

GVPT685: Voting, Campaigns, and Elections

Dr. Raymond Williams

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Class Time: Thursdays 6:00-9:00pm

Office Hours: By Appointment

Spring 2023

Introduction to the theoretical and empirical research on political participation, campaigns, and elections. By gaining an understanding of the literature and working with a variety of data sets, students will be equipped to carry out their own research on these topics.

Course Requirements

Classes will consist of class discussions. Students are expected to read all of the readings for the week before attending class, and actively participate in class discussions. On a regular basis, students will be assigned to lead class discussions on specific research questions or substantive debates, and individual students will be asked to report on selected readings.

Short Papers: Students will be asked to select four class meetings for which they will write 2-4 page essays (double-spaced) on the readings for those meetings. Students should develop an argument dealing with these readings. The purpose of these essays is critique and analysis (i.e. what do the authors get right, what are the blind spots they are not addressing, what other data sources could they have used, and what should future research cover). Summary of the readings should be kept to a minimum. **Papers are due to me by email by the start of class on the day we discuss the readings.**

Final Project: Your final project will be completed in groups. Your group will develop a post-mortem of one 2022 Senate race. Using at least three data sources (quantitative and qualitative) you will explain the outcome of the election and how that outcome occurred, *a la The Bitter End*. The final project consists of a preliminary presentation on the last day of class and a final paper due during the final exam period (10-20 pages, double-spaced). Senate races will be selected on **February 9**, your hypotheses, data sources, and your research plan are due on **March 9**.

Grading

Class Participation 30 %

Short Papers 30 %

Final Project 40 %

Required Readings

Sides, John, Chris Tausanovitch, and Lynn Vavreck. 2022. *The Bitter End: The 2020 Presidential Campaign and the Challenge to American Democracy* Princeton University Press.

Weekly Reading Assignments

January 26: Introduction of Course

February 2: Campaign Finance

Stratmann, Thomas. 2005. “The Effectiveness of Money in Ballot Measure Campaigns” *Southern California Law Review* 78(4): 1041-1064

Grumbach, Jacob M. and Alexander Sahn. 2020. “Race and Representation in Campaign Finance” *American Political Science Review* 114(1): 206–221

Ridout et. al. 2021. “Spending Fast and Furious: Political Advertising in 2020” *Forum* 18(4): 465-492

Bouton, Laurent, Julia Cagé, Edgard Dewitte, and Vincent Pons. 2022. “Small Campaign Donors.” NBER Working Paper Series. 1-46

February 9: Campaign Strategies: Advertising (Pick Final Project Topic)

Brader, Ted. 2005. “Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions.” *American Journal of Political Science* 49(2): 388–405

Gerber, Alan S., James G. Gimpel, Donald P. Green, and Daron R. Shaw. 2011. “How Large and Long-lasting Are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads? Results from a Randomized Field Experiment.” *American Political Science Review*. 105(1): 135-150

Williams, Christine B. and Girish J. “Jeff” Gulati. 2018. “Digital Advertising Expenditures in the 2016 Presidential Election.” *Social Science Computer Review* Vol. 36(4): 406-421.

Fowler et. al. 2021. “Political Advertising Online and Offline” *American Political Science Review* 115(1): 130–149

Sides, John, Lynn Vavreck, and Christopher Warshaw. 2022. “The Effect of Television Advertising in United States Elections.” *American Political Science Review*. 116(2): 702–718.

Canen, Nathan and Gregory J. Martin. 2023. “How Campaign Ads Stimulate Political Interest” *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 105(2): 1–19

February 16: Campaign Strategies: Campaign Visits

Shaw, Daron R. and Brian E. Roberts. 2000. “Campaign Events, the Media and the Prospects of Victory: The 1992 and 1996 US Presidential Elections.” *British Journal of Political Science* 30(2): 259-289

Herr, J. Paul, 2002. “The Impact of Campaign Appearances in the 1996 Election.” *Journal of Politics* 64(3): 904-913

Shaw, Daron R. and James G. Gimpel. 2012. “What if We Randomize the Governor’s Schedule? Evidence on Campaign Appearance Effects from a Texas Field Experiment” *Political Communication*, 29:137–159

Wood, Thomas. 2016. “What The Heck Are We Doing in Ottumwa, Anyway? Presidential Candidate Visits and Their Political Consequence” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 667: 110-125

Heersink, Boris and Brenton D. Peterson. 2017. “Truman defeats Dewey: The effect of campaign visits on election outcomes.” *Electoral Studies* 49: 49-64

February 23: APAN Interview Workshop (Required to attend)

March 2: Campaign Strategies: Ground Game

Darr, Joshua P. and Matthew S. Levendusky. 2014. “Relying on the Ground Game: The Placement and Effect of Campaign Field Offices.” *American Politics Research*. 42(3) 529–548

Enos, Ryan D. and Eitan D. Hersh. 2015. “Party Activists as Campaign Advertisers: The Ground Campaign as a Principal-Agent Problem.” *American Political Science Review*. 109(2):1-27

Enos, Ryan D. and Anthony Fowler. 2018. “Aggregate Effects of Large-Scale Campaigns on Voter Turnout” *Political Science Research and Methods*, 6(4):733-751

Kalla, Joshua L. and David E. Broockman. 2018. “The Minimal Persuasive Effects of Campaign Contact in General Elections: Evidence from 49 Field Experiments” *American Political Science Review* 112(1): 148-166.

March 9: Campaign Strategies: Voter Turnout (Hypotheses and Data Sources Due)

Gerber, Alan, and Donald Green. 2000. "The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment" *American Political Science Review* 94: 653-663.

Smith, Mark A. 2001. "The Contingent Effects of Ballot Initiatives and Candidate Races on Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(3): 700-706

Citrin, Jack, Eric Schickler, and John Sides. 2003. "What if Everyone Voted? Simulating the Impact of Increased Turnout in Senate Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(1):75-90.

Nickerson, David W. 2015. "Do Voter Registration Drives Increase Participation? For Whom and When?" *Journal of Politics*. 77(1), 88-101

Weinschenk, Aaron C. 2015. "Campaign Field Offices and Voter Mobilization in 2012." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 45(3): 573-580

March 16: Election Determinants: Incumbency

Cox, Gary W. and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in the U.S. House Elections Grow?" *American Journal of Political Science* 40(2): 478-497

Mayhew, David. 2008. "Incumbency Advantage in U.S. Presidential Elections: The Historical Record" *Political Science Quarterly* 123(2): 201-228

Ansola-behere, Stephen and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2002. "The Incumbency Advantage in U.S. Elections: An Analysis of State and Federal Offices, 1942–2000." *Election Law Journal*. 1(4): 315-338

Brown, Adam R. 2014. "Voters Don't Care Much About Incumbency." *Journal of Experimental Political Science*. 1: 132–143

Jacobson, Gary C. 2015. "It's Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in US House Elections" *The Journal of Politics* 77(3): 861-873

March 23: Spring Break (No Class)

March 30: Election Determinants: Economics

Hibbs Jr., Douglass A. 2000. "Bread and Peace Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections" *Public Choice* 104:149-180.

Lewis-Beck, Michael and Mary Stegmaier. 2000. "Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3(June): 183-219.

Healy, Andrew and Gabriel S. Lenz. 2014. "Substituting the End for the Whole: Why Voters Respond Primarily to the Election-Year Economy" *American Journal of Political Science* 58(1):31-47

Ellis, Christopher and Joseph Ura. 2021. "Polarization and the Decline of Economic Voting in American National Elections." *Social Science Quarterly* 102(1): 83-89

April 6: Election Forecasting

Dassonneville, Ruth, and Charles Tien. 2021. "Introduction to Forecasting the 2020 US Elections." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 47-51

Abramowitz, Alan I. 2021. "It's the Pandemic, Stupid! A Simplified Model for Forecasting the 2020 Presidential Election." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 52-54

Lewis-Beck, Michael S. and Charles Tien. 2021. "The Political Economy Model: A Blue Wave Forecast For 2020." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 59-62

Norpoth, Helmut. 2021. "Primary Model Predicts Trump Reelection." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 63-66

Lockerbie, Brad. 2021. "Economic Pessimism and Political Punishment in 2020." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 67-69

Enns, Peter K. and Julius Lagodny. 2021. "Forecasting the 2020 Electoral College Winner: The State Presidential Approval/State Economy Model." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 81-85

Murr, Andreas E. and Michael S. Lewis-Beck. 2021. "Citizen Forecasting 2020: A State-by-State Experiment." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 91-95

Dowding, Keith. 2021. "Why Forecast? The Value of Forecasting to Political Science." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 104-106

Victor, Jennifer Nicoll. 2021. "Let's Be Honest about Election Forecasting" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 54(1): 107-109

Sabato, Larry J., Kyle Kondik, and J. Miles Coleman. 2022. "Final Ratings for the 2022 Election" Center for Politics, UVA.

Sabato, Larry J., Kyle Kondik, and J. Miles Coleman. 2022. "Looking Back at the 2022 Projections" Center for Politics, UVA.

April 13: The 2020 Presidential Election

Sides, John, Chris Tausanovitch, and Lynn Vavreck. 2022. *The Bitter End: The 2020 Presidential Campaign and the Challenge to American Democracy*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 4, 7, 8, and 9.

Yoder et. al. 2021. “How did absentee voting affect the 2020 U.S. election?” *Science Advances* 7(52): 1-8

April 20: External Shocks and Unexpected Events

Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2013. “Blind Retrospection: Why Shark Attacks Are Bad for Democracy.”

Healy Andrew J., Neil Malhotra, and Cecilia Hyunjung Mo. 2010. “Irrelevant events affect voters’ evaluations of government performance.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 107(29): 12804–12809

Fowler, Anthony and B. Pablo Montagnes. 2015. “College football, elections, and false-positive results in observational research.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 112(45): 13800–13804

Heersink, Boris, Brenton D. Peterson, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. 2017. “Disasters and Elections: Estimating the Net Effect of Damage and Relief in Historical Perspective” *Political Analysis* 25(2): 260-268

Fowler, Anthony and Andrew B. Hall. 2018. “Do Shark Attacks Influence Presidential Elections? Reassessing a Prominent Finding on Voter Competence.” *The Journal of Politics* 80(4): 1423-1437

Wasow, Omar. 2020. “Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting.” *American Political Science Review* 114 (3): 638–659

April 27: Election Laws and Administration

Ang, Desmond. 2019. “Do 40-Year-Old Facts Still Matter? Long-Run Effects of Federal Oversight under the Voting Rights Act” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 11(3): 1-53

U.S. Election Assistance Commission. 2021. *Election Administration and Voting Survey 2020 Comprehensive Report: A Report from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission to the 117th Congress*. Executive Summary (i-v) and Chapters 1-2 (1-26, 54-84)

Schraufnagel, Scot, Michael J. Pomante II, and Quan Li. 2022. “Cost of Voting in the American States: 2022” *Election Law Journal* 21(3): 234-247

May 4: Electoral Reforms

Berinsky, Adam. 2005. "The Perverse Consequences of Electoral Reform in the United States." *American Politics Research*. 33: 471-491

Rigby, Elizabeth, and Melanie Springer. 2011. "Does Electoral Reform Increase (or Decrease) Political Equality?" *Political Research Quarterly* 64: 420-434.

Burden et. al. 2014. "Election Laws, Mobilization, and Turnout: The Unanticipated Consequences of Election Reform." *American Journal of Political Science*. 58(1): 95-109

Thompson, Daniel M., Jennifer Wu, Jesse Yoder, and Andrew B. Hall. 2020. "Universal vote-by-mail has no impact on partisan turnout or vote share" *PNAS*, 117(25): 14052–14056

Hajnal et. al. 2022. "Who Votes: City Election Timing and Voter Composition" *American Political Science Review* 116(1): 374–383

Eggers, Andrew C. and Tobias Nowacki. 2022. "Susceptibility to strategic voting: a comparison of plurality and instant-runoff elections"

May 11: Preliminary Final Project Presentation

Final Project Due on Final Exam Day TBD

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Policies and Resources for Graduate Courses

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please see the University's website for graduate course-related policies at:

<https://gradschool.umd.edu/course-related-policies>

Course Guidelines

Names/Pronouns and Self-Identifications:

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering inclusive and equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to in this class, both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). Keep in mind that the pronouns someone uses are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more.

Additionally, it is your choice whether to disclose how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

Communication with Instructor:

Email: If you need to reach out and communicate with me, please email me at rtw0613@umd.edu. Please DO NOT email me with questions that are easily found in the syllabus or on ELMS (i.e. When is this assignment due? How much is it worth? etc.) but please DO reach out about personal, academic, and intellectual concerns/questions.

I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours.

ELMS: I will send IMPORTANT announcements via ELMS messaging. You must make sure that your email & announcement notifications (including changes in assignments and/or due dates) are enabled in ELMS so you do not miss any messages. You are responsible for checking your email and Canvas/ELMS inbox with regular frequency.

Communication with Peers:

With a diversity of perspectives and experience, we may find ourselves in disagreement and/or debate with one another. As such, it is important that we agree to conduct ourselves in a professional manner and that we work together to foster and preserve a virtual classroom environment in which we can respectfully discuss and deliberate controversial questions. I encourage you to confidently exercise your right to free speech—bearing in mind, of course, that you will be expected to craft and defend arguments that support your position. Keep in mind, that free speech has its limit and this course is NOT the space for hate speech, harassment, and derogatory language. I will make every reasonable attempt to create an atmosphere in which each student feels comfortable voicing their argument without fear of being personally attacked, mocked, demeaned, or devalued.

Any behavior (including harassment, sexual harassment, and racially and/or culturally derogatory language) that threatens this atmosphere will not be tolerated. Please alert me immediately if you feel threatened, dismissed, or silenced at any point during our semester

together and/or if your engagement in discussion has been in some way hindered by the learning environment.

Academic Integrity

The University's Code of Academic Integrity is designed to ensure that the principles of academic honesty and integrity are upheld. In accordance with this code, the University of Maryland does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Please ensure that you fully understand this code and its implications because all acts of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this code. All students are expected to adhere to this Code. It is your responsibility to read it and know what it says, so you can start your professional life on the right path. **As future professionals, your commitment to high ethical standards and honesty begins with your time at the University of Maryland.**

It is important to note that course assistance websites, such as CourseHero, or AI generated content are not permitted sources, unless the instructor explicitly gives permission. Material taken or copied from these sites can be deemed unauthorized material and a violation of academic integrity. These sites offer information that might be inaccurate or biased and most importantly, relying on restricted sources will hamper your learning process, particularly the critical thinking steps necessary for college-level assignments.

Finally, on each exam or assignment you must write out and sign the following pledge: ***"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."*** If you ever feel pressured to comply with someone else's academic integrity violation, please reach out to me straight away. Also, ***if you are ever unclear*** about acceptable levels of collaboration, ***please ask!*** To help you avoid unintentional violations, ***the following table*** lists levels of collaboration that are acceptable for each graded exercise. Each assignment will contain more specific information regarding acceptable levels of collaboration.

Grades

All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades (including the exams), or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time for us to meet and discuss.

Late work will not be accepted for course credit so please plan to have it submitted well before the scheduled deadline. I am happy to discuss any of your grades with you, and if I have made a mistake I will immediately correct it. Any formal grade disputes must be submitted in writing and within one week of receiving the grade.

Resources & Accommodations

[Accessibility and Disability Services](#)

The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on

the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The **Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS)** provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that I have sufficient time to make arrangements.

For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682, or email them at adsfrontdesk@umd.edu. Information about [sharing your accommodations with instructors, note taking assistance](#) and more is available from the **Counseling Center**.

Student Resources and Services

Taking personal responsibility for your own learning means acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it. I hope you will come talk to me so that I can help you find the right approach to success in this course, and I encourage you to visit **UMD's Student Academic Support Services website** to learn more about the wide range of campus resources available to you.

In particular, everyone can use some help sharpening their communication skills (and improving their grade) by visiting **UMD's Writing Center** and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center.

You should also know there are a wide range of resources to support you with whatever you might need (**UMD's Student Resources and Services website** may help). If you feel it would be helpful to have someone to talk to, visit **UMD's Counseling Center** or [one of the many other mental health resources on campus](#).

Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lack a safe and stable place to live, please visit **UMD's Division of Student Affairs website** for information about resources the campus offers you and let me know if I can help in any way.

Veteran Resources

UMD provides some additional supports to our student veterans. You can access those resources at the office of [Veteran Student life](#) and the [Counseling Center](#). Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.