

Political Science 8110
RESEARCH ON ELECTORAL BEHAVIOR
Fall 2026 (59598)
Baldwin 302
T 2:55 – 5:35 p.m.

Dr. Jamie L. Carson
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Course Overview

This research seminar is intended as a broad survey of the literature on electoral behavior and politics. The central focus of the course will be on congressional elections, but much of what we discuss will have direct relevance for the study of elections more generally. As such, we will focus on the behavior of “strategic” politicians, the electoral connection, the incumbency advantage, congressional campaigns, representation, and election outcomes. Since this is an election year, we will also be spending some time understanding how political scientists seek to explain why some candidates seeking elective office win while others lose. Throughout the course, we will pay attention to current political and scholarly controversies (as well as some “classics”) in terms of identifying important research questions as well as examining and improving upon existing research designs. By the end of the course, you should have a better understanding of the nature of elections research, even though it would be impossible to cover all facets of electoral behavior in a single graduate seminar.

Required Texts

- Carson, Jamie, Brad Gomez, and Jennifer Merolla. 2026. *Change and Continuity in the 2024 Elections*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Carson, Jamie and Gary C. Jacobson. 2024. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. 11th Edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Carson, Jamie, Joel Sievert, and Ryan Williamson. 2024. *Nationalized Politics: Evaluating Electoral Politics Across Time*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hassell, Hans J. G. 2018. *The Party's Primary: Control of Congressional Nominations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. 2nd edition. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Course Materials

The readings for the course will be drawn from the list of books above, in addition to several scholarly articles each week. On occasion, we may also read unpublished papers (which will generally be made available electronically). Required books are available for purchase from the usual sources or may be checked out from the library. Unless otherwise indicated, articles for a given week can be downloaded from www.jstor.org, the UGA library, or Google Scholar.

Course Expectations and Evaluation

You will complete three critical evaluations of the assigned readings during the semester. Each should address the full set of readings assigned for one week and should be approximately 5-6 double-spaced pages. Evaluations must be submitted before the class meeting in which those readings are discussed; they may not be completed retroactively after our discussion. These reviews should summarize, analytically synthesize, and critique the literature in the particular area of emphasis. More effort and attention should be focused on analysis and criticism and comparatively less on summarization. You have some leeway in terms of when to turn in your critical evaluations, with the only restriction being that two must be completed prior to the midpoint of the course (prior to October 13) and the remaining one due before the end of the semester. These writing assignments will represent 30% of your course grade.

The other writing assignment will involve you completing a research paper on a selected topic by the end of the semester. These research projects will be judged by the same criteria I would apply to a paper delivered at a professional conference or one submitted to a journal. Your completed research paper will be due by **December 1st** and can be emailed to me as a Word document. Additionally, all students will be required to present their paper to the class in a brief 10-12 minute presentation on **November 17th**. This paper and presentation will represent 40% of your overall course grade. I would encourage each of you to contact me as early as possible to begin planning for your research project.

The remainder of your grade (30%) will depend on your active participation in the course. *On any given day, you may be asked to lead the discussion on one or more of the assigned articles or books.* As such, you are expected to read all the assigned material, to analyze it seriously, and to demonstrate that you have read and mastered that material by sharing your views and evaluations with the class (you want to understand what the author is trying to say and do, and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the author's theoretical framework, methodology, and substantive conclusions). If you do not do this, you will not be able to receive an "A" in the class. Remember that this class is a collaborative enterprise. For the seminar to be a useful learning experience you *must* come to class every week and be prepared to participate in discussions. You alone are responsible for taking an active role in shaping your intellectual development and your research agenda. Both energetic and thoughtful participation in graduate seminars is a necessary step in that process.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

Incompletes will only be given under exceptional circumstances. As a rule, late assignments will not be accepted unless approval is obtained in advance from the instructor.

Instructor Availability

If you would like to speak with me outside of class time, feel free to stop by my office (Baldwin 304B) or schedule an appointment. Keep in mind that I often have meetings during the day and may be unavailable. To ensure that I am in my office on a given day, email me (carson@uga.edu) ahead of time to set up a specific time to meet. I generally also respond quickly to email inquiries.

Miscellaneous

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. No "extra credit" will be given under any circumstances. Final grades may only be changed in the event of a clerical error (e.g., points summed incorrectly). *The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

AI Usage in Class

We are now living in an age where artificial intelligence tools are widely accessible and increasingly used in academic work. I do not want to discourage you from exploring and learning with these tools in this class. However, you need to be smart and thoughtful about how you use them to avoid any issues related to academic honesty (see general policy outlined below). AI should be treated as a supplement to—not a replacement for—your own critical thinking, writing, and analysis. You also need to document any AI source that you do use just like any other reference material. Keep in mind that AI-generated content can sometimes be incorrect, misleading, or lacking in nuance. Submitting work that relies entirely on these tools without proper understanding, citation, or originality may violate academic integrity policies like those highlighted above. You are responsible for the work you turn in, regardless of how you created it. If you choose to use AI to brainstorm ideas, clarify concepts, or get feedback on drafts, do so in a way that supports your learning, not short-circuits it. If you have questions about what constitutes appropriate use of AI in this course, please do not hesitate to ask. I am happy to help you navigate this evolving landscape responsibly and effectively.

UGA Student Honor Code

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu.

UGA Well-Being Resources

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community. Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students who are experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity. UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Accessibility and Testing: accessibility.uga.edu
- Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>

Policy on Recording Lectures

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Course Schedule (Assigned readings are to be completed by the dates listed below)

August 18 – The Electoral Connection in Congress

Mayhew, David. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Rothenberg, Lawrence, and Mitchell Sanders. 2000. "Severing the Electoral Connection: Shirking in the Contemporary Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(April): 310-319.

Carson, Jamie L., Michael H. Crespin, Jeffery A. Jenkins, and Ryan Vander Wielen. 2004. "Shirking in the Contemporary Congress: A Reappraisal." *Political Analysis* 12(Spring): 176-179.

Carson, Jamie L. and Erik J. Engstrom. 2005. "Assessing the Electoral Connection: Evidence from the Early United States." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(October): 746-757.

Clemens, Austin C., Michael H. Crespin, and Charles J. Finocchiaro. 2015. "The Political Geography of Distributive Politics." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 40(1): 111-136.

Hunt, Charles R. and Kristina C. Miler. 2025. "How Modern Lawmakers Advertise Their Legislative Effectiveness to Constituents." *Journal of Politics* 87(1): 231-245.

Recommended:

Herrick, Rebekah, Michael Moore, and John R. Hibbing. 1994. "Unfastening the Electoral Connection: The Behavior of U.S. Representatives when Reelection is No Longer a Factor." *Journal of Politics* 56(February): 214-227.

Bianco, William T., David B. Spence, and John D. Wilkerson. 1996. "The Electoral Connection in the Early Congress: The Case of the Compensation Act of 1816." *AJPS* 40(February): 145-171.

Carson, Jamie L. and Jeffery Jenkins. 2011. "Examining the Electoral Connection across Time." *Annual Review of Political Science* 14: 25-46.

August 25 – Congressional Elections and Electoral Accountability

- Carson, Jamie L. and Gary C. Jacobson. 2024. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 11th edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mann, Thomas E. and Raymond Wolfinger. 1980. "Candidates and Parties in Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 74(September): 617-632.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, David Brady, and John Cogan. 2002. "Out of Step, Out of Office: Electoral Accountability and House Members' Voting." *American Political Science Review* 96(1): 127-140.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen and Philip Edward Jones. 2010. "Constituents' Responses to Congressional Roll-Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(July): 583-597.
- Carson, Jamie L., Gregory Koger, Matthew J. Lebo, and Everett Young. 2010. "The Electoral Costs of Party Loyalty in Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(July): 598-616.
- Bonica, Adam and Gary W. Cox. 2018. "Ideological Extremists in the U.S. Congress: Out of Step but Still in Office." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 13(2): 207-236.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice and Michael R. Kistner. 2022. "Out of Step and Still in Congress? Electoral Consequences of Incumbent and Challenger Positioning Across Time." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 17(3): 389-420.
- Meisels, Mellissa. 2026. "Candidate Positions, Responsiveness, and Returns to Extremism." *Journal of Politics* 88(2): 681-697.

Recommended:

- Erikson, Robert S. 1971. "The Electoral Impact of Congressional Roll Call Voting." *American Political Science Review* 65(December): 1018-1032.

September 1 – Congressional Primaries

- Hassell, Hans J. G. 2018. *The Party's Primary: Control of Congressional Nominations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lawless, Jennifer and Kathryn Pearson. 2008. "The Primary Reason for Women's Underrepresentation? Reevaluating the Conventional Wisdom." *Journal of Politics* 70(January): 67-82.
- McGhee, Eric, Seth Masket, Boris Shor, Steven Rogers, and Nolan McCarty. 2014. "A Primary Cause of Partisanship? Nomination Systems and Legislator Ideology." *AJPS* 58(2): 337-351.
- Hall, Andrew B. 2015. "What Happens When Extremists Win Primaries?" *APSR* 109(1): 18-42.
- Pyeatt, Nicholas. 2015. "Party Unity, Ideology, and Polarization in Primary Elections for the House of Representatives: 1956-2012." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 40(4): 651-676.
- Treul, Sarah, Danielle M. Thomsen, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2022. "The Primary Path for Turning Legislative Effectiveness into Electoral Success." *Journal of Politics* 84(3): 1714-1726.

Recommended:

Brady, David W., Hahrie Han, and Jeremy C. Pope. 2007. "Primary Elections and Candidate Ideology: Out of Step with the Primary Electorate?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32(February): 79-105.

Carson, Jamie, Michael Crespín, Carrie Eaves, and Emily Wanless. 2012. "Constituency Congruency and Candidate Competition in Primary Elections for the U.S. House." *SPPQ* 12(June): 127-145.

Silva, Andrea and Carrie Skulley. 2019. "Always Running: Candidate Emergence among Women of Color over Time." *Political Research Quarterly* 72(2): 342-359.

September 8 – Ambition and Strategic Politicians

Rohde, David W. 1979. "Risk-Bearing and Progressive Ambition: The Case of Members of the United States House of Representatives." *American Journal of Political Science* 23(February): 1-26.

Krasno, Jonathan S. and Donald Philip Green. 1988. "Preempting Quality Challengers in House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 50(November): 920-936.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-86." *American Political Science Review* 83(September): 773-793.

Banks, Jeffery S., and Rod Kiewiet. 1989. "Explaining Patterns of Candidate Competition in Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 33(November): 997-1015.

Maestas, Cherie D., Sarah A. Fulton, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter J. Stone. 2006. "When to Risk It? Institutions, Ambitions, and the Decision to Run for the U.S. House." *American Political Science Review* 100(May): 195-208.

Porter, Rachel and Sarah A. Treul. 2025. "Evaluating (in)Experience in Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 69(1): 284-298. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12854>

Thomsen, Danielle M. Sarah A. Treul, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wisemen. 2026. "Legislative Effectiveness, Progressive Ambition, and Electoral Success." *American Political Science Review* doi:10.1017/S0003055426101683

Recommended:

Canon, David T. 1993. "Sacrificial Lambs or Strategic Politicians? Political Amateurs in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(November): 1119-1141.

Hall, Richard and Robert Van Houweling. 1995. "Avarice and Ambition in Congress: Representatives' Decisions to Run or Retire from the U.S. House." *American Political Science Review* 89 (1): 121-136.

Carson, Jamie L. 2005. "Strategy, Selection, and Candidate Competition in U.S. House and Senate Elections." *Journal of Politics* 67(February): 1-28.

September 15 – The Incumbency Advantage

Mayhew, David R. 1974. "Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals." *Polity* 3(Spring): 295-317.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1977. "The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did It." *American Political Science Review* 71(March): 177-181.

Alford, John R., and John H. Hibbing. 1981. "Increased Incumbency Advantage in the House." *Journal of Politics* 43(November): 1042-1061.

Cover, Albert D., and Bruce S. Brumberg. 1982. "Baby Books and Ballots: The Impact of Congressional Mail on Constituency Opinion." *American Political Science Review* 76(June): 347-359.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1987. "The Marginals Never Vanished: Incumbency and Competition in Elections to the U.S. House, 1952-1982." *American Journal of Political Science* 31(February): 126-141.

Bauer, Monica and John R. Hibbing. 1989. "Which Incumbents Lose in House Elections: A Response to Jacobson's 'The Marginals Never Vanished'" *American Journal of Political Science* 33(1): 262-271.

Abramowitz, Alan I. 1991. "Incumbency, Campaign Spending, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 53(February): 34-56.

Recommended:

Erikson, Robert. 1971. "The Advantage of Incumbency in Congressional Elections." *Polity* 3(1): 395-405.

Cover, Albert D. 1977. "One Good Term Deserves Another: The Advantage of Incumbency in Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 21(August): 523-542.

September 22 – The Incumbency Advantage II

Cox, Gary W. and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *American Journal of Political Science* 40(May): 478-497.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, Jr., and Charles Stewart, III. 2000. "Old Voters, New Voters, and the Personal Vote: Using Redistricting to Measure the Incumbency Advantage." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(January): 17-34.

Prior, Markus. 2006. "The Incumbent in the Living Room: The Rise of Television and the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 68(3): 657-673.

Schaffner, Brian F. 2006. "Local News Coverage and the Incumbency Advantage in the U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 31(November): 491-511.

Carson, Jamie L., Erik Engstrom, and Jason Roberts. 2007. "Candidate Quality, the Personal Vote, and the Incumbency Advantage in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 101(May): 289-301.

Kim, Henry A. and Brad L. Leveck. 2013. "Money, Reputation, and Incumbency in U.S. House Elections, or Why Marginals Have Become More Expensive." *APSR* 107(August): 492-504.

Druckman, James N., Martin Kifer, and Michael Parkin. 2020. "Campaign Rhetoric and the Incumbency Advantage." *American Politics Research* 48(1): 22-43.

Recommended:

Gelman, Andrew and Gary King. 1990. "Estimating Incumbency Advantage without Bias." *American Journal of Political Science* 34(November): 1142-1164.

Stone, Walter J., Sarah A. Fulton, Cherie D. Maestas, and L. Sandy Maisel. 2010. "Incumbency Reconsidered: Prospects, Strategic Retirement, and Incumbent Quality in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 72(January): 178-190.

Wilkins, Arjun S. 2012. "Electoral Security of Members of the U.S. House, 1900-2006." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 37(August): 277-304.

September 29 – Nationalized Politics

Carson, Jamie, Joel Sievert, and Ryan Williamson. 2024. *Nationalized Politics: Evaluating Electoral Politics Across Time*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jacobson, Gary C. 2015. "It's Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 3(July): 861-873.

Abramowitz, Alan I. and Steven Webster. 2016. "The Rise of Negative Partisanship and the Nationalization of U.S. Elections in the 21st Century." *Electoral Studies* 41(1): 12-22.

Sievert, Joel and Seth C. McKee. 2019. "Nationalization in U.S. Senate and Gubernatorial Elections." *American Politics Research* 47(5): 1055-1080.

Moskowitz, Daniel J. 2021. "Local News, Information, and the Nationalization of U.S. Elections." *American Political Science Review* 115(1): 114-129.

Dancey, Logan, John Henderson, and Geoffrey Sheagley. 2023. "The Personalized Vote in a Polarized Era." *American Journal of Political Science* <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12815>

Kuriwaki, Shiro. 2026. "Ticket Splitting in a Nationalized Era." *Journal of Politics* 88(1): 47-62.

Recommended:

Zingher, Joshua N. and Jesse Richman. 2019. "Polarization and the Nationalization of State Legislative Elections." *American Politics Research* 47(5): 1036-1054.

October 6 – Money and Election Outcomes

Jacobson, Gary C. 1978. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 72(June): 469-491.

Green, Donald Philip, and Jonathan S. Krasno. 1988. "Salvation for the Spendthrift Incumbent: Reestimating the Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections." *AJPS* 32(November): 884-907.

- Jacobson, Gary C. 1990. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections: New Evidence for Old Arguments." *American Journal of Political Science* 34(May): 334-362.
- Green, Donald Philip, and Jonathan S. Krasno. 1990. "Rebuttal to Jacobson's New Evidence for Old Arguments." *American Journal of Political Science* 34(May): 363-372.
- Gerber, Alan. 1998. "Estimating the Effect of Campaign Spending on Senate Election Outcomes using Instrumental Variables." *American Political Science Review* 92(June): 401-411.
- Fourinaies, Alexander and Andrew B. Hall. 2014. "The Financial Incumbency Advantage: Causes and Consequences." *Journal of Politics* 76(3): 711-724.
- Thomsen, Danielle M. 2023. "Competition in Congressional Elections: Money versus Votes." *American Political Science Review* 117(2): 675-691.

Recommended:

- Levitt, Steven D. 1994. "Using Repeat Challengers to Estimate the Effect of Campaign Spending on Election Outcomes in the United States House." *Journal of Political Economy* 102(August): 777-798.
- Erikson, Robert S., and Thomas R. Palfrey. 1998. "Campaign Spending and Incumbency: An Alternative Simultaneous Equations Approach." *Journal of Politics* 60(May): 355-373.

October 13 – Money and Election Outcomes II

- Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M. 1996. "A Dynamic Analysis of the Role of War Chests in Campaign Strategy." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(May): 352-371.
- Sellers, Patrick J. 1997. "Fiscal Consistency and Federal District Spending in Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 41(July): 1024-1041.
- Goodliffe, Jay. 2001. "The Effect of War Chests on Challenger Entry in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(October): 830-844.
- Gimpel, James G., Frances E. Lee, and Shanna Pearson-Merkowitz. 2008. "The Check Is in the Mail: Interdistrict Funding Flows in Congressional Elections." *AJPS* 52(April): 373-394.
- Maestas, Cherie D. and Cynthia R. Rugeley. 2008. "Assessing the 'Experience Bonus' through Examining Strategic Entry, Candidate Quality, and Campaign Receipts in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(July): 520-535.
- Aldrich, John H., Andrew O. Ballard, Joshua Y. Lerner, and David W. Rohde. 2017. "Does the Gift Keep on Giving? House Leadership PAC Donations before and after Majority Status." *Journal of Politics* 79(4): 1449-1453.
- Baker, Anne E. 2020. "The Partisan and Policy Motivations of Political Donors Seeking Surrogate Representation in House Elections." *Political Behavior* 42(4): 1035-1054.
- Thomsen, Danielle M. 2025. "Early Money and Strategic Candidate Exit." *British Journal of Political Science* 55:e101.

Recommended:

- Thomsen, Danielle M. 2025. *The Money Signal: How Fundraising Matters in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Epstein, David and Peter Zensky. 1995. "Money Talks: Deterring Quality Challengers in Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 89(June): 295-308.
- Bickers, Kenneth N. and Robert M. Stein. 1996. "The Electoral Dynamics of the Federal Pork Barrel." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(November): 1300-1326.
- Bovitz, Gregory L. 2002. "The Electoral Consequences of Porkbusting in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Political Science Quarterly* 117(Autumn): 455-477.

October 20 – Congressional Campaigns

- Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Larson, Bruce A. 2004. "Incumbent Contributions to the Congressional Campaign Committees, 1990-2000." *Political Research Quarterly* 57(March): 155-161.
- Wolak, Jennifer. 2009. "The Consequences of Concurrent Campaigns for Citizen Knowledge of Congressional Candidates." *Political Behavior* 31(June): 211-229.
- Sides, John, Lynn Vavreck, and Christopher Warshaw. 2022. "The Effect of Television Advertising in United States Elections." *American Political Science Review* 116(2): 702-718.
- Porter, Rachel, Sarah A. Treul, and Maura McDonald. 2024. "Changing the Dialogue: Descriptive Candidacies and Position Taking in Campaigns for the U.S. House of Representatives." *Journal of Politics* <https://doi.org/10.1086/726928>
- Meisels, Mellissa. 2025. "Strategic Campaign Attention to Abortion Before and After Dobbs." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 122(20): e2503080122.

Recommended:

- Sellers, Patrick J. 1998. "Strategy and Background in Congressional Campaigns." *American Political Science Review* 92(March): 159-171.
- Sulkin, Tracy. 2011. *The Legislative Legacy of Congressional Campaigns*. Cambridge University Press.

October 27 – Media and Elections

- Stewart, Charles, and Mark Reynolds. 1990. "Television Markets and U.S. Senate Elections." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 15(November): 495-524.
- Goldstein, Ken and Paul Freedman. 2000. "New Evidence for New Arguments: Money and Advertising in the 1996 Senate Elections." *Journal of Politics* 62(November): 1087-1108.

Druckman, James N. and Michael Parkin. 2005. "The Impact of Media Bias: How Editorial Slant Affects Voters." *Journal of Politics* 67(November): 1030-1049.

Levendusky, Matthew S. 2013. "Why do Partisan Media Polarize Viewers?" *American Journal of Political Science* 57(July): 611-623.

Hayes, Danny and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2015. "As Local News Goes, So Goes Citizen Engagement: Media, Knowledge, and Participation in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 77(2): 447-462.

Martin, Gregory J. and Zachary Peskowitz. 2018. "Agency Problems in Political Campaigns: Media Buying and Consulting." *American Political Science Review* 112(2): 231-248.

Arceneaux, Kevin, Johanna Dunaway, Martin Johnson, and Ryan J. Vander Wielen. 2020. "Strategic Candidate Entry and Congressional Elections in the Era of Fox News." *American Journal of Political Science* 64(2): 398-415.

Recommended:

Goidel, Robert K. and Todd G. Shields. 1994. "The Vanishing Marginals, the Bandwagon, and the Mass Media." *Journal of Politics* 56(August): 802-810.

Ridout, Travis N. and Glen R. Smith. 2008. "Free Advertising: How the Media Amplify Campaign Messages." *Political Research Quarterly* 61(December): 598-608.

November 3 – Presidential and Midterm Elections

Carson, Jamie, Brad Gomez, and Jennifer Merolla. 2026. *Change and Continuity in the 2024 Elections*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Abramowitz, Alan I. 1985. "Economic Conditions, Presidential Popularity, and Voting Behavior in Midterm Congressional Elections." *Journal of Politics*, 47: 31-43.

Oppenheimer, Bruce I., James A. Stimson, and Richard Waterman. 1986. "Interpreting U.S. Congressional Elections: The Exposure Thesis." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 11: 227-247.

Campbell, James E. 1991. "The Presidential Surge and Midterm Decline in Congressional Elections, 1868-1988." *Journal of Politics* 53: 477-487.

Jacobson, Gary C. 2023. "The 2022 Elections: A Test of Democracy's Resilience and the Referendum Theory of Midterms." *Political Science Quarterly* 138(1): 1-22.

Malzahn, Janet and Andrew B. Hall. 2025. "Election-Denying Republican Candidates Underperformed in the 2022 Midterms." *American Political Science Review* 119(3): 1536-1541.

Recommended:

Erikson, Robert S. 1988. "The Puzzle of Midterm Loss." *Journal of Politics* 50: 1011-1029.

Campbell, James E. 1992. "Forecasting the Presidential Vote in the States." *American Journal of Political Science* 36(May): 386-407.

Hayes, Danny. 2005. "Candidate Qualities through a Partisan Lens: A Theory of Trait Ownership." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(October): 908-923.

Gomez, Brad, Thomas Hansford, and George Krause. 2007. "The Republicans Should Pray for Rain: Weather, Turnout, and Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections." *Journal of Politics* 69(3): 649-663.

November 10 – U.S. Senate Elections

Lublin, David I. 1994. "Quality, Not Quantity: Strategic Politicians in U.S. Senate Elections, 1952-1990." *The Journal of Politics* 56(February): 228-241.

Kahn, Kim Fridkin and Patrick J. Kenney. 1999. "Do Negative Campaigns Mobilize or Suppress Turnout? Clarifying the Relationship between Negativity and Participation." *American Political Science Review* 93(December): 877-889.

Highton, Benjamin. 2000. "Senate Elections in the United States, 1920-94." *British Journal of Political Science* 30(July): 483-506.

Citrin, Jack, Eric Schickler, and John Sides. 2003. "What if Everyone Voted? Simulating the Impact of Increased Turnout in Senate Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(January): 75-90.

Jones, David R. 2003. "Position Taking and Position Avoidance in the U.S. Senate." *Journal of Politics* 65(August): 851-863.

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Recommended:

Squire, Peverill S. 1992. "Challenger Quality and Voting Behavior in United States Senate Elections." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17(May): 247-263.

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November 17 – Research Paper Presentations

November 24 – No Class, Thanksgiving break

December 1 – Final Papers Due - Email me a final copy of your paper in Word by this date (or earlier)