STATEMENT ABOUT THE COURSE: The subject of presidential elections is inherently exciting to any person interested in politics. I want to make this course as informative, interesting, and exciting as possible. You have the special advantage of taking this course during the height of the 2012 presidential campaign. How could the timing of this course be better? Consequently, we are going to follow and discuss the day to day progress of this campaign as it progresses from the convention stage (your first day of class just happens to fall on the opening day of the Republican National Convention) to Election Day.

You will be responsible for reading half of the chapters for the mid-term and the other half of the chapters for the final. I will cover much of the material in these chapters, but I am not going to bore you with tedious lectures, covering systematically practically all of the materials covered in these chapters by our author, Stephen Wayne. I will definitely cover the highlights in these chapters and make certain what I expect from you for the mid-term and final, but I want to spend most of the time \textit{living with you} the developing moments of this 2012 presidential campaign.

To do this, I want I will be emailing to you the most current articles, editorials, blogs, polls, etc. that will provide insights into what is happening in this presidential campaign. Many times the articles will be only hours old. I will comment on most of these materials and we will discuss their significance in class. Obviously, some of the articles may offend your partisan beliefs since some will slam Republicans, while others will slam Democrats. Please understand that, although most of us are partisans, we should act as scholars in our search for understanding presidential campaign politics, not as sensitive, not-so-open-minded partisans. Frankly, this may not be so easy for many of you not very comfortable with having your partisan beliefs challenged and even shaken by, yes, I am going to say it, facts. What we will learn is that both Republicans and Democrats lie and distort in their political ads and say about anything to get elected. Presidential campaigns have engaged rather unprincipled candidates and involved dirty politics since active campaigning for the presidency first began. It is the nature of the most important electoral game in the world where the stakes are very high, making it understandable that the candidates play hardball, not softball.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. \textbf{Introductory Comments: Understanding Presidential Elections}
   A. American Presidential Elections Are Like No Other!
   B. McCain v. Obama: Analyzing the results
   C. Taking a close look at 2008 exit poll data
   D. What Internet sites are the best for insights into presidential elections?
   E. We are a product of \textit{“the funnel of causality”} (chill out and abandon your partisan blinders and think like a political scientist while still retaining your partisanship – it can be done)
II. Presidential Seduction: A Historical Overview
   A. Introduction
   B. Creation of the Electoral College
   C. Why third party candidates cannot win
   D. The Development of the Nomination Process
   E. General Elections
      Emerging Patterns
   G. Electoral College Politics and the Vote
   H. Summary

III. Campaign Finance: Money Counts
   A. Introduction
   B. Campaigns Cost Big Bucks
   C. Money Sources
   D. Finance Laws: Controversies, Reform, and the Always Existing Loopholes
   E. Finance Law, Revenues, Expenditures, and Choices
   F. Analyzing the Supreme Court’s recent decision on corporate contributions
   G. The Correlation Between Money and Winning: Myths and Realities
   H. Summary

IV. The Environment of Presidential Elections
   A. Introduction
   B. Voter Turnout
   C. Partisans, Voting, and Deviations
   D. Social Basis of Politics
   E. Election Types
   F. Evolving Political Coalitions: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow
   G. Summary

V. Nomination Politics
   A. Introduction: the 2012 Battle for the Nominations
   B. Trying to Win the Crucial Delegates: Overview
   C. Understanding the Nomination Process: Republican and Democratic Rules
   D. Legalities
   E. Rules Changes and Their Impact on Voters, Parties, Candidates, and Democracy
   F. Specific Strategies for Winning Delegates
   G. Summary

VI. Pre-Convention and Convention Politics
   A. Introduction: the 2012 Republican and Democratic National Party Conventions
   B. Posturing for the Convention and General Campaign
   C. National Party Conventions in perspective
   D. The Nominees
   E. Summary
VII. Going to Battle: The General Election Campaign
   B. Organization
   C. Strategic Objectives
   D. Campaign Tactics
   E. Summary

VIII. Presidential Campaigns and Media Politics
   A. Introduction
   B. Hard News Coverage
   C. Soft News Coverage
   D. Presidential Debates
   E. Campaign Ads: Types, Techniques, Targeting, Appeals
   F. Media Impact
   G. Summary

IX. The Presidential Election
   A. Introduction
   B. Predicting Election Results: Models, Polls, and Forecasts
   C. Interpreting the Election
   D. So What Does The Winner Do Now? Turning An Election Victory Into Governing Success (e.g., Obama as a campaigner and president)
   E. Summary

X. Reforming the Electoral System
   A. Introduction
   B. Reasons for Reform
   C. Making Desirable Changes
   D. Improving Electoral Choice
   E. Summary

Required Readings


Handouts and online articles “hot off the press”

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend class regularly since lectures are an important source of information, especially since topics discussed in lectures are frequently not covered in the book or in the hand-outs. This is because I will be lecturing on breaking news regarding the 2012 presidential campaign and political news in general that cannot be covered in previously published materials. I want to frequently comment on what is happening in the presidential campaign as it develops, putting the breaking events into an historical perspective. Students cannot miss more than six classes during the course of the semester and get credit for this course. Excused absences (e.g., illness, death in the family) are exempt.
Grading Policy

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<td>Mid-Term</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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The numerical equivalents of letter grades are:

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COURSE EVALUATION

During the last day of the semester, students will complete a confidential course evaluation in class rather than an on-line evaluation. This is because too many students fail to complete online course evaluations, reducing the value of the course evaluation.
Students with Special Needs - Disability Services

Any student who feels that he/she may need academic accommodations in order to meet the requirements of this course - as outlined in the syllabus - due to presence of a disability, should contact the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action. Please telephone the office at 314-977-8885, or visit DuBourg Hall Room 36. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

Americans With Disabilities Act

All provisions are honored by this instructor.

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COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic Integrity and Honesty

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

Any clear violation of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. Possible sanctions for violation of academic integrity may include, but are not limited to, assignment of a failing grade in a course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. Students should review the College of Arts and Sciences policy on Academic Honesty, which can be accessed on-line at http://www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/ under “Quicklinks for Students” or in hard copy form in the Arts and Sciences Policy Binder in each departmental or College office.