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Finance and Law Programs

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Fundamentals of Political Campaign Management

CPMG1-CE9001

Spring 2015

Instructor: Mr. Travis N. Taylor, MPS

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Office Hours: This is an asynchronous online course with a remote Instructor who will meet virtually (Skype, telephone) with students by appointment only.

University Course Description

Political campaigns and other political organizations often must be assembled quickly, operate flexibly, and achieve high levels of efficiency and effectiveness—in many cases using volunteer labor. Develop a framework for managing political organizations, including strategic planning, targeting, fundraising, field organization, polling and other forms of opinion research. Learn effective strategies for message development, technology use, budgeting, financial management, and grassroots organizing. At the conclusion of the course, be able to develop a campaign plan.

Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the field of Political Management and to teach the rudimentary skills necessary to understand the political world and operate successfully as a political practitioner within that world. Working both individually and collaboratively, students will gain a basic understanding of the fundamentals – both theoretical and practical – of managing a political campaign.

General Course Policies

- Read and/or watch all assigned material
- Read and/or watch the news on a regular (preferably daily) basis
- The profession of politics is challenging and exciting; this course is no different. Learn, grow, and have fun!
- This is a graduate level course. A student's writing must reflect that status. Assignments that do not reflect graduate level, professional writing will receive failing grades. Resources, including the Instructor, are available to students who need to improve their writing. Writing includes proofreading.
- Late work will be accepted ONLY with prior authorization from the Instructor. A student wishing to submit a late assignment must contact the Instructor to request an extension *at least* 24 hours before the assignment is

due. Submitting a request does not grant the student an extension; an extension is only granted once the Instructor has given it in writing to the student. Extensions will be granted only in extenuating circumstances and work submitted under the extension will be reduced by one letter grade per day. Late work submitted without an extension will not be evaluated and will earn an automatic grade of zero.

- Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated and could lead to any number of consequences up to and including expulsion from the program. Please refer to the NYU-SPS academic integrity handbook located [here](#).
- While differences of opinion are inevitable and the expression of a diversity of opinions is strongly encouraged, intolerance, derogatory remarks, and personal attacks are strictly forbidden. Remember, politics is about relationships; make them, develop them, nourish them, and cherish them.

Required Reading List

Bocskor, N. (YEAR). *Go Fish: How to Catch (and Keep) Contributors*. Available for purchase [here](#).

Broockman, D.E., & Green, D.P. "Do Online Advertisements Increase Candidates' Name Recognition or Favorability? Evidence from Randomized Field Experiments," *Political Behavior*: Volume 36, No. 2: pp. 263-90

Burton, M.J., & Shea, D. (2006). *Campaign Craft: The Strategies, Tactics, and Art of Political Campaign Management* (3rd ed.). Westport, CT: Praeger. (ISBN 0-275-99004-4)

Burton, M.J., & Shea, D. (2003). *Campaign Mode: Strategic Vision in Congressional Elections*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. (ISBN 0-7425-0141-8)

Cicero, Q.T. (2012). *How to Win an Election: An Ancient Guide for Modern Politicians*. (P. Freeman, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 64, BC) (ISBN 978-0-691-15408-4)

Donahower, B., "The Colors to Avoid on Yard Signs," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/294/the-colors-to-avoid-on-yard-signs>

Donahower, B., "Selling Yard Signs Can Mean Banking Votes," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/749/selling-yard-signs-can-mean-banking-votes>

Donahower, B., "Timing your Campaign Signs," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/604/timing-your-campaign-signs>

Green, D.P., & Gerber, A.S. (2008). *Get out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Brookings Press. (ISBN 978-0-8157-3267-9) pp. 1-163

Hillygus, D.S. & Shields, T.G. (2008). *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (ISBN 978-0-691-13341-6)

Makse, T., & Sokhey, A.E. "The Displaying of Yard Signs as a Form of Political Participation," *Political Behavior*: Volume 36, No. 1: pp. 189-214

Mowery, D., "Why I Can't Stand Yard Signs," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/magazine/2370/why-i-can-t-stand-yard-signs>

McNamara, M. (2010). *The Political Campaign Desk Reference: A Guide for Campaign Managers and Candidates Running for Elected Office*. Denver, CO: Outskirts Press. (ISBN 978-1-4327-3195-3)

Oliver, J.E. (2012). *Local Elections and the Politics of Small-Scale Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (ISBN 978-0-691-14356-9)

Polsby, N. & Wildavsky, A. (2000). *Presidential Elections: Strategies and Structures of American Politics* (10th ed.). New York, NY: Seven Bridges Press. (ISBN 1-889119-26-1)

Rosen, D., "The Psychology Behind Motivating Turnout," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/magazine/2385/the-psychology-behind-motivating-turnout>.

Shaw, C. (2010). *The Campaign Manager: Running and Winning Local Elections* (4th ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press. (ISBN 978-0-8133-4451-5)

Thurber, J.A., & Nelson, C.J. (Eds.). (2014). *Campaigns and Elections American Style*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. (ISBN 978-0-8133-4835-3)

UNO Survey Research Center poll, October 2014, found [here](#).

Weissmann, S., "Chosing your Next Political Job," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/2384/choosing-your-next-political-job>

Weissmann, S., "The Right Way to Write a Campaign Resume," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/179/the-right-way-to-write-a-campaign-resume>

Westin, D. (2007). *The Political Brain: The Role of emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation*. New York, NY: PublicAffairs. (ISBN 978-1-58648-425-5)

Assignment Grading and Evaluation:

Weekly Assignments:	10 points each
Be the Blogger Project:	15 points
Team Strategy Memo:	15 points
Final Campaign Plan:	20 points

- Weekly assignments will be evaluated based on the student's comprehension and incorporation of weekly readings and the political feasibility of the

memo. Graduate-level, professional writing will be strongly required and poorly written assignments will not receive a passing grade.

- The Be the Blogger Project will be evaluated based on the successful completion of the project as described in the project outline, including the About page and two weekly blog posts. These blog entries can be written more colloquially than the weekly memos and should be written as if the general public will read them. This does not alleviate the student from writing coherently and ensuring spelling and punctuation is accurate.
- The team strategy memo will be evaluated based on a clear understanding of the readings from the first half of the course and the political feasibility of the team's recommendations. Students will also be evaluated on this project based on their ability to work as a group.
- Your final campaign plan will be evaluated based on the student's ability to exhibit a clear understanding and incorporation of the course readings in the campaign plan.

This course will abide by the NYU-SPS standard grading scale, which is as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	65-66
F	Below 65

Course Project: Be the Blogger

Two of the most instrumental parts of being a political professional are communicating with the public and knowledge of how current events are related to the political environment. The “Be the Blogger” project will help the student gain proficiency in both of these critical skills. Moreover, blogs are a valuable tool used by political professionals for candidates to disseminate the campaign message without relying on traditional media, and this project will give students another layer of valuable practical experience.

By the end of Week 1, students will be required to set up a blog webpage and create an About page, where they will upload biographical information about themselves, to include education and work history, along with any personal information they’re comfortable sharing such as spouse, kids, hobbies, etc. A link to

the blog page shall be sent to the Instructor via e-mail. Free blogs can be set up on various sites around the Internet. The Instructor personally recommends WordPress for its ease of use and customizable design templates.

By the end of each subsequent week of the course, students will be required to read one news article (from a hard news source of their choice, i.e. not another blog) and write a blog post about the news event and its political significance. In addition to the hard news article, students will be required to read an article about a campaign or political strategy or tactic and write a blog post discussing the same. In both instances, links to the article should be included in the student's blog post.

Course Calendar & Outline

What follows is a week-by-week outline for this course. While every effort will be made to abide by this guide, it – much like political campaign plans – is dynamic and subject to change based on a variety of factors. Should alterations to this plan become necessary, the Instructor will notify you of the changes.

Week 1: Understanding Campaigns

The purpose of this week's lessons is to introduce the student to the basic theories and practices of American political campaigns and the strategies and tactics that go into electioneering in the United States.

Readings:

Cicero: All

Polsby & Wildavsky: pp. 151-215

Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 1-30

Burton & Shea (*Mode*): chapters 1, 2, and student choice of 3-6

Thurber & Nelson: pp. 1-44; 315-24

Assignment:

After completing the week's readings, write a 4-6-page memo to compare and contrast the strategies and tactics recommended in the Cicero memorandum found in *How to Win an Election* to the strategies and tactics of American campaigns today as discussed in the remaining readings. Pay particular attention to one of the case studies (chapters 3-6 in *Campaign Mode*) and incorporate lessons learned from Cicero to analyze the case study and make strategic recommendations for the campaign examined in the case study.

Week 2: Building a Team

During this week, students will develop an understanding of the various positions on a campaign team and the roles played by the people who hold these titles. Students will be introduced to resources for filling the roles of a campaign.

Readings:

Shaw: pp. 21-30

McNamara: pp. 19-28; 139-43

Assignment:

Place yourself in the role of a campaign manager, managing a campaign for the office of state senate. Your candidate is a very popular member of the community with a large network of friends, family, and community members who are itching to volunteer on behalf of your candidate. As the campaign manager, you are already working 18-20 hour days with the daily operation of the campaign and would like to hire a full-time volunteer coordinator to oversee the volunteer operation. Write a 3-5-page memo to your candidate making a business case for the hiring of a volunteer coordinator. Include a discussion of the duties of the volunteer coordinator, what qualities you will look for in an applicant, where you will seek applicants, and what the salary for the position will be.

Week 3: Feeding the Beast – Fundraising

The purpose of this week's lesson is to introduce the student to basic campaign budgeting and fundraising. Money is the lifeblood of a political campaign and political practitioners must know how much money is necessary to win; where that money is going to come from; and how, when, and why the money will be spent.

Readings:

Thurber & Nelson: pp. 77-122
Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 135-52
Shaw: pp. 91-144; 381-4
McNamara: pp. 65-74
Bocskor: All

Assignment:

Write a budget and fundraising plan for a Congressional race. As an appendix to your plan, write a fundraising letter to a specific target demographic (party loyalists, unions, teachers, tea partiers, etc.). The fundraising plan and budget should be comprehensive yet brief, roughly 3-5 pages. The fundraising letter should be one page long.

Week 4: From Dream to Reality – Developing a Strategy

An old adage goes: "A goal without a strategy is just a dream." This is true nowhere more so than in political campaigns. The purpose of this week's lesson is to build on the lessons learned in Week 1 by teaching students how to develop a written strategy for a political campaign and the lesson from Week 2 by delineating the roles of political professionals, each responsible for the development and execution of strategy.

Readings:

Thurber & Nelson: pp. 47-76
Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 31-134
Hillygus & Shields: pp. 145-82
Shaw: pp. 1-20; 165-210; 373-80

McNamara: pp. 53-64

Assignment:

Form a campaign team of 3-4 students and compose an 8-10 page campaign strategy memo for a Congressional campaign. Your team memo, which will serve as individual mid-term papers, should be meticulously researched and deeply collaborative. Your team will select a congressional district (any of them will suffice) and answer the question, "How do we win?" This will entail determining the demographics of the selected congressional district (e.g. racial composition and partisan affiliation), voting turnout based on comparable historical data, number of votes needed to win, where those votes will come from, etc. In writing this memo, you should draw heavily on the lessons learned from this week's readings.

Week 5: Messages and Media

In politics, staying on message is crucial. When your message is being disseminated, chances are you're winning; conversely, when you're off message, you're likely losing ground. Keeping your candidate and staff (and yourself) on message is one of the most important responsibilities of a campaign manager. Moreover, getting the media to help carry your message is important because earned media helps spread your message without expending precious campaign dollars. This week, you will learn how to develop a campaign message and theme and how to leverage the media to your advantage.

Readings:

Thurber & Nelson: pp. 123-74
Oliver: pp. 149-82
Hillygus & Shields: pp. 1-106
Weston: pp. 3-144
Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 167-80
Rosen: All
UNO Poll

Assignment A:

Draw on the week's readings to develop a message and theme for a congressional candidate based on the data found in the UNO Poll. Data from the poll should be read as if the poll were commissioned by your campaign. Write a 3-4 page strategic memo giving your recommendations for the campaign's message and theme based on the polling data and the week's readings.

Assignment B:

Write a press release announcing your congressional candidate's bid for office. The press release should include information about your candidate, his/her background, and why (s)he is running for Congress. Include quotes from the candidate incorporating the campaign's message.

Week 6: Voter Contact

All of the hard work of a campaign is for naught if Election Day comes and the voters don't know your candidate or what the candidate stands for. As a campaign manager, it is your responsibility to make sure the campaign puts the strategy into action with voter contact tactics. This week, you will learn about the various voter contact techniques and how to implement them to effectively persuade voters with your campaign's message.

Readings:

- Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 153-66
- McNamara: pp. 75-120
- Shaw: pp. 37-74; 194-207
- Broockman & Green: All

Assignment:

Write a voter contact plan including mail, TV, radio, newspaper, and digital. As an appendix to your voter contact plan, write copy for a direct mail piece, a :30 TV spot, and a :60 radio spot.

Week 7: Grassroots

All of a campaign's strategy and tactics are for naught if no mechanism exists for turning out the campaign's supporters to vote. This week, you will study and begin to understand the various aspects of a political campaign's grassroots operation, or "ground game." With this knowledge you will learn how to develop and implement an effective ground game through the use of these diverse tactics.

Readings:

- Green & Gerber: pp. 1-163
- Thurber & Nelson: pp. 197-216
- Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 181-96
- Maske & Sokhey: All
- Donahower ("Colors"): All
- Donahower ("Selling"): All
- Donahower ("Timing"): All
- Mowery: All
- McNamara: pp. 121-38
- Shaw: pp. 31-6; 75-90; 145-64; 341-72

Assignment:

Place yourself in the role of a volunteer coordinator for a congressional campaign. Your campaign manager has assigned you the task of developing the campaign's grassroots strategy and tactics. Incorporate the week's readings to develop the ground game for the campaign. Write a grassroots plan including the use and distribution of yard signs, a plan for going door-to-door in targeted precincts, the use of phone banking by volunteers, a strategy for turning out identified supporters to vote, and a calendar of all grassroots activities.

Week 8: Business of the Business

The focus of this week's lesson will be on developing your reputation as a campaign manager and identifying resources for you as you build your brand and your business in the field of practical politics.

Readings:

AAPC Contracting Principles

Weissmann ("Choosing"): All

Weissmann ("Resume"): All

Assignment:

Select a congressional district (preferably your home district) and place yourself in the role of a Campaign Manager for a 2016 Congressional campaign in that district. Using the knowledge and skills you've learned during this course, write a comprehensive campaign plan that will serve as the handbook for the campaign. See the sample plan in the Resources tab as a model for your own plan. Make sure to include a calendar and budget. Remember, campaign plans are living, dynamic documents that can be changed from time-to-time to accommodate shifts in the political environment or adapt based on fundraising numbers. The goal is to be as thoughtful and thorough as possible while recognizing that no plan will ever be 100% perfect. All we can do as campaign managers is plan our work and work our plan!

Other Resources:

www.theaapc.org

www.campaignsandelections.com

www.campaigntrailsyardsigns.com

www.conservativejobs.com

www.jobsthatareleft.com