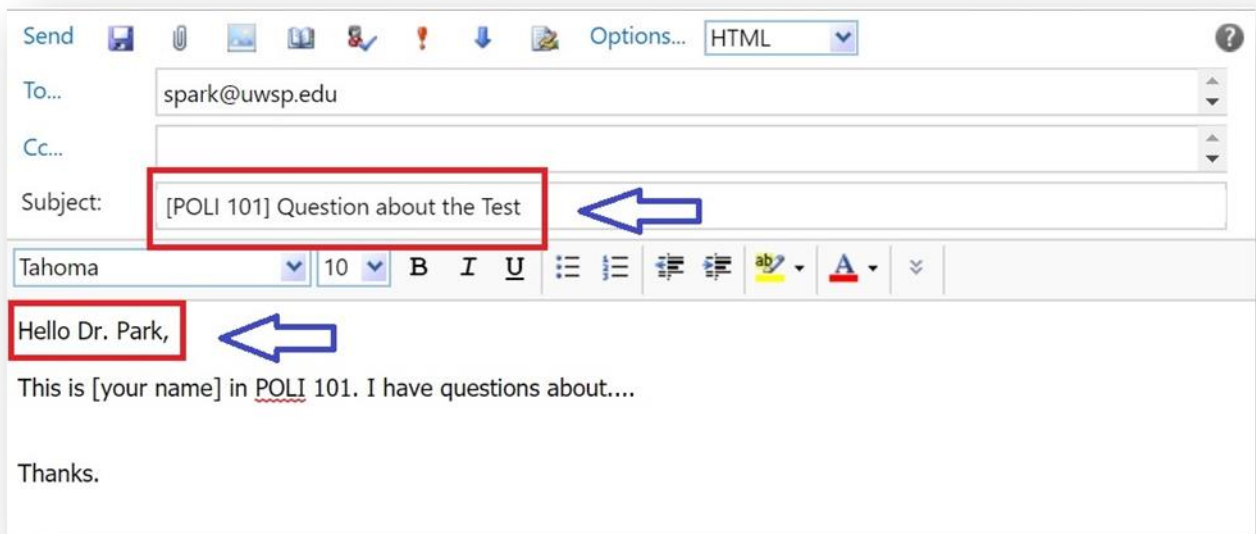
Before we begin a topic in class, I will post an outline of the lecture material on the course website. The outline for a topic will remain on the website for a day or two after we finish a topic and will then be removed. The outlines give you the framework of the lecture but do not give you the entire script. If you wish, you can print these outlines and bring them with you to class to use as a base for note taking. You will learn and remember better when you write things down yourself. Regarding note taking, make sure you take notes that will be meaningful to you later when you are reviewing your notes, rather than focusing only on transcribing the slides verbatim.

D. Office Hours

Feel free to drop by during my office hours or make an appointment to see me. I WELCOME students.

E. Email Communication

Email is a convenient way to continue contact between professor and student outside of class. Email is best for 1-2 sentence responses, and conceptual questions do not lend themselves well to email. If you have any questions regarding your papers, please visit my office hours for in-depth consultation. I will NOT consult on your written assignment via email. While students should take advantage of this email communication opportunity with me, you should also do so in a professional manner. I will NOT reply to emails that do not include a salutation (“Dear Prof. ...” or “Hello Dr. ...”).



I will also NOT respond to emails that ask for answers to questions that can easily be found on the syllabus or the lecture notes. If you have a question regarding lectures or assigned material that you just cannot seem to master, then ask a question in class, or come to me during office hours. I will only respond to questions about coursework or academic requirements, and I will not respond to questions of a personal nature. I will be able to respond your email during weekdays (not weekend), but please email me again if you do not receive my response within 48 hours.

F. Honesty:

Any instance of academic misconduct will be taken seriously and may result in failure of the course. Misconduct will result in notification to the Dean of Students. If you are having a problem, it is much better to talk to me about it. Do not struggle by yourself. I want you to learn and do well in this course, not punish you with a lower grade. Talk to me if you are having a problem so I can try to help you work out a solution.

G. Late Work & Extra Credit

There are NO opportunities to make up a missed assignment nor will there be any extra credit assignments. Students with serious illness or family emergencies may be considered to be given, but I will need to see an official evidence to verify the seriousness of the situation.

H. Ground Rules

This course is open to a variety of ways of interpreting history, theories, and policies. Students are encouraged to share their questions and ideas in lecture. Since there will be differences and disagreements, students are expected to show respect to the comments and positions of fellow students and me. Also, using a cell phone, iPad, or laptop is NOT allowed in class.

The Course Calendar

(Topics, readings, and schedule subject to announced change by instructor.)

Topic	Tentative Dates	Textbook
Introduction	9/5	
The American Electoral System	9/7, 9/12 & 9/14	Ch.2
The Transformation of American Campaigns		Ch. 3
Campaign Finance	9/19 & 9/21	Ch. 4
Campaign Strategies	9/26 & 9/28	Ch. 5
Film Presentation I	10/3	
Campaign Advertisements	10/5 & 10/10	
Political Parties and Interest Groups	10/12 & 10/17	Ch. 6 & Ch. 7
Review Session	10/19	
Midterm Exam	10/24	
Presidential Elections & Campaigns	10/26 & 10/31	Ch. 9
Congressional Elections & Campaigns	11/2 & 11/7	Ch. 10
State and Local Elections & Campaigns	11/9 & 11/14	Ch. 11
Film Presentation II	11/16	
Media & Social Media	11/21 & 11/28	Ch. 8
Thanksgiving Break (no class)	11/23	
Voter Participation	11/30, 12/5 & 12/17	Ch. 12
Voter Choice		Ch. 13
Film Presentation III	12/12	
Review Session	12/14	
Final Exam	12/20	

Note: Besides the main textbook assigned to each week, there are more required readings for each topic. Please check out D2L (“content” -> “readings”).