

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Political Science 310

Section 01 10:30-11:45 TT
Fall 2004/2005

Dr. William K. Hall
426-C Bradley Hall

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

There are many ways to study political behavior. One of the most interesting and useful is to study electoral behavior. In this course, we will study political behavior by studying congressional elections. The elections of 2004 (all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the U.S. Senate) will serve as our “living laboratory” of electoral politics.

Our study of political behavior will focus not only on the political behavior of the candidates who run for seats in the House of Representatives or the Senate, but on the political behavior of the American electorate, the effects (if any) of issues on political behavior, the role and effects of campaigns, the power of money, electronic and other types of political advertising, the impact of a simultaneous presidential election contest, and the larger environment in which the election of 2004 is taking place (the nation at war, the escalation of terrorism as a political tool, a slowly-recovering economy, etc.) .

READINGS FOR THE COURSE

Two books are required for this course. Both are available at the Bradley Bookstore:

Paul S. Herrnson, Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington, 4th edition, 2004.

Sunil Ahuja and Robert Dewhirst (editors), The Roads to Congress 2000, 2002.

CLASSROOM METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

This class will be conducted through a combination of lecture, as much class discussion and student involvement as possible, and student-led and student-carried discussion. The course will depend therefore on the active participation and discussion efforts of each and every student. In order to thoughtfully participate (with knowledge), it is imperative that you keep up with events and happenings of the 2004 political season from late August through Election Day.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

You are expected to attend ALL class sessions.

GRADES

Your overall course grade will be weighted as follows:

Mid-term Exam	20%
Second (final) Exam	25%
Senate Election Project	40%
Election Exercises	10%
Class Participation	5%

EXAMINATIONS

There will be two scheduled examinations. Each exam will consist of several pairs of essay questions. The two scheduled examinations will be given on these dates:

The mid-term exam (over Sections I, II, III [Parts A, A-1 and B]) will be given on Thursday, October 7.

The second (final) exam (over Sections III [Parts C, C-1, D, E, F and F-1], IV and V) will be given at the time assigned in the *Academic Handbook* for final week—that is: Wednesday, December 15, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Do not plan to miss the Second (final) Exam which will be given only on Wednesday, December 15. In the event your travel (or other) plans do not permit you to take the second examination on December 15, your course grade will need to be sufficiently strong enough to overcome the “loss” of 25% of your semester grade....

MAKE-UP EXAMINATION

A make-up examination for the Mid-term Exam will be given only under the most extraordinary circumstances, and then only for a legitimate, excused absence. Students who must unavoidably be absent on examination day because of participation in official inter-collegiate events (e.g., a member of the BU varsity co-ed gator wrestling team) should see the instructor before the examination is given in order to discuss a make-up.

In cases of illness on examination day, documented proof of the alleged affliction may be required before a student would be allowed to take a make-up examination. Make-up examinations are given solely at the instructor's discretion.

SENATE ELECTION PROJECT

Each student will track and analyze one of the races for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Each student will select a race to track and analyze from a list of approximately 20-25 (of the 34) 2004 Senate contests. Each student will prepare a written analysis of his/her Senate race (in the form of a 25-35 page paper) which will be due by noon on Election Day, Tuesday, November 2. Details on the Senate election project will be presented and discussed during class on Thursday, September 2. A packet of materials on the project will be given to each student in class on Tuesday, August 31.

ELECTION EXERCISES

Over the course of the semester we will do a number of election exercises. These exercises are case studies of specific House or Senate election contests in 2000.

Each case study was selected to emphasize a particular facet of congressional elections. Students (working in teams of three) will be responsible for "presenting" each of the case studies. The team will also help guide the day's discussion on that case study.

One of the purposes of using these case studies is to improve your ability to analyze congressional election contests. This should help when researching/analyzing your 2004 Senate election contest.

The first of the case studies (September 14) will serve as our "practice run" on the case studies. Four other case studies are scheduled to be done before your Senate election project is due. The fifth case study (October 21) is scheduled well in advance of your project due date. Some instructors are simply too, too nice....

CLASS PARTICIPATION

I have five expectations for class participation:

- (1) That you will be in attendance at each of our class sessions. **Students who miss more than three class sessions will receive 0 credit for Class Participation.**
- (2) That you read the assigned readings—whether from Herrnson and/or Ahuja/Dewhirst and/or one of the rare class handouts—before coming to class each day.
- (3) That you make yourself aware of and informed about current political activities as the congressional campaign season unfolds.
- (4) That you come to class prepared to be an active participant, ready to discuss the day's topic(s), raise questions and make comments about the readings, etc.
- (5) That you volunteer relevant information from your Senate race during our various class discussions.

INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Although you will see me twice a week in the classroom, it is possible you will want to see me in my office (now doing business at a new location—426-C). I am available to meet with you every day of the academic week, especially at the scheduled office hours listed below:

Monday	9:15-10:45, 2:00-3:30
Tuesday	9:15-10:15
Wednesday	9:15-10:45, 2:00-3:30
Thursday	9:15-10:15
Friday	9:15-10:45, 2:00-3:00

Should you need to reach me by phone my office phone is 677-2495. If I am not available when you call, you may leave a voice-mail message for me, or you can reach the departmental secretary at 677-2502 and leave a message with her. I can also be reached by email at: hall@bradley.edu

TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENT OUTLINE

COURSE INTRODUCTION

August 26–Course Introduction

I. THE CONTEXT AND HISTORY OF CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

In order to study congressional elections, it is necessary to place them into some sort of strategic context. In addition to placing congressional elections into the appropriate “strategic context,” we will ascertain what can be learned from studying both historical election trends and recent congressional elections.

A. August 31–The Strategic Context of Congressional Elections

Readings: Herrnson, Introduction and Chapter #1 (pp. 1-5, 6-34)

B. September 2–Detailed Explanation of Senate Election Project

C. September 7 and 9–Historical Background of Congressional Elections and A Special Look at the 2000 and 2002 Elections

Readings: Ahuja/Dewhirst (A/D), Chapters #1 and #14 (pp. 1-11, 212-218)

C-1. September 14–Election Exercise

Reading: A/D, Case Study #8 (pp. 113-129)

II. GETTING TO THE FINALS: WINNING THE PARTY’S NOMINATION

Before a person can be elected to Congress, she/he must be nominated by her/his political party. Here we will examine what makes people run for Congress, the role of the parties in recruitment, the several ways of being nominated, and how a person campaigns for nomination to the House of Representatives or the Senate.

September 16 and 21–The Politics of Nominations

Readings: Herrnson, Chapter #2 (pp. 35-68)

III. CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Campaigns for House and Senate seats have undergone changes at least as great as those affecting other aspects of electoral politics in the American political system. In this section, we seek to understand congressional campaigning as we examine candidates, campaign

organizations, campaign strategy and tactics, and the role of interest groups and political parties in congressional elections.

A. September 23 and 28–The Anatomy of a Campaign

Reading: Herrnson, Chapter #3 (pp. 69-85)

A-1. September 30–Election Exercises

Readings: A/D, Case Study #4 (pp. 45-60)

A/D, Case Study #5 (pp. 61-75)

B. October 5–Political Parties and Interest Groups in Congressional Campaigns

Readings: Herrnson, Chapters #4 and #5 (pp. 86-128, 129-158)

******* MID-TERM EXAM on Thursday, October 7 *******

******* FALL BREAK–No Class on Tuesday, October 12 *******

B-1. October 14–Election Exercise

Reading: A/D, Case Study #13 (pp. 199-211)

C. October 19–Campaign Strategy and Tactics

Reading: Herrnson, Chapter #7 (pp. 189-212)

C-1. October 21–Election Exercise

Reading: A/D, Case Study #11 (pp. 165-179)

D. October 26–The Role of the Media/Campaign Advertising: Part I

Reading: Herrnson, Chapter #8 (pp. 213-237)

******* FOUNDER'S DAY–No Class on Thursday, October 28 *******

******* SENATE RESEARCH PROJECT DUE Tuesday, November 2 *******

E. November 4–Analysis of the 2004 Congressional Elections

F. November 9–The Role of the Media/Campaign Advertising: Part Deux

Reading: Herrnson, Chapter #8 (pp. 213-237)

F-1. November 11–Election Exercise

Reading: A/D, Case Study #7 (pp. 97-109)

IV. ELECTION OUTCOMES

Why do some candidates for seats in Congress win their elections and others lose? How important is money in helping to determine the outcome of election contests? These and other related questions will be explored in this section on the outcomes of election contests.

A. November 16–Candidates, Campaigns, and Electoral Success

Reading: Herrnson, Chapter #9 (pp. 238-264)

A-1. November 18–Election Exercise

Reading: A/D, Case Study #6 (pp. 77-96)

B. November 23–Money and Congressional Elections

Readings: Herrnson, Chapters #6 and #11 (pp. 159-188, 282-308)

******* THANKSGIVING BREAK–No Class on Thursday, November 25 *******

B-1. November 30–Election Exercise

Reading: A/D, Case Study #10 (pp. 148-164)

V. THE IMPACT OF ELECTIONS ON CONGRESS

The election is over. The votes have been tabulated. Both the winners and the losers know their fate. What difference does it make as far as which candidates win seats in the U.S. Congress? Does it really matter whether the Republicans or the Democrats control one or both houses of the national legislature? What are the effects of elections on the functioning of Congress? In this closing topic, we discover and put in place the last pieces of our political behavior puzzle.

December 2–Elections and the Institution of Congress

Reading: Herrnson, Chapter #10 (pp. 265-281)

December 7–Election Exercises

Readings: A/D, Case Study #2 (pp. 15-29)

A/D, Case Study #3 (pp. 30-43)

******* Second (Final) Exam on Wednesday, December 15, 9:00-11:00 a.m. *******