

The 2016 Presidential Election
Prof. David Greenberg
SAS Honors Seminar

Class Time: Mon. 11:30am - 02:30pm
Email: davidgr@rutgers.edu
Office Hours: M&W 3-4pm
Course No.: 01:090:293:01

Room: Honors College Seminar Room N106
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Syllabus

Updated December 18, 2015

Description. The course examines the 2016 election in its historical context. Studying the history of the campaign and its practices and institutions should encourage students to think in a more rigorous, scholarly way about a topic that many of us will be talking about anyway. As a class, we'll follow the ups and downs and twists and turns of the election season. But we'll also try to understand how campaigns have come to take the form that they do. We'll use the insights of political scientists to challenge conventional wisdom and journalistic clichés, and we'll study media and communications research to understand how the election is portrayed to voters.

Course Requirements.

1. Weekly readings. Each week there will be assigned readings on the given topic. On some weeks the assignment will consist mainly of a single book, and on those weeks you may have 200 pages or so to read. On other weeks it will be a collection of articles, coming to around 100 pages.
2. Following the campaign in the news. You must follow the daily political coverage through a few different kinds of news outlets:

a) at least one major, non-partisan newspaper such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* or *The Wall Street Journal*; and

b) one serious political magazine (print or online) such as *Slate*, *The Daily Beast*, *Politico*, or *The Weekly Standard*; and

c) one political-science website such as *The Monkey Cage*, www.brendan-nyhan.com, or *538*;

d) one history website such as *History News Network*.

Avoid trashy websites such as *Yahoo News*, *Gawker*, *Buzzfeed*, and *The Huffington Post*, which are aimed at a mass audience and are not discriminating in what they publish. If you're unsure whether a site is legitimate, please ask me.

3. Collecting relevant articles. From these sources, students are expected to save at least 10 articles throughout the semester on one of the topics listed below. Students will write one paragraph about each of the 10 articles. These articles will be drawn upon for the term paper.

Possible topics to write about:

- a) race in the campaign;
- b) gender in the campaign;
- c) religion in the campaign;
- d) foreign policy in the campaign;
- e) political consultants;
- f) the news media;
- g) political advertising;
- h) the biographies and personal lives of the candidates;
- i) the debates

4. Oral presentation. Each student will be expected to lead off one week's discussion with a ten-minute oral presentation about the readings. It should not summarize.
5. First Short Paper. There will be an initial five-page essay, designed to evaluate facility with the readings, ability to frame an argument, and writing skill.
6. Second Paper and Portfolio. A second ten-page paper will be based on the articles you collect on a campaign-related topic. It will be due the week that topic is discussed in class. You will also submit those ten (or more) articles, with a one-paragraph write-up of each one.
7. Watching campaign events. Students are expected to watch the major political events of the campaign season.


In addition to the reading and writing assignments on the syllabus, there are a number of other things you should know.


1. Regular attendance is required. This course meets only two and a half hours a week. Arriving on time and staying for the duration is essential. Students may miss one class during the semester, no questions asked. Students who miss more than one class—or substantial portions of more than one class—will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each class missed, even if they notify the professor in advance. (The scale includes minuses, even though Rutgers does not allow such grades. e. g., if you are on pace to earn an A, and you have two unexcused absences, you will earn a B+.) In case of severe illness or other extraordinary events, documentation must be provided. And to be clear: “Severe illness” does not refer to a bad cold or the flu. It refers to something like meningitis or a car accident.
2. Active participation is required. One central purpose of a seminar like this is to teach students to form their own ideas and share them with their peers. The very work of the course consists of engaging in a discussion of ideas. Students who abstain from discussion are missing the course's whole purpose. A class in which a student doesn't contribute to discussion is equivalent to a missed class. In other words, if you miss one class because of illness and are completely silent through a second class, you will be penalized. Although I appreciate that some people are more soft-spoken or shy than others, if you are truly phobic about talking in class, you should probably not take this course.
3. We will be using Sakai regularly. Go to <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal> and log in using your Rutgers ID and password. On the site I will post announcements, assignments, readings, and so on.
4. Phones, tablets, and laptops are not permitted. It's human nature to be distracted by these devices and use them for pursuits others than classwork. I've found that when we all put away our devices, the conversation and level of engagement is much higher.
5. Students must show up on time and stay for the duration of the class. Please do not get up in the middle of class for any reason.
6. I will return all emails. Don't assume that I've received your email. Sometimes messages get stuck in a spam folder or lost in cyberspace. If I don't reply within 48 hours, please follow up with a phone call. If it's urgent, please call me.
7. Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and cheating are, of course, forbidden, according to Rutgers University policy. You are responsible for reviewing and obeying these policies. A lengthy statement of the policy is at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers>.


Reading List.

1. Matt Bai, *All the Truth Is Out: The Week Politics Went Tabloid*. Vintage, 2014. ISBN: 0307474682.
2. Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*. Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003. ISBN: 0812968204. 416 pp
3. John Geer, *In Defense of Negativity*. University of Chicago Press, 2008. ISBN: 0226284999, 218 pp.
4. Lewis Gould, *Four Hats in the Ring: The 1912 Election and the Birth of Modern American Politics*. University Press of Kansas, 2008. ISBN: 0700618562. 254 pp.
5. John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800*. Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN: 019518906X. 288 pp.
6. Norman Mailer, *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*. NYRB Classics, 2008. ISBN: 1590172965. 224 pp.
7. Alan Schroeder, *The Presidential Debates: Fifty Years of High-Risk TV*. Columbia University Press, 2008. ISBN: 023114105X. 384 pp.
8. Rebecca Traister, *Big Girls Don't Cry: The Election That Changed Everything for American Women*. Free Press, 2010. ISBN: 143915029X. 352 pp.

Weekly Assignments.

 Book available at Rutgers University Bookstore, or in Alexander library reserves, or online for order.

 Article available on the class website at the Sakai site.

 Article available elsewhere on the Web.

Mon., Jan. 25

Introduction


I will not be able to be present in class this first week. I realize that this is unfortunate because you will be deciding whether or not to stay in the class. I am willing to answer your questions by phone or email.

Mon., Feb 1


Iowa Caucuses


Mon., Feb. 1


The Iowa Caucuses and the Nominating Process

 Alexis de Tocqueville, "Election of the President," "Mode of Election," "Crises of Election," and "Re-Election of the President," from *Democracy in America*, Vol. 1, Ch. 8.


http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/detoc/1_ch08.htm [11pp.]

 William G. Mayer, "Chapter 10: How Parties Nominate President," in *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups*, eds. Jeffrey M. Berry, and Sandy Maisel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 185-203. [19pp.]

 Peverill Squire, "The Iowa Caucuses, 1972-2008: A Eulogy," *The Forum* 5:4 (2008), 1-9. [10pp.]


 Hugh Winebrenner, "The Evolution of the Iowa Precinct Caucuses," in *The Iowa History Reader*, ed. Marvin Bergman, (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008) 397-410. [14pp.]


 Marty Cohen, et al., "Polls or Pols? The Real Driving Force behind Presidential Nominations," *The Brookings Review*, 21: 3 (Summer 2003), 36-39 [4pp.]

 History of the Iowa Caucuses (Iowa Public Television)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bduF39rgl8s>

Mon., Feb. 8

The New Hampshire Primary

 Hendrik Hertzberg, "This Must Be the Place," *The New Yorker*, January 31, 2000, 36-39. [4pp.]

 William G. Mayer, "The New Hampshire Primary: A Historical Overview," in *Media and Momentum: The New Hampshire Primary and Nomination*

Politics, eds. Garry R. Orren and Nelson W. Polsby (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, 1987), 9-41 [33 pp.]

📁 Elizabeth Drew, "A Political Journal," *The New Yorker*, March 12, 1984. pp. 128-156 [23 pp.]

📁 David Broder, *Behind the Front Page: A Candid Look at How News Is Made* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 23-49 [27 pp.]

Tues., Feb 9

New Hampshire Primaries

Mon., Feb. 15

Case Study #1: 1800

📖 John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800*. [215 pp.]

Mon., Feb. 22

The Debates

📖 Alan Schroeder, *The Presidential Debates*, Chapters 1-3, 6-9 [168 pp.]

📁 David Greenberg, "Torchlight Parades for the Television Age: The Presidential Debates as Political Ritual," *Daedalus*, Spring 2009, pp. 6-19. [14 pp.]

📁 Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1960*, Chapter 11 [16 pp.]

★ **First Paper Due**

Mon., Feb. 29

Case Study #2: 1912

📁 Gil Troy, "The Campaign Triumphant," *Wilson Quarterly* 36:3 June 2012. <http://bit.ly/1NuaMHf> [13 pp.]

📖 Lewis Gould, *Four Hats in the Ring: The 1912 Election and the Birth of Modern American Politics* [187 pp.]

Tues., Mar. 1

Super Tuesday (13 states vote)

Mon., Mar. 7

The Handlers

📁 Robert Westbrook, "Politics as Consumption," Chapter V in Richard Fox & Jackson Lears, *The Culture of Consumption*, pp. 145-173. [28pp.]

📁 Richard Jensen, "Armies, Admen and Crusaders: Types of Presidential Election Campaigns," *The History Teacher*, 2 (1969): 33-50. [17pp.]

📁 Sidney Blumenthal, "Introduction," and "Patrick Caddell," in *The Permanent Campaign* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1982), pp. 17-26, 44-75. [32pp.]

📁 Fred Barnes, "The Myth of Political Consultants," *The New Republic*, June 16, 1986, pp. 16-19. [4 pp.]

📁 Jennifer Senior, "The Politics of Personality Destruction," *New York Magazine*, June 3, 2007 [14 pp.]

Mon., Mar. 14

No class – spring break

📖 Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*, pp. 1-137. It is a long book, and you may not be able to read it all in one week. So start now. [138 pp.]

Mon., Mar. 21

Advertising

📖 John Geer, *In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns*. [162 pp.]

📁 Frank Rich, "Nuke 'Em," *New York Magazine*, June 17, 2012 [10 pp.]

Mon., Mar. 28

Research sessions.

📖 Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*, 140-290. [151 pp.]


Mon., Apr. 4

The News Media

📖 Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*, 291-393. [103 pp.]

Mon., Apr. 11


Case Study #3: 1968 - Political Crisis


 Norman Mailer, *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*. [219 pp.]


Mon., Apr. 18

The Conventions

 Alan Brinkley, "The Taming of the Political Convention," in *Liberalism and Its Discontents* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 249-265. [16 pp.]

 Sean Wilentz, "Here We Go Again: An Unconventional History," *The New Republic*, August 19 & 26, 1996, pp. 20-24. [5 pp.]

 Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1960* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009 [1961]), Chapter 6: "Rendezvous at Los Angeles: The Democratic Convention," pp. 150-179. [30 pp.]

 Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1964* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009 [1961]), Chapter 7: "Barry Goldwater's Convention: Coup at the Cow Palace," pp. 200-231 [32 pp.]


Mon., Apr. 25


Case Study #4: 1988 – Sex Scandal

 Matt Bai, *All the Truth Is Out: The Week Politics Went Tabloid*, pp. 3-195. [193 pp.]

Mon., May 2

Case Study #5: 2008 – Race and Gender

 Rebecca Traister, *Big Girls Don't Cry*, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12. [185 pp.]

 David Greenberg, "Why Obamamania? Because He Runs as the Great White Hope," *Washington Post*, January 13, 2008. [3 pp.]

 Sean Wilentz, "Race Man," *The New Republic*, February 27, 2008, at <http://www.tnr.com/article/politics/race-man> [20 pp.]

★ **Final Paper Due**