

New York University, School of Professional Studies

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Fundamentals of Political Campaign Management

CPMG1-CE9001

Spring 2016

Instructor: Mr. Travis N. Taylor, MPS

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Meeting Location: This is an asynchronous online course, meaning students will not meet in-person in a classroom environment and will be responsible for checking online resources, namely NYU Classes, on a frequent basis for instructions and pre-recorded lectures.

Office Hours: This is an asynchronous online course with a remote Instructor who will meet virtually (Skype, telephone) with students by appointment only. Students should e-mail the Instructor to begin the process of setting a meeting.

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 Prerequisites

This course has no prerequisite requirements.

Course Structure & Methods

This is an online asynchronous course. Students will not meet in a physical location at any set time. Students will be responsible for checking NYU Classes, the online learning platform for NYU, on a frequent basis; checking the site daily is highly encouraged. Students will submit assignments, access pre-recorded lectures, collaborate with classmates, check grades, and conduct most course work through NYU Classes.

Communication Policy

Because this course does not meet in a physical location, communication with the Instructor will be primarily through e-mail. The Instructor will also correspond with students through virtual office hours during scheduled appointments only; these meetings can take place either via telephone or Skype.

Although it rarely occurs, students in the course who are in the same location are free to meet in person to collaborate and work on group projects together.

NYUSPS Policies

“NYUSPS policies regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Academic Integrity and Plagiarism, Students with Disabilities Statement, and Standards of Classroom Behavior among others can be found on the NYU Classes Academic Policies tab for all course sites as well as on the University and NYUSPS websites. Every student is responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with all of these policies.”

The full list of policies can be found at the web links below:

- University: <http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance.html>
- NYUSPS: <http://sps.nyu.edu/academics/academic-policies-and-procedures.html>

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 & Expectations

- 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!
- Although this is a certificate (non-degree) program, 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

Later editions of some readings are available and are acceptable. However, the page numbers listed in this document for weekly readings come from the editions listed hereunder.

Alfano, K., "The Value of Going Negative," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/2519/the-value-of-going-negative>.

Bocskor, N. (2013). *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

Borman, K., "In fundraising, the kickoff matters," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/240/in-fundraising-the-kickoff-matters>.

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>

Foley, A., & Miller, S.J., "How Some Of The Industry's Top Firms Created Their Brands," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at

<http://campaignsandelections.com/magazine/2400/how-some-of-the-industry-s-top-firms-created-their-brands>

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>.

Rosen, D., "The Psychology of Yard Signs," *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/2513/the-psychology-of-yard-signs>.

Starrett, J.R., "Do you really need a political director?" *Campaigns & Elections* online. Available at <http://campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/2503/do-you-really-need-a-political-director>.

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

Taylor, T.N. (2015). "Ryan Michaels for Congress Campaign Plan." Located in Resources section of NYU Classes course site.

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: | 25 points |
| Personal Responsibility Assignment: | 15 points |
| Team Strategy Memo: | 100 points |
| Final Campaign Plan: | 100 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. These assignments will build upon one another, continuously working toward the completion of your final campaign plan.
- 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.
- The Personal Responsibility Assignment will be evaluated on your ability to identify the ethical and/or legal conundrum presented in the prompt, to present a personalized response to the query, and justify your response in terms of what is ethical, legal, and moral. You should draw on course readings and external sources to validate your position(s).
- *Unless otherwise noted, ALL assignments should be submitted via NYU Classes in a WORD DOCUMENT. Assignments submitted in PDF files will be returned and the student will lose one letter grade from their score on that assignment.*
- I have a mandatory "cooling off period" of 24 hours after an assignment is returned to you. This mandatory waiting period provides you the opportunity to process your grade, objectively examine feedback provided, and avoid saying or e-mailing something you may regret. I will not respond to grade or feedback inquiries during this period of time. If, after the passing of 24 hours, you still have questions regarding your grade or the feedback I

provided, please feel free to e-mail me with your questions or to request a time to discuss them via Skype or telephone.

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 |

Additional policies and procedures can be found here:
<http://sps.nyu.edu/content/scps/academics/noncredit-offerings/academic-noncredit-policies-and-procedures.html>

Course Project: Be the Blogger

Two of the most instrumental skills of 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 submitted in the Be the Blogger Assignment on NYU Classes. 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 how what impact that story will have on the political environment OR 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. The Instructor strongly encourages you to write posts on both types of articles and not limit yourself to one style of reading.

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, this outline – 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. 1-27

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

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

Assignment 1:

After completing the week's readings, write a 4-6-page memo (the memo format is located in the Resources section of the NYU Classes site) 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. In your analysis, clearly identify a strategy or tactic recommended by Cicero that was employed by the case study you examine in *Campaign Mode*. Additionally, identify strategies or tactics recommended by Cicero that were not employed in the case study and make strategic recommendations for the campaign on how the campaign can employ those political operations.

Week 2: Kicking off the Campaign – Analysis and Staffing

During this week, students will develop the skills necessary to formulate a comprehensive political analysis for a congressional campaign. Students will also 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 compiling the necessary political data and for filling the roles of a campaign staff.

Readings:

Shaw: pp. 21-30
McNamara: pp. 19-28; 139-43
Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 31-57; 81-102
Starrett: All
Taylor: pp. 3-7; 16-7

Resources:

Oklahoma Secretary of State
The Daily Oklahoman
The Okie (political blog)
The McCarville Report (political blog)

Assignment 2:

Place yourself in the role of a campaign manager, managing a campaign for the 5th Congressional District of Oklahoma. Your election should be considered an open seat, meaning there is no incumbent, and your candidate has survived the primary election and will be headed to the general election against the other Party's candidate. You may work for the candidate of either Party and choose your candidate's name. As the campaign manager, you are on the ground, in the district, and your first two goals are to understand the district and to hire a staff. First, you need to develop a sound understanding of the political context in which you will run your candidate's campaign for Congress. The research you conduct on the district and state will lead to the development of your political analysis (Taylor, 3-7). Second, you must determine the composition of your ideal campaign staff and clearly define duties for the individual roles on the staff. Draw upon your understanding of Shaw and McNamara to develop your team descriptions in the format of Taylor, 16-7. For your submitted assignment, write a memorandum, addressed to the Instructor (your General Consultant) incorporating your political analysis and staffing descriptions. This memo does not have a required page count, but must be comprehensive.

Week 3: Feeding the Beast – Fundraising & Budgeting

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. 53-5; 65-74
Bocskor: All
Borman: All
Taylor, pp. 30-2

Resources:

- Federal Election Commission (Campaign Finance Reports)
- OpenSecrets.org (Detailed analysis of campaign financing)

Assignment 3:

Develop a budget and fundraising plan for your Congressional race in OK-5. Your budget should be submitted in either an Excel file or in grid format in a Word document (see, for example, Taylor, pp. 30-2). Your fundraising plan should be submitted along with, and in the same file as, your budget. Ensure your finance plan draws on the lessons from Bocskor. As a separate document, write a fundraising letter to a specific target demographic (party loyalists, unions, teachers, tea partiers, etc.). The fundraising letter should be one page long and include appeals to the ideals of the target, multiple “asks,” and a brief summary of how your candidate’s values align with theirs.

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 Weeks 1 and 2 by teaching students how to develop a written strategy for a political campaign including the roles of political professionals, each responsible for the development and execution of strategy.

Readings:

- Thurber & Nelson: pp. 47-76
- Burton & Shea (*Craft*): pp. 59-77; 121-134
- Hillygus & Shields: pp. 145-82
- Shaw: pp. 1-20; 165-210; 373-80
- McNamara: pp. 53-64
- Taylor, pp. 7-10; 14-5; 23

Team Assignment:

Working in a collaborative manner with your assigned campaign team, compose the campaign strategy section of your Congressional campaign plan. Your team memo, which will serve as individual mid-term papers, should be meticulously researched and deeply collaborative. Your team will continue to operate under the mantle of working in OK-5 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 and be formatted similar to the sample plan.

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. 101-19; 167-80
- Rosen ("Motivating Turnout"): All
- UNO Poll
- Taylor, pp. 10-3

Assignment 5:

Draw on the week's readings to develop a message and theme for your OK-5 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 brief but thorough memo (see Taylor, 10-3) giving your recommendations for the campaign's message and theme based on the polling data and the week's readings. As an appendix to your message memo, 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
- Taylor, pp. 23-9

Assignment 6:

Write a voter contact plan modeled after the sample plan (Taylor, 23-9). As you write this section, incorporate lessons learned from your weekly readings. As an appendix to your voter contact plan, write copy for a direct mail piece, a :30 TV spot, and a :60 radio spot. Remember to keep your voter contact on message.

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
Rosen ("Yard Signs"): All
Mowery: All
McNamara: pp. 121-38
Shaw: pp. 31-6; 75-90; 145-64; 341-72
Taylor, pp. 17-23

Assignment 7:

As the campaign manager for your OK-5 candidate, you will develop the grassroots strategy and tactics for the campaign. Your grassroots coordinator, with little oversight, will execute this strategy. As such, you must be thorough and articulate in your strategy. 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, and a strategy for turning out identified supporters to vote.

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. Part of developing your reputation as a campaign manager is maintaining an unimpeachable character marked by personal responsibility and professional ethics.

Readings:

- AAPC Contracting Principles
- AAPC Code of Ethics
- Foley: All
- Weissmann ("Choosing"): All
- Weissmann ("Resume"): All

Final Campaign Plan:

Now is the time to for all of your work to come together into a comprehensive campaign plan that will serve as the handbook for the campaign. Ensure you incorporate all of your work from the course into this final document and, although you haven't developed one yet, be sure to include a calendar or timeline. You should also, once your plan is compiled, write your executive summary. The executive summary should effectively summarize the document without the minutia; it could be anywhere from one paragraph to two pages. 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!

Personal Responsibility Assignment:

Developing your reputation as a campaign manager requires you to establish and pursue professional ethics while taking personal responsibility. It is incumbent upon us to know and abide by the AAPC Code of Ethics; indeed membership in the Association requires one to agree to conduct business according to the ethical boundaries established in the document. The Personal Responsibility Assignment (PRA) will present you with a scenario and require you to respond to a series of questions designed to assist you in beginning to examine political situations through an ethical lens. Details on the PRA can be found in the Resources section and must be submitted during Week 8.

Other Resources:

- www.theaapc.org
- www.campaignsandelections.com
- www.campaigntrailsyardsigns.com
- www.conservativejobs.com
- www.jobsthatareleft.com