

PSC 4010
Elections and Governance
Spring 2015

Instructor: Mr. Jonathan Doc Bradley
Location: WRI C235
Time: MW 10:00 – 11:15 am

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Office: WRI A 217
Office Hours:

Course Overview and Learning Outcomes:

The purpose of this class is to investigate the causes and consequences of the decoupling of contemporary electoral politics from governance, as well as evaluate potential reforms to each of these processes. Elections are the primary means by which public opinion is infused into the political system and representation is achieved. Governance, not to be confused with *government*, is the process whereby policy goals are developed and implemented. Ideally, these two processes should reinforce each other. However, today, as the costs of contemporary elections continue to escalate, they offer more negativity and less substance, while the institutionalization of the permanent campaign has made it nearly impossible for policy makers to address the country's myriad policy challenges. In other words, the necessity to permanently campaign has decreased the actual ability to govern.

This class incorporates material from the Brookings Institution's Governance Studies program and is highlighted by guest lectures by Brookings scholars who will be visiting UNLV during the term. In addition, this course will meet all five University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs). By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. More effectively use their critical thinking, writing, and information gathering skills.
2. Assess how institutional arrangements and processes and the preferences of political actors determine policy and electoral outcomes.
3. Understand the inter-relations between different levels of government and how these relationships affect the delivery of governmental policy.
4. Analyze how electoral and policymaking institutions function at different levels of government.
5. Produce a public policy memo addressing an area of concern presented in this class, evidence of the issue and viable solutions for the issue.

University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs)

This course supports the following UULOs:

- 1) Intellectual Breadth and Lifelong Learning - Integrate basic principles of the social sciences and develop skills and a desire for lifelong learning.
- 2) Inquiry and Critical Thinking - Be able to identify problems, articulate questions, and use various forms of research and reasoning to guide the collection, analysis, and use of information related to those problems
- 3) Communication - Communicate effectively in written and verbal modes
Citizenship and Ethics - Participate knowledgeably and actively in the public life of our communities and

make informed, responsible, and ethical decisions in one's personal and professional lives.

- 4) Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness – Develop knowledge of multicultural societies and an awareness of one's place in and effect on them
- 5) Citizenship and Ethics - Participate knowledgeably and actively in the public life of our communities and make informed, responsible, and ethical decisions in one's personal and professional lives.

Readings:

Edwards, Mickey. 2012. *The Parties Versus the People*. New Haven: Yale University .

Mann, Thomas E. and Norman J. Ornstein. 2012. *It's Even Worse Than It Looks*. New York: Basic Books.

Wittes, Benjamin (ed.). 2012. *Campaign 2012*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution.

Additional course readings will be available via the course WebCampus site. These will be posted at various times throughout the semester.

Policy Paper and Grading

You will only have one assignment for the class, and that is to produce a strong and coherent public policy memorandum. This assignment will be broken down into several component parts which will be graded and due at various times during the course. You will also be expected to continually improve on the work you have submitted so that by the end of the semester you will produce a well-polished policy memorandum. Each assignment will have the opportunity to be corrected and resubmitted for grade improvement. The final completed work will be a policy memorandum containing a cover page with abstract, a one (1) page facts sheet, a three (3) page synopsis, and a 12 or so page memorandum with footnotes. The entire memorandum with cover, facts sheet, synopsis, and body will be around 4,500 words.

You are instructed to select one issue or aspect of this course (see list below) and fully investigate the matter so as to provide detailed information about the subject. To that end you will be tasked with completing the following graded assignments (due dates listed in calendar):

- 1) Meet with professor at some point in the first three (3) weeks of class to select and discuss memorandum topic. You will need to make an appointment with me. Expect the meeting to last 20 minutes or so. You will need to answer the following questions concerning you topic selection:
 - a. What is it?
 - b. Why do you want to research it?
 - c. What your initial position is on the subject (which may change after your research)?
 - d. How you plan to research and what you expect to find?
 - e. Your understanding of the level of work required to complete the memorandum.
(5% of grade).
- 2) A 150 to 200 word abstract explaining all the things discussed in the meeting.
(5% of grade)

- 3) A bibliography with 10 citations (other than class material) which you plan to use for your memorandum. Five of those citations will need to be annotated with 100 words or so answering the following questions:
 - a. What is the work and what does it say?
 - b. What level of quality is the work?
 - c. How relevant is the work?
 - d. How relevant is the work to you?
 (10% of grade)
- 4) A one page "facts page" composed of bullet point facts about your subject (5% of grade).
- 5) Interview with elected official or public/community leader concerning issue. Before the interview the student will need to email the professor with a brief description of who they intend to interview, why, and a list of general question they intend to ask. **ASSIGNMENT MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE 15TH OF APRIL!**
 (15% of grade)
- 6) Rough draft which must contain (but not limited to) **(2,000 words at minimum)**:
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Issue with evidence that it actually exist
 - c. Projection of issue if it goes unchanged or worsens
 - d. Solutions
 - e. Conclusions
 (15% of grade)
- 7) Final memorandum with coversheet, fact sheet, 3 PAGE SYNOPSIS, memorandum.
 (25% of grade)

Issues:

(These are big issues so you will probably want to concentrate on a single aspect)
 (And remember, it is possible that there is no "there, there.")

Lack of political efficacy of citizens
 Demoralization of citizens with the political process
 Political parties are too powerful
 Political parties are too weak
 Media's (news) role in perpetual elections
 Media's (other than news) role in perpetual elections
 Media's role in partisanship or polarization
 Redistricting of federal elections
 Redistricting of state elections (Nevada, California, Texas, Ohio, New York, or Florida).
 The Presidential Primary process.
 The Nevada primaries for state elections.
 Campaign finance (some aspect of it).
 State ballot initiatives (pick a state, preferably ours)
 Direct democracy
 The uniqueness of Las Vegas, Clark County, and the resort corridor
 The political power and clout of large cities
 The relationship between Carson City and Las Vegas
 Elections and Governance in the Silver State

***** Final test 15% of grade*****

***** Class participation and behavior will account for 10% of grade*****

Grading:

100% - 93% A, 92.9%-90% A-, 89.9%-87% B, 86.9%-83% B-, 82.9%-80%=B-, 79.9%-77% C, 76.9%-72% C-, 71.9%-70% C-, 69%-60% D below 60% = F

Schedule: (This schedule is subject to change)

January 19th: Doctor, Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no class

January 21st: Class introduction

January 26th:

January 26th: Last day to drop without a penalty

January 28th:

February 2nd:

February 4th: *Must meet with professor for memorandum topic by this date*

February 9th:

February 11th: Vanda Felbab-Brown ✓
Hand in 150-200 word abstract

February 16th: Washington's Birthday, no class

February 18th: Carol Graham ✓
Email revised 150-200 word abstract by COB (Close Of Business, 5pm)

February 23rd:

February 25th: Elizabeth Ferris ✓

February 27th: Final day to drop with a 50% refund

March 2nd:

March 4th: Jennifer Vey ✓
Hand in Bibliography 

March 9th:

March 11th: Joshua Meltzer ✓
Email in revised Bibliography by COB

March 16th:

March 18th: John Hudak ✓
Hand in facts page

March 23rd

March 25th: Ross A. Hammond ✓
Email in revised facts page by COB

March 30th -April 4th: Spring Break. Have fun, make some memories, but be safe.
April 3rd: Final day to withdraw.

April 6th:

April 8th: Jeremy Shapiro "Politics and the State Department" ✓
Hand in rough draft (There will be no revisions for the rough draft)

April 13th:

April 15th: Jeffrey S. Gutman ✓
Interview must be conducted by this date

April 20th:

April 22nd:

April 27th:

April 29th:
Final Memorandum

May 4th:

May 6th:

May 11th—16th: Finals week.
Final Memorandum with revisions due during finals testing period

Final Test

Requirements:

1. Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. It is difficult to earn a passing grade in this class if you are not present for the lectures. Students are responsible for all information taught and provided in class, whether they are present or not. Attendance will be taken at random, and I reserve the right to take attendance at multiple times during one class period. Two (2) absences will result in 0% given for class participation and attendance. Any additional absences will result in a half letter grade reduction per absence. Valid absences for scholastic reasons, religious reasons or medical reasons will be allowed and will not count against overall attendance. Scholastic and religious absences need to be preapproved. Medical absences need to be proven with medical paperwork from a medical professional concerning the date missed.

2. Tardiness: I loathe tardiness. Constant tardiness will not be tolerated. **DO NOT BE TARDY WHEN WE HAVE A GUEST LECTURER.** It is disrespectful to your fellow students, and much more importantly, it is disrespectful to me and our guest. Continued tardiness will result in a lowering of your class participation grade, and could also result in a lowering of your overall final grade. I reserve the right to restrict access to the class if tardiness by any student(s) becomes an issue. If you have extenuating circumstances that will cause you to be consistently tardy, please contact me at the beginning of the semester about the situation. I am willing to make allowances for valid reasons.

3. Communications: Email communications must be via RebelMail and Webcampus. Do not send an email via Google, Yahoo, or other commercial providers. For all communications send me an email via RebelMail or Webcampus, or come see me directly. I will not answer emails sent in any medium other than RebelMail. I check my office phone messages infrequently, and there is no way on this Earth I am giving you my cell number. Do not leave an important message on my office line and expect me to retrieve it rapidly. If you do leave a message it would behoove you to also send an email with the same information. Please avail yourself of my office hours. I am here to help you and teach you. I am thrilled by visits from students (honestly) who are seeking to learn and understand.

Classroom Behavior: Every student is entitled to a distraction-free classroom. Students may not behave in any manner that interferes with the learning of another student or my teaching. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- 1) You will be utmost respectful to your instructor, but most especially our guest. All of the below rules will be enforced throughout the entirety of the class, but especially when our guest lecturers are present. Violation of any of the below rules can result in a lowering of your final grade.
- 2) You must arrive and be prepared to begin class on time.
- 3) **Cell phones must be turned off and stored out of sight.** Texting, accessing the internet, or reading email during class is absolutely prohibited and will result in your being asked to leave the classroom. Continual cell phone use during the class will result in a lowering of your class participation grade. I have no tolerance for cell phones in class. We have survived in various forms of society for 8,000 years without cell phones. You can survive for a few hours without yours. I don't even want to see them out. If they are out I will assume you are using it and I will ask you to put it away. Unless you are a brain surgeon on call or in possession of the nuclear launch codes there is absolutely no reason you need to be talking or texting on your cell phone in our class.
- 4) Laptops and tablets are allowed in class **ONLY** to take notes. You are not to access the internet (unless I request you to do so), check email or perform any other function on your

computer that is not class related. I reserve the right to discontinue the use of all or individual electronic devices in class if they disrupt the learning environment. **If you use a laptop or tablet to take notes a copy of your daily notes must be emailed to me before the next class.**

- 5) No “side-bar” conversations or passing notes. Ignoring this rule will result in your being asked to leave the classroom. I do not tolerate students who are disruptive or inconsiderate of other students.
- 6) Do not do another class’ homework in this class.
- 7) Recording devices will not be permitted.
- 8) No food or beverages (except water in a sealable container) are allowed in the classroom.
- 9) No sleeping
- 10) Classroom behavior should always be courteous, respectful of others, and consistent with the expectations set forth by the university.

University Policies and Resources:

1. Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* located at: <http://studentconduct.unlv.edu/misconduct/policy.html>. Any evidence of collaboration, plagiarism, or other violations of the honor code will be immediately referred for investigation.

2. UNLV requires all members of the university community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. UNLV will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://provost.unlv.edu/copyright/statements.html>.

3. The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to me during office hours so that we may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach me before or after class to discuss your accommodation needs.

4. The grade of I – Incomplete – can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed all course work up to the withdrawal date of that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. A student who receives an I is responsible for making up whatever work was lacking at the end of the semester.

If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor.

5. The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring and academic assistance for all UNLV students taking UNLV courses. Students are encouraged to stop by the ASC to learn more about subjects offered, tutoring times and other academic resources. The ASC is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Students may learn more about tutoring services by calling (702) 895-3177 or visiting the tutoring web site at: <http://academicsuccess.unlv.edu/tutoring/>.

6. One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

7. Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor no later than the end of the first two weeks of classes, September 6, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. This policy shall not apply in the event that administering the test or examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the university that could not reasonably been avoided. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=164>.

8. By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu.

9. The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule (<http://www.unlv.edu/registar/calendar>)

This syllabus is subject to change at the university's, departments', and/or the instructor's desire.

