

**Macalester College
Department of Political Science**

POLI 294.02
Presidential Campaigns and Elections
Spring 2008
Class Mtgs: W 7-10 pm
Carnegie #204

Dr. Julie Dolan
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Office Hours:
MW 2:30-4:30 and by appt
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Course Description

The course uses a combination of academic theory and focused field experiences to expose students to the complexities, inner workings and strategies employed by presidential campaigns in the United States. In particular, we will focus on the Byzantine system of state primaries and caucuses used to award presidential delegates in the United States, the complicated rules of campaign finance that govern presidential elections, the ways parties, candidates and interest groups mobilize voters, the role of the media and campaign communications, and the actual workings of the Electoral College.

Required Texts

Stephen J. Wayne. 2008. *The Road to the White House*, 8th edition. Wadsworth Publishing.

Rozell, Mark, Clyde Wilcox, and David Madland. 2005. *Interest Groups in American Campaigns: The New Face of Electioneering*. 2nd edition. CQ Press.

Iyengar, Shanto, and Jennifer A. McGrady. 2007. *Media Politics: A Citizen's Guide*. New York: Norton.

** Additional required readings, listed on the last page of the syllabus.

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation and Community Education Projects (40%)

This course was awarded a Civic Engagement Course grant by national Project Pericles to enable students to make connections between the academic literature on presidential campaigns and elections and the reality of the process as it unfolds on the ground. As part of being a Project Pericles course, the class contains a community education component. In particular, this means we are expected to share the insights and expertise we develop with the larger community. To these ends, the class is charged with developing and implementing a series of community education projects. We will discuss these projects beginning on the first evening of class (audience, media, format, etc).

The full participation of all students is expected, both in the classroom and in creating and implementing the community education projects. Students should be on time and well prepared for all class sessions. If you are unable to attend class or have a problem completing an assignment by the due date, you must call me **before the close of business (5:00 pm) the day prior to class**. Your participation is essential and if you are not in class, you cannot participate.

2. Series of three short writing assignments (30%)

Each student will write a series of 3 different short papers (no more than 3 pages in length) over the course of the semester. Since there are more than three paper topics to choose from, it is up to each student to decide which of these three assignments to select. However, no more than one paper will be accepted for any one date on the syllabus. Each assignment essentially requires you to apply a concept or theory about presidential elections and campaigns as described in the reading and to relate it to the 2008 presidential campaigns and candidates in particular. More details to come.

3. In-depth examination of some subset of presidential campaigns literature (30%)

As our semester gets underway, both Republicans and Democrats are in the process of selecting a party nominee. Yet the field of viable candidates in 2008 is unlike any seen before and provides us with an excellent opportunity to examine the impact of gender, race, and religion on presidential nominations. Throughout the semester, we will follow the nomination contests (until nominees are selected), and drawing from the academic literature, try to make sense of their strategies, voter reactions, and outcomes. To do so, each student in the class will complete three related assignments:

a) **An annotated bibliography** on some aspect of presidential campaigns (10%). **Due March 26th**.

b) **A synthesis and discussion** of the relevant literature and an analysis of how the 2008 elections do or do not fit the literature (10%). **Due May 8th**.

c) **An in-class presentation** that informs and educates your colleagues as to the state of the literature and situates the 2008 race within the relevant political science literature (10%). Dates to be determined.

Further details will be handed out in class at a later date.

Course Schedule

January 30

Course Overview

Reading: None

- February 5** **Super Tuesday and MN Caucuses** – meet in Carnegie #05 to watch and discuss election returns
- February 13** **History of Presidential Nomination and Selection and Caucuses, Primaries and Delegates**
Reading: Wayne, Chapters 1 and 4
 Norrander, “Explaining Individual Participation in Presidential Primaries”* (see last page of syllabus)
 Gregg, “First in the Nation: The Primacy of New Hampshire’s First-in-the-Nation Election”*
 Rozell, Wilcox, and Madland, Chapter 2, esp. pp 46-70
 Follow delegate count at www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008
- February 20** **Voting, Partisanship, and the Presidential Nomination Process**
Reading: Wayne, Chapter 3
 Iyengar and McGrady, Chapters 5 and 8 (including Appendix)
- February 27** **Campaign Strategy: Nomination, Interim and the Convention**
Reading: Wayne, Chapter 5-6
 Iyengar and McGrady, Chapters 8-9
- March 5** **Role of Policy Issues in Presidential Campaigns**
Reading: TBD
- March 12** **Role of Media**
Reading: Iyengar and McGrady Chapters 1-4
- March 19** **No class – Spring Break**
- March 26** **Campaign Finance / Fundraising**
Reading: Wayne, Chapter 2
 Rozell, Wilcox and Madland, Chapter 3
 *Buckley v. Valeo**
 *** Annotated bibliography due ***
- April 2** **Campaign Organization, Strategy and Tactics**
Reading: Wayne, Chapter 7
 Leibovich, “Early Stops on the Sweet-Talk Circuit”*
- April 9** **Campaign Communications**
Reading: Wayne, Chapter 8
 Iyengar and McGrady, Chapter 6
Video: *Journeys with George* (time permitting)

April 16	Voter Mobilization / Role of Interest Groups and Parties Reading: Rozell, Wilcox and Madland, Chapters 1 and 4
April 23	The General Election Reading: Wayne, Chapter 9 Dan Allen, "Power Politics: An Empirical Analysis of the Electoral College" (Chapters 1 and 5)*
April 30	Last Day of Class: Wrap-Up and Discussion
May 8	Final Research Paper Due

Additional Required Readings and Where to Find them:

Allen, Dan. 2007. "Power Politics: An Empirical Analysis of the Electoral College." Available at http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/poli_honors/. (Dan Allen is a Macalester graduate from 2007).

Buckley v. Valeo. 424 US 1, 1976. Available online at http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0424_0001_ZS.html.

Gregg, Hugh. "First in the Nation: The Primacy of New Hampshire's First-in-the-Nation Election." Available online at <http://www.nh.gov/nhinfo/primacy.html>.

Liebovich, Mark. 2007. "Early Stops on the Sweet-Talk Circuit." *New York Times*, February 24th. Available through LexisNexis.

Norrander, Barbara. 1991. "Explaining Individual Participation in Presidential Primaries." *Western Political Quarterly* 44(3): 640-655. Available through JSTOR.