

The 2016 Presidential Election
Prof. David Greenberg
SAS Honors Seminar

Class Time: Mon. 11:30am - 02:30pm

Email: davidgr@rutgers.edu

Office Hours: Mon. 2:30-4:30 pm

Course No.: 01:090:293:01

Room: Honors College Rm S120

Phone: 646-504-5071

Office: 106 DeWitt (185 College Ave.)

Syllabus

Updated September 11, 2016

Description. The course examines the 2016 election in its historical context. Studying the history of the campaign should help students to think in a more rigorous, scholarly way about a topic that many 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 the history: 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 of a single book, and 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*, *Princeton Election Consortium*, or *538*;

Avoid websites such as *Yahoo News*, *Buzzfeed*, and *The Huffington Post*, which tend not to be as discriminating in the quality of what they publish. If you're unsure whether a site is legitimate, please ask me.

3. Collecting relevant articles. From these sources, you are expected to save at least ten articles throughout the semester on one of the topics listed below. You will write one paragraph about each of the ten 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. **Due Oct. 10.**
6. Portfolio and Second Paper. A second ten-page paper will be based on the articles you collect on a campaign-related topic. The portfolio of articles is **due Nov. 14.** The term paper is **due Dec. 5.**
7. Watching campaign events. Students are expected to watch the major political events of the campaign season such as debates and primary returns. There are also some on-campus events that are recommended for you to attend.

In addition, 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 parts of more than one class—will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each class missed, even if they notify me. That means that if you're 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. 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 you don'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 am extremely sympathetic to students, and I know that some people are more soft-spoken or shy than others, if you are truly phobic about talking in class, you may wish to consider whether to take this course. I am more than happy to talk to individual students about the challenges of speaking in class.
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. Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*. Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003. ISBN: 0812968204. 416 pp.
2. John Geer, *In Defense of Negativity*. University of Chicago Press, 2008. ISBN: 0226284999, 218 pp.
3. 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.
4. John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800*. Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN: 019518906X. 288 pp.
5. Norman Mailer, *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*. NYRB Classics, 2008. ISBN: 1590172965. 224 pp.
6. Alan Schroeder, *The Presidential Debates: Fifty Years of High-Risk TV*. Columbia University Press, 2008. ISBN: 023114105X. 384 pp.
7. Lynn Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the Election of 1828*. Oxford University Press, 2011. 0199754241.
8. Rebecca Traister, *Big Girls Don't Cry: The Election That Changed Everything for American Women*. Free Press, 2010. ISBN: 143915029X. 352 pp.
9. Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Weekly Assignments.

Books available at Rutgers University Bookstore, New Jersey Books, or in Alexander library reserves.
 Articles available on the class website at the Sakai site.

Mon., Sep. 12

The Pageant

This week will be an introduction to the class. Please come to class having read excerpts from two classic works of American political sociology, Tocqueville's Democracy in America and Bryce's American Commonwealth.

Alexis de Tocqueville, "Election of the President," "Mode of Election," "Crises of Election," and "Re-Election of the President," in *Democracy in America*.

<http://tinyurl.com/alexis-president-01>

<http://tinyurl.com/alexis-president-02>

<http://tinyurl.com/alexis-president-03>

<http://tinyurl.com/alexis-president-04>

James Bryce, "The President," "Observations on the Presidency," and "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President" in *The American Commonwealth*.

<http://tinyurl.com/bryce-chapter05>

<http://tinyurl.com/bryce-chapter07>

<http://tinyurl.com/bryce-chapter08>

Mon., Sep. 19

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., Sep. 26

The Debates

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


☞ David Greenberg, "Torchtlight 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.]

- Mon., Sep. 26 **WATCH: 1st PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Mon., Oct. 3 **No Class: Rosh Hashanah**
- Tues., Oct. 4 **WATCH: VICE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Sun., Oct. 9 **WATCH: 2ND PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Mon., Oct. 10 **Case Study #1: 1800**
 John Ferling, *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election of 1800.*
 **First Paper Due**
Evening Event: Lecture by Donna Brazile, Chair, Democratic National Committee. College Avenue Gym, 130 College Avenue, 7:00 pm.
- Mon., Oct. 17 **Case Study #2: 1828**
 Gil Troy, "The Campaign Triumphant," *Wilson Quarterly* 36:3 June 2012.
<http://bit.ly/1NuaMHf> [13 pp.]
 Lynn Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the Election of 1828*
- Wed., Oct. 19 **WATCH: 3RD PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Mon., Oct. 24 **No Class:** Begin reading Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*. Read the whole thing if you can. Required sections are § 1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 14, 17.
- Thurs., Oct. 27 **Evening Event:** "Pollsters on Politics: A Conversation About the 2016 Race for President and the State of Public Opinion Research." Traves Hall, Douglass Student Center, 100 George Street, 7:00 pm.
- Mon., Oct. 31 **The Media**
 Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*.
Read the whole thing if you can. Required sections are § 1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 14, 17.
- Mon., Nov. 7 **No Class.**
- Tues., Nov. 8 **WATCH: ELECTION DAY RETURNS**
- Mon., Nov. 14 **Case Study #3: 1912 – Party Split**
 Lewis Gould, *Four Hats in the Ring: The 1912 Election and the Birth of Modern American Politics* [187 pp.]
 **Submit Portfolio**
- Mon., Nov. 21 **The Handlers**
 Robert Westbrook, "Politics as Consumption," Chapter V in Richard Fox & Jackson Lears, *The Culture of Consumption*, pp. 145-173. [28 pp.]
 Richard Jensen, "Armies, Admen and Crusaders: Types of Presidential Election Campaigns," *The History Teacher*, 2 (1969): 33-50. [17 pp.]
 Sidney Blumenthal, "Introduction," and "Patrick Caddell," in *The Permanent Campaign* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1982), pp. 17-26, 44-75. [32 pp.]
 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., Nov. 28


Case Study #4: 1968 – Political Crisis


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

★ **Submit Final Paper.**

Mon., Dec. 5


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., Dec. 12

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.]