



POLS 4515 – How to Win (or Lose) an Election

CRN: 65476

PRQ: POLS 1101



Course Information

Course Description

Ready to dive into the high-stakes world of political campaigns? This course offers an in-depth exploration of and actionable knowledge about the essential components of political campaigns. From campaign organization to navigating the digital landscape, fundraising tactics to crisis management strategies, and beyond, we'll dissect the dynamics that shape electoral victories and defeats. Led by someone with firsthand experience of both triumphs and setbacks in elections, you'll gain invaluable insights into the fundamental principles and evolving strategies of political campaigns.

Professor

Laura Uribe, PhD
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Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand their candidate, their strengths and weaknesses
2. Understand the district and who in the community the candidate would represent
3. Develop voter goals and how to effectively target community members
4. Develop a campaign mission, values, stances, and write an endorsement request
5. Develop a fundraising plan and budget
6. Deliver a persuasive speech in the voice of their candidate
7. Demonstrate an ability to act in an experiential manner in the campaign context

Course Format and Expectations

Class will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:35 AM – 12:55 PM during Fall Semester, August 17th through December 1st in Baldwin Hall room 202. Assignments will be turned in online and lectures will be made available on D2L after class.

What you can do to support your success in the course:	What I will do to support your success in the course:
Read the syllabus and stay current with course information shared via D2L/email	Be prepared and bring my enthusiasm for teaching to each session
Keep up with lectures and assignments, and ask questions as needed for understanding	Respond to emails within two working days, and provide timely feedback on assignments
Contribute to the learning environment with fairness, cooperation, and professionalism	Establish a healthy learning environment and act if these principles are violated
Treat your classmates, instructional assistants and myself honestly and ethically	Treat you honestly and ethically and address any concerns you might have
Commit to excel with integrity. Have the courage to act in ways that are honest, fair, responsible, respectful & trustworthy	Uphold integrity standards and create an atmosphere that fosters active learning, creativity, critical thinking, and honesty
Manage your time so you can stay on track with the course and complete tasks	Only assign work that is vital to the course, meets the standard credit hour allotment for the course, and is flexible with life situations
Communicate with me if you determine that a deadline cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances!	Consider requests for adjustments and will make reasonable exceptions available to all students when approved



Course Materials and Tools

Text/Readings/Other Material

Readings are a mixture of videos, blog posts, research articles, and textbook chapters. They can all be found linked in the syllabus or on D2L. If you have difficulty accessing anything, please let me know as soon as possible. Readings must be done *before* the start of the week.

Technology Requirements

Reliable internet access for attending lectures, assignments, and the final exam. If you find yourself in need of support with this, please see me!

Assignments, Projects, and Grading

Summary of Grade Criteria

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Candidate and District	10	<i>Friday, August 28th</i>
Vote Goals	20	<i>Friday, September 18th</i>
Media and Endorsements	15	<i>Friday, October 9th</i>
Fundraising and Budget	20	<i>Friday, November 6th</i>
Speech	5	<i>Friday, November 20th</i>
Participation	10	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>Final Exam</i>	20	<i>TBD</i>
	100	

*** Note that all assignments are due at 6 PM and not 11:59 PM EST! ***

Grading Scale

A = 90-100% B+ = 85-89% C+ = 75-79% D = 60-69% F = 59%-below
B = 80-85% C = 70-75%

Grading Procedure and Feedback

You will be graded based on rubrics that are made available under each assignment. These rubrics will also provide feedback on your assignments. Assignments all have deadlines, listed above and on D2L. However, I understand that *life happens*. Please fill out this form to notify me as soon as you're aware of an obstacle preventing you from submitting your assignment on time. [Assignment Extension Request – Fill out form](#)



Each class will have an “exit note.” These notes ask about your struggles, understanding, or otherwise provides a space for you to provide feedback. For every 5 exit tickets submitted at the end of each class, you will be awarded 1 extra credit point for up to 5 extra credit points.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are required. Participation is awarded based on engagement and involvement in class. If you are unable to make it to class, you will also be ineligible for extra credit. However, if you are unable to attend class, write to me in advance of missing class so I can provide you with a parallel opportunity to earn credit for that class. Recordings will be made available on D2L after each session. Additionally, I respect any religious or cultural observance you may have. Please email me if you find yourself needing time off for this reason.

Topical Outline

1. Candidate Background
2. District Information
3. Vote Targeting
4. Participation, Turnout, and Get Out The Vote (GOTV)
5. Media
6. Endorsements
7. Fundraising
8. Campaign Finance
9. Budgeting
10. Campaign Speechwriting

Choose your Final

I value your dedication to learning—both in the classroom and out in the real world. As such, I allow students to choose their final: a sit-down, written exam at the end of the course or an experiential learning opportunity working in the world of campaigns and elections. Either option will be graded out of twenty points, and you cannot choose both.

Option 1: Written	Option 2: Experiential
A three hour, open note, written exam will test how well you learned the material throughout the quarter. This exam is meant to apply the skill set you have developed over the course of the semester towards a hypothetical scenario.	Three hours of dedicated volunteering time to a campaign (issue or candidate) will allow you to apply your skills in the real world. Seek instructor approval prior to starting. Write a 1-page summary of what you learned, signed by a supervisor who attests to your five contributed hours.

Extra Credit Opportunities

- (5) Exit Notes – Each class will have an “exit note.” These notes ask about your struggles, understanding, or otherwise provides a space for you to provide



feedback. For every 5 exit tickets submitted, you will earn 1 extra credit point. This is additive for up to 5 points for each of the 25 class sessions.

- (1) Hidden in Syllabus – You tell me what you find! IYKYK 😊

You won't be able to get over 100% in the course; maximum extra credit will cap out at 100%.

About Me



Hi all! I'm Colombiana, a proud Latina, first-generation to college and first-generation in the US. I graduated summa cum laude from the University of Florida (Go Gators!), where I was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. After graduation, I worked with the ACLU-FL on a statewide voting rights case for formerly convicted felons. I then worked in local government as a management analyst before starting my PhD program. My research focuses on disaggregating the Hispanic/Latine identity across cultural, racial, and sociodemographic categorizations and how collectively these shape political behavior and public opinion.

I believe in the power of representation and mentorship, and I dedicate my time to mentoring undergraduate students of various backgrounds through their academic and career goals.

Office Hours are Mondays, 2-4 or by appointment:

[Book time with Laura Uribe: Office Hours](#)

Laura Uribe (she/her/ella)
PhD
[Website](#)

Teaching and Inclusion Philosophy

As an educator, I am committed to fostering a learning environment that not only cultivates academic growth but also empowers students to become agents of positive change in their communities. I aim to inspire critical thinking about our world. I strive to create inclusive classrooms where diverse perspectives are valued and where students feel seen, heard, and respected. See [BOR Policy 6.5](#).



Resources for Support and Learning

There are a variety of resources available to students at the University of Georgia, which are designed to address needs and enhance the student experience.

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 most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the [Embark@UGA](https://embark.uga.edu) program which supports students 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, any time, any place. 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 & Testing: accessibility.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting well-being.uga.edu.

Student Success Resources

The Office for Student Success and Achievement (OSSA) empowers students to achieve success throughout their academic journey. Through free peer tutoring, academic coaching, UNIV student success courses, Bulldog Basics, and first-generation student support, we promote well-being, student learning, and community building. To connect with OSSA, email ossa@uga.edu, call (706) 542-0163, or visit Milledge Hall (near Reed Hall and Sanford Stadium).

Disclaimer

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.



Campus and Course Policies

Course Policies

Health and Well-Being Statement

We are all human, and I am a proponent of taking care of yourself as your top priority. I am here to support you and help connect you to resources if you find yourself in need of it. Your well-being matters *a lot*.

Subject to Change Policy

Anything on the syllabus is subject to change. However, I commit to communicating any changes 1) in a timely manner, 2) in more than one medium (ex, in the classroom and via D2L-wide message), and 3) in a manner that listens to needs for flexibility.

Late Policy

Please make me aware as soon as you know you'll be unable to submit an assignment on time by filling out this form: [Assignment Extension Request – Fill out form](#). Your new due date is what you indicate on the form, usually a max of 48 hours after the original deadline.

If you do not fill out the form with an updated due date, 1 point will be deducted for each day after the deadline until you submit, capping at 5 points per assignment. The same structure will follow from your updated due date if you fill out the form. For example, if you submit an hour after the assignment deadline, you will lose one point on that assignment. If you submit a late form with an updated deadline and you submit your assignment an hour after your proposed updated deadline, you will lose one point for that assignment.

No assignments will be accepted after Friday, December 4th at 12 PM EST.

Letter of Recommendation Policy

I would be honored to write a letter of recommendation. Please be mindful of my connection to you and the extent of what I would be able to say—are you someone who has intentionally connected with me or your peers, and there is substance I can speak to in your letter? If you believe this is the case, please send me an email with your resume and a request as to what the letter needs are.

Technology Policy

You are welcome to take notes on your computer, tablet, phone, notepad, etc. Please try your best to minimize distractions for you and your peers.

AI Policy

In this course, thoughtful and intentional use of Artificial Intelligence is encouraged. Importantly, however, these are *tools* and not meant to replace your own critical thinking. There are limitations to using AI:



- You may not copy and paste the output of any AI tools for this class.
- AI often provides inaccurate, hallucinated, or biased responses. You are responsible for verifying the truth of the responses before incorporating into your work.
- If your work seems like it was written by AI, you may lose quality points on your assignments. If there is suspicion of extreme plagiarism through copying off of AI, you may be subject to the University's ethics policies on plagiarism.
- Be careful, cautious, and skeptical of data privacy.

Plagiarism Policy

All work must be original, and any work that is borrowed from another source must be properly cited. I am indifferent as to how you cite (APA, MLA, footnotes, etc.), so long as you do cite. If you are found plagiarizing, you will be subject to the University's ethics policies on plagiarism, [found here](#).

Not A Real Policy

If you've found this, submit through D2L a picture of an original, self-designed "I Voted" sticker for extra credit! Doesn't have to be fancy, but it should encourage a smile.

Campus Policies

- [Grading System](#)
- [Attendance Policy](#)
- [Final Examination Policy](#)
- [Field Trip Policy](#)
- [Final Instructional Days](#)
- [Syllabus System](#)

UGA 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.

Accommodation for disabilities

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the *Accessibility & Testing*. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <https://accessibility.uga.edu/>.

Course Schedule

Readings should be done before the start of lecture. Come prepared with one concept you found interesting or impactful from the readings for the week.



Course Timeline

Date	Topic	Readings
Introduction, Candidate, and District		
August 17 th	Introduction	–
August 19 th	Why campaign?	Read an online bio of your congressional representative
August 24 th	The Candidate	Candidate Qualities and Elected Officials Job Performance
August 26 th	The District	Immigrants, citizens, and (un)equal representation
Vote Goals and Targeting		
August 31 st	Why vote?	Campaigns and Elections Chapter 12: Voter Participation
September 2 nd	Participation and Turnout	Campaigns and Elections Chapter 12: Voter Participation, <i>continued</i>
September 7 th	<i>Labor Day</i>	<i>No Class</i>
September 9 th	Outreach Strategies	Does Language Matter? The Impact of Spanish Versus English-Language GOTV Efforts on Latino Turnout
September 14 th	Past Election Turnout	–
September 16 th	Forecasting Turnout	Swing voters vs mobilizing the base
Media and Endorsements		
September 21 st	News Media & Media Types	The News Media as Political Institutions
September 23 rd	Campaign Announcements	NGP Van: Endorsements
September 28 th	Endorsements	Indivisible: Endorsements
September 30 th	Advertisements	Does Political Advertising Persuade?
October 5 th	Mis- and Dis-Information	Voters distrust delayed election results, but a prebunking message inoculates against distrust
October 7 th	Catch up day	
Fundraising and Budget		
October 12 th	Campaign Finance	Campaigns and Elections Chapter 4: Financing Campaigns
October 14 th	Citizens United v. FEC	Listen: Civics 101
October 19 th	Funding Sources	Political Campaigns Chapter 4, page 82-97
October 21 st	Hard, Soft, and Dark Money	Soft Money, Hard Money, Strong Politics
October 26 th	Fundraising Strategies	
October 28 th	Budgeting	–
November 2 nd	Election Day Prep	–
November 4 th	Election Day Recap	–
Campaign Speech		
November 9 th	Principles of Speechwriting	E-Canvasser: Political Speeches
November 11 th	<i>Veteran's Day!</i> Political Speech Techniques – Who	Watch: A Young Person's Guide to Speechwriting
November 16 th	Political Speech Techniques – What	Find a video of your candidate giving a speech (or, being interviewed)
November 18 th	Political Speech Techniques – Why	–
November 23 rd	In-class Campaign Speeches	–
November 25 th	In-class Campaign Speeches	–
November 30 th	Final Class Review	
December 2 nd	Final Exam	

