

PS 5135 Readings and Research in American Politics  
**The U.S. Presidential Election Process**  
FALL 2008  
Dr. Phillip J. Ardoin  
Tuesday 3:30-6:00pm in Room 1131

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**OFFICE HOURS:**

**Monday:** 9:15-Noon & 1-2:00pm  
**Wednesday:** 9:15-Noon & 1-2:00pm  
**Thursday:** 9:30-Noon

If the posted office hours are not convenient for you due to your work or class schedule, please e-mail or simply see me before or after class to schedule an alternative time.

If the above posted office hours are not convenient for you due to your work or class schedule, please e-mail or simply see me before or after class to schedule an alternative time. E-mail is the most efficient means of contacting me and or requesting information. I compulsively check my e-mail throughout the day and evening. E-mail allows me to respond to your questions about assignments, tests and other class material in an efficient and timely manner even when I am off campus.

**MY FALL 2008 CLASS SCHEDULE:**

MWF 8-8:50 American National Government  
MW 2-3:15 Presidency and Executive Branch  
Tues :3:30-6:00 Graduate Seminar Readings and Research in American Politics (Presidential Election Process)

**Course Description:** This course provides us an opportunity to delve into a number of topics, questions, and problems associated with the presidential election or selection process in the United States. The goals of the course are straightforward. By the end of the semester you should have a fairly enlightened understanding of the U.S. Presidential election process and an understanding of the core research and critical theories regarding presidential elections. With luck, you will also be able to speak intelligently and make some sense of what you read and hear in the media and from friends and family --keeping in mind that sometimes what you read and hear makes no sense at all.

**As per the Academic Integrity Code....**

Students attending Appalachian State University agree to abide by the following code:

- Students will not lie, cheat, or steal to gain academic advantage.
- Students will oppose every instance of academic dishonesty.

**Disability Services** - Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <http://www.ods.appstate.edu/> or 828-262-3056.

Important Dates		Grading Scale			
Midterm Exam	Oct 14	A	94-100	C+	77-79
Fall Break	Oct 16-19	A-	90-93	C	74-76
Thanksgiving Break	Nov 26-30	B+	87-89	C-	70-73
Last Day of Classes	Dec 9 <sup>th</sup>	B	84-86	D	60-69
Reading Day	Dec 10 <sup>th</sup>	B-	80-83	F	Below 60
Comprehensive Final Exam	Take Home				

**Grading: Your grade in this course will be calculated as follows:**

- **Reaction Papers:** 20%
- **Participation** 20%
- **Blog Posts:** 15%
- **Midterm Exam:** 20%
- **Comprehensive Final Exam:** 25%

**Exams** – There will be 2 exams in this course. The exams will cover all material discussed in class and covered in the assigned readings. The midterm exam will constitute 20% of your course grade and will be an in class essay exam conducted in the department's computer lab. The comprehensive final exam will constitute 25% of your course grade and will be a take home essay exam.

**Reaction Papers:** You are required to write 3 reaction papers during the first half of the semester and 3 reaction papers during the second half of the semester. Your reaction papers must be uploaded to our AsUlearn web page by midnight the day before class. The papers should be 3-5 pages in length. They must be typed (10-12 pt font) and you must use a standard citing/bibliography format. I urge you not to wait until the last 3 weeks of each half of the semester to write your 3 reaction papers. If you wait until the last 3 weeks and are unable to submit a paper, you will simply receive a zero for the paper.

The purpose of the reaction papers is to have you *critically* address one or more of the major concepts put forward in the assigned readings of the week. **I do not want a summary of the readings, I want a CRITICAL ANALYSIS.** A good reaction paper will begin with a brief summary of the major points or findings of the reading, will note weaknesses in the author(s) analyses/conclusions, will suggest alternative methods of analysis, and will provide suggestions for future research on the topic. When developing your critique of the assigned readings, you are encouraged to integrate the readings from other weeks, other classes, and even readings which were not assigned in class.

**Blogging:** I am setting up a BLOG for my classes this semester which will focus on the 2008 Presidential Election. Each week two of you will be responsible for finding one or more articles related to an issue being discussed in the media or in our classes. You are required to post the article and provide a brief summary or reaction to the article. You will be graded on the uniqueness and quality of the articles you post and your summary or reaction to the article. The Blog will be read by students in our class and also in my undergraduate Presidency course.

**Course Text Books and Readings:**

- Edwards, George C. 2008. *Governing by campaigning : the politics of the Bush presidency*. 2007 ed. New York: Pearson Longman..
- Edwards, George C. 2004. *Why the electoral college is bad for America*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hillygus, D. Sunshine, and Todd G. Shields. 2008. *The persuadable voter: wedge issues in presidential campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Geer, John Gray. 2006. *In defense of negativity: attack ads in presidential campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shaw, Daron R. 2006. *The race to 270 : the Electoral College and the campaign strategies of 2000 and 2004*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gelman, Andrew. 2008. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*. Princeton: Princeton University Press
- CD-Rom with readings
- AsULearn Website

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>
Aug 28	Syllabus and Introductions
Sept 4	Looking Back: The Myths and Realities of the 2004 Presidential Election
Sept 9 <sup>th</sup>	The Presidential Nomination Process and Conventions
Sept 16 <sup>th</sup>	Presidential Debates and Media Coverage of Elections
Sept 23 <sup>rd</sup>	In Defense of Negativity
Sept 30 <sup>th</sup>	Why The Electoral College is Bad for America
Oct 7 <sup>th</sup>	The Race to 270: The Electoral College and the Campaign Strategies of 2000 and 2004
Oct 14 <sup>th</sup>	Midterm Exam
Oct 21 <sup>st</sup>	Conventional Wisdom and American Elections: Exploring Myths and Misconceptions
Oct 28 <sup>th</sup>	Red State – Blue State – Rich State – Poor State
Nov 4 <sup>th</sup>	American Voter Turnout and Participation
Nov 11 <sup>th</sup>	Who are the Voters and Recap of 2008 Presidential Elections
Nov 18 <sup>th</sup>	The Persuadable Voter
Nov 25 <sup>th</sup>	Campaign Finance
Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Voting and Election Issues and Concerns – Is it a Conspiracy?
Dec 9 <sup>th</sup>	Governing by Campaigning

PS 5135 Readings and Research in American Politics  
**The U.S. Presidential Election Process**  
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**Sept 4 Looking Back: The Myths and Realities of the 2004 Presidential Election**

- Guth, J. L., L. A. Kellstedt, et al. (2006). "Religious Influences in the 2004 Presidential Election." Presidential Studies Quarterly 36(2): 223-242.
- Abramowitz, A. I. (2004). "Terrorism, Gay Marriage, and Incumbency: Explaining the Republican Victory in the 2004 Presidential Election." The Forum 2(4).
- Burden, B. C. (2004). "An Alternative Account of the 2004 Presidential Election." The Forum 2(4).
- Campbell, J. E. (2004). "The Presidential Election of 2004: The Fundamentals and the Campaign." The Forum 2(4).
- Karol, D. and E. Miguel (2007). "The Electoral Cost of War: Iraq Casualties and the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election." The Journal of Politics 69(3): 633-648.
- Abramowitz, A. I. and W. J. Stone (2006). "The Bush Effect: Polarization, Turnout, and Activism in the 2004 Presidential Election." Presidential Studies Quarterly 36(2): 141-153.
- Stanley, H. W. and R. G. Niemi (2006). "Partisanship, Party Coalitions, and Group Support, 1952-2004." Presidential Studies Quarterly 36(2): 172-188.

**Sept 9<sup>th</sup> The Presidential Nomination Process and Conventions**

- Kaufman, K. M., J. G. Gimpel, et al. (2003). "A Promise Fulfilled? Open Primaries and Representation." The Journal of Politics 65(2): 457-476.
- Cline, A. R. (2006). "Primary Instability Paradox: The Ethics of Media Coverage in Presidential Nominations." The Forum 3(4).
- Cohen, M., D. Karol, et al. (2008). "Political Parties in Rough Weather." The Forum 5(4).
- Squire, P. (2008). "The Iowa Caucuses, 1972-2008: A Eulogy." The Forum 5(4).
- Abramowitz, A. (2008). "Don't Blame Primary Voters for Polarization." The Forum 5(4).
- Altschuler, B. E. (2008). "Selecting Presidential Nominees by National Primary: An Idea Whose Time Has Come?" The Forum 5(4).
- Panagopoulos, C. (2008). "Presidential Nominating Conventions: Past, Present and Future." The Forum 5(4).
- Altschuler, B. E. (2006). "Scheduling the Party Conventions." Presidential Studies Quarterly 36(4): 660-669.

**Sept 16<sup>th</sup> Presidential Debates and Media Coverage of Elections**

- Inside the Presidential Debates: Chapter 6 and Appendix A
- Fridkin, K. L., P. J. Kenney, et al. (2007). "Capturing the Power of a Campaign Event: The 2004 Presidential Debate in Tempe." The Journal of Politics 69(3): 770-785.
- Rivlin, J. (2008). "On the Air: Advertising in 2004 as a Window on the 2008 Presidential General Election." The Forum 5(4).
- Seelye, K. Q. (2004). How to Sell a Candidate to a Porsche-Driving, Leno-Loving Nascar Fan. NY Times.
- Baumgartner, J. and J. S. Morris (2006). "The Daily Show Effect." American Politics Research 34(3): 341-367.
- Overby, L. M. and B. Jay (2006). "Radio Advertising in American Political Campaigns: The Persistence, Importance, and Effects of Narrowcasting." American Politics Research (formerly called American Politics Quarterly) 34(4): 451-478.
- Benoit, W. L. and G. J. Hansen (2004). "Presidential Debate Watching, Issue Knowledge, Character Evaluation, and Vote Choice." Human Communication Research 30(1): 121-144.

**Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> In Defense of Negativity**

- Geer, John Gray. 2006. *In defense of negativity: attack ads in presidential campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Damore, D. F. (2002). "Candidate Strategy and the Decision to Go Negative." Political Research Quarterly 55(3): 669-685.

**Sept 30<sup>th</sup> Why The Electoral College is Bad for America**

- Edwards, George C. 2004. *Why the electoral college is bad for America*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

**Oct 7<sup>th</sup> The Race to 270: The Electoral College and the Campaign Strategies of 2000 and 2004**

- Shaw, Daron R. 2006. *The race to 270: the Electoral College and the campaign strategies of 2000 and 2004*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**Oct 14<sup>th</sup> Midterm Exam**

**Oct 21<sup>st</sup>                    Conventional Wisdom and American Elections: Exploring Myths and Misconceptions**

- “It’s the Ratings Stupid”: Misconceptions about Media Bias in Baumgartner, Jody C., and Peter L. Francia. 2008. *Conventional wisdom and American elections: exploding myths, exploring misconceptions*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Science or Vodoo? Misconceptions about National Election Polls in Baumgartner, Jody C., and Peter L. Francia. 2008. *Conventional wisdom and American elections: exploding myths, exploring misconceptions*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- An Unrecognized Need for Ballot Reform: The Effects of Candidate Name Order on Election Outcomes in Crigler, Ann N., Marion R. Just, Edward J. McCaffery, and Erwin Chemerinsky. 2004. *Rethinking the vote: the politics and prospects of American election reform*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Searching for Voters along the Liberal-Conservative Continuum: The Infrequent Ideologue and the Missing Middle
- The “American Divided” Myth: Red States, Blue States, and Other Gaps Bias in Baumgartner, Jody C., and Peter L. Francia. 2008. *Conventional wisdom and American elections: exploding myths, exploring misconceptions*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

**Oct 28<sup>th</sup>                    Red State – Blue State – Rich State – Poor State**

- Gelman, Andrew. 2008. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Nov 4<sup>th</sup>                    Voter Turnout and Participation**

- Hill, David Lee. 2006. *American voter turnout: an institutional perspective*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

**Nov 11<sup>th</sup>                    Who are the Voters and Recap of 2008 Presidential Elections**

- Sides, J., E. Schickler, et al. (2008). "If Everyone Had Voted, Would Bubba and Dubya Have Won?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* **38**(3): 521-539.
- Gomez, B. T., T. G. Hansford, et al. (2007). "The Republicans Should Pray for Rain: Weather, Turnout, and Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections." *The Journal of Politics* **69**(3): 649-663.
- McKee, S. C. (2007). "Rural Voters in Presidential Elections, 1992-2004." *The Forum* **5**(2).
- Panagopoulos, C. and P. W. Wielhouwer (2008). "The Ground War 2000-2004: Strategic Targeting in Grassroots Campaigns." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* **38**(2): 347-362.
- David, W. N. (2006). "Volunteer Phone Calls Can Increase Turnout: Evidence From Eight Field Experiments." *American Politics Research* (formerly called *American Politics Quarterly*) **34**(3): 271-292.

**Nov 18<sup>th</sup>                    The Persuadable Voter**

- Hillygus, D. Sunshine, and Todd G. Shields. 2008. *The persuadable voter: wedge issues in presidential campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

**Nov 25<sup>th</sup>                    Campaign Finance**

- Raja, R. J. L. (2008). "From Bad to Worse: The Unraveling of the Campaign Finance System." *The Forum* **6**(1).
- Hayward, A. (2008). "Is That a Bundle in Your Pocket, Or . . .?" *The Forum* **6**(1).
- Panagopoulos, C. and D. Bergan (2006). "Contributions and Contributors in the 2004 Presidential Election Cycle." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* **36**(2): 155-171.
- Fowler, J. H. (2008). "The Colbert Bump in Campaign Donations: More Truthful than Truthy." *PS: Political Science & Politics*: 533-539.
- Gimpel, J. G., F. E. Lee, et al. (2006). "The Political Geography of Campaign Contributions in American Politics." *The Journal of Politics* **68**(3): 626-639.
- Hasen, R. L. (2008). "Political Equality, the Internet, and Campaign Finance Regulation." *The Forum* **6**(1).

**Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>                    Election Issues and Concerns – Is it a Conspiracy?**

- Shugart, M. S. (2004). "Elections: The American Process of Selecting a President: A Comparative Perspective." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* **34**(3): 632-655.
- Donovan, T. (2008). "The Limbaugh Effect: A Rush to Judging Cross-Party Raiding in the 2008 Democratic Nomination Contests." *The Forum* **6**(2).
- Measuring Perceptions of Election Threats: Survey Data from Voters and Elites in Alvarez, R. Michael, Thad E. Hall, and Susan D. Hyde. 2008. *Election Fraud: detecting and deterring electoral manipulation*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Election Forensics: The Second-Digit Benford's Law Test and Recent American Presidential Elections in Alvarez, R. Michael, Thad E. Hall, and Susan D. Hyde. 2008. *Election Fraud: detecting and deterring electoral manipulation*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

- The Performance of the Machines in Alvarez, R. Michael, and Thad E. Hall. 2008. *Electronic Elections: the perils and promises of digital democracy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

**Dec 9<sup>th</sup>      Governing by Campaigning**

- Edwards, George C. 2008. *Governing by Campaigning: the politics of the Bush presidency*. 2007 ed. New York: Pearson Longman.