

# Elections and Campaigns

Vanguard University of Southern California

## Class

Semester: Fall, 2016

Room: NMC 201A

Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:45

## Instructor

Kevin Walker, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Government

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11-1

Email: kevin.walker@vanguard.edu

## Course Description

A presidential election does far more than select a candidate for office: it gives life to American politics, compels us deliberate about the common good, and returns us to the fundamental questions about who we are as a people. An election shows us the human heart writ large for all to examine: when we scrutinize the character of the candidates, we are actually studying ourselves. In practice, elections ignite all the most powerful emotions in us – anger and euphoria, tribalism and unity, sublime hopes for the future and terrifying predictions; but we should always remember that the American political system and the traditions that have grown up around it are designed precisely to manage even the worst things in human nature, and compel us to bring out the better things – to “refine and enlarge the public views,” as James Madison put it (Federalist #10). This course is a study of the institutions, practices, and history of that experience in American democracy, and the responsibility we have in maintaining it. Students will begin by examining the motivation for civic participation, voter behavior and the involvement of interest groups, from grassroots movements to political parties. We will then turn to the procedure of elections, from the nomination process to the final campaign. Students will consider the strengths, weaknesses, and prospects for reform in the electoral system, and above all, their own unique place in it as citizens. We will conclude with a survey of great elections in American history, and their contributions to our political culture and national life.

## Texts

The following texts are required (not digital):

Polsby, Nelson, et al. *Presidential Elections: Strategies and Structures of American Politics*. Thirteenth Edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2012.

Adkins, Randall E. *The Evolution of Political Parties, Campaigns, and Elections: Landmark Documents, 1787-2007*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2008.

Mieczkowski, Yanek. *The Routledge Historical Atlas of Presidential Elections*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

## Course Requirements

- **Participation (10%).** Be prepared to answer the reading questions. Inability to answer questions about the text will result in the loss of *one* percentage point; not having the book will cost *two* percentage points.
- **Constitution Quiz (5%).** This is a brief quiz on relevant parts of the U.S. Constitution.
- **Minor Research Presentations (5%).** These are short presentations on various historical, contemporary and scholarly studies on Congress.
- **Midterm Exam (25%).** This is an exam on the terms, basic concepts, and readings on the first half of the course.
- **Final Exam (25%).** This is an exam on the terms, basic concepts, and readings on the second half of the course.
- **Research Essay (30%, Phase I 5%, Phase II 5%).** This is a 12-14+ page research essay on a topic of your choice related to Congress. There will be a prompt, and it will be due in two phases.

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, or the use of someone else’s text without quotes and proper citation, is considered a violation of the university’s standards of academic integrity and will be grounds for serious disciplinary action. A first offense will be an F on the assignment; a second offence will be an F in the class and a referral to the Dean.

## 2016-2017 Disability Services Statement

The Disability Services Office (DSO) offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor and the DSO. If you have not yet established services through the DSO, but have a temporary or permanent disability that requires accommodations (this can include, but is not limited to, mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impairments), you are welcome to contact the DSO at 714-619-6550 or [disabilityservices@vanguard.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@vanguard.edu).

### Course Outline

Read each of the following documents for the day listed.

#### I. The Framework of Elections and Campaigns

##### Week 1 – The Constitution

###### August 22

The U.S. Constitution (in class); 2016 Election in Overview (in class)

###### August 24

Packet: Convention Debates, July 17 and 25; Federalist #10, #68 and #72

##### Week 2 – Voters

###### August 29

Nelson Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 1: Voters (pp. 3-23); Appendix A and B on Voter Turnout (pp. 243-260)

###### August 31

Adkins, *Evolution: Baker v. Carr* (1962) (pp. 241-247); Lyndon Johnson's Message to Congress on the Voting Rights Act (pp. 251-265); Report on the National Commission on Federal Election Reform (pp. 315-319)

##### Week 3 – Groups

###### September 5

Labor Day

###### September 7

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 2: Groups (pp. 25-47); Appendix C (pp. 261-265)

##### Week 4 – Religion and Politics

###### September 12

Mark Noll, "Political Reflections," in *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (packet, pp. 149-175)  
Adkins, *Evolution: William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" Speech* (pp. 136-143)

###### September 14

Lyman Kellstedt, "Faith Transformed: Religion and Politics from FDR to George W. Bush," in *Religion and American Politics* (pp. 269-295)

##### Week 5 – Parties

###### September 19

Adkins, *Evolution: Alexander Hamilton to Edward Carrington* (pp. 19-27); Washington-Jefferson Correspondence (pp. 28-35); George Washington, Farewell Address (pp. 47-51); Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address (pp. 51-58); Martin Van Buren, Letter to Thomas Ritchie (pp. 65-69)

###### September 21

Adkins, *Evolution: Henry Clay's Speech Concerning the Whig Party* (69-76); Alexis de Tocqueville, "Parties in the United States" (pp. 77-82); Abraham Lincoln, House Divided Speech (pp. 88-95); Woodrow Wilson, "Wanted – A Party" (pp. 114-118); Theodore Roosevelt, "Confession of Faith" (pp. 165-174)

**Research Essay Phase One Due September 23**

## Week 6 – Corruption and Reform

### September 26

Adkins, *Evolution*: Thomas Nast’s Cartoon of William “Boss” Tweed (pp. 101-103); Massachusetts Australian Ballot Law (pp. 119-129); William Riordan’s “Strenuous Life of the Tammany District Leader” (pp. 150-156); The Tillman Act (pp. 157-159); Franklin Roosevelt’s Message to Congress on the Hatch Act (pp. 203-209); Taft-Hartley Act (pp. 210-212)

### September 28

Adkins, *Evolution*: *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976) (pp. 277-290); Russ Feingold’s Speech Supporting the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act and Mitch McConnell’s Speech Opposing (pp. 319-329)

## Week 7 – Rules and Resources

### October 3

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 3: Rules and Resources (pp. 51-73)

### October 5

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 3: Rules and Resources (pp. 73-92)

## II. The Election Process

### Week 8 – The Nomination

#### October 10

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 4: Nominations (pp. 87-116)

#### October 12

Exam

Midterm Exam – October 12

### Week 9 – The Convention

#### October 17

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 4: Nominations (pp. 116-133)

#### October 19

Adkins, *Evolution*: Tennessee General Assembly’s Protest Against the Caucus System (pp. 59-65); Robert LaFollette’s “Peril in the Machine” Speech (pp. 144-150); McGovern-Frasier Commission Report (pp. 266-276); The Price-Herman Commission Report

### Week 10 – The Campaign

#### October 24

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 5: The Campaign (pp. 161-184)

#### October 26

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 5: The Campaign (pp. 184-207)

Essay Phase Two Due Friday, October 28

### Week 11 – Assessing American Democracy

#### October 31

Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections*, Chapter 6: Appraisals (pp. 211-240); Chapter 7: Parties and Democracy (pp. 241-251)

#### November 2

Adkins, *Evolution*: Abram Hewitt, Secret Disputed Election, 1876-77 (pp. 104-110); Birch Bayh’s Resolution to Amend the Constitution to Provide for Direct Popular Election of the President (pp. 291-294); *Bush v. Gore* (2000) (pp. 304-314); Colorado Amendment 36 (pp. 330-337)

**Week 12 – 2016 Election Week**

**November 7**  
Election Watch

**November 9**  
Election Results

**VOTE – Tuesday, November 8**

**III. History of Presidential Elections**

**Week 13 – The Early Republic: Elections of 1789-1864**

**November 14**  
Yanek Mieczkowski, *Atlas of Presidential Elections* (pp. 12-36)

**November 16**  
Mieczkowski, *Atlas of Presidential Elections* (pp. 37-57)

**Week 14 – The Gilded Age: Elections of 1868-1912**

**November 21**  
Mieczkowski, *Atlas of Presidential Elections* (pp. 58-87)

**November 23**  
Thanksgiving

**Week 15 – Modern American Democracy: Elections of 1914-1980**

**November 28**  
Mieczkowski, *Atlas of Presidential Elections* (pp. 88-105)

**November 30**  
Mieczkowski, *Atlas of Presidential Elections* (pp. 106-133)

**Essay Final Draft Due Friday, December 2**

**Week 16 – Modern American Democracy: Elections of 1984-2000)**

**December 5**  
Mieczkowski, *Atlas of Presidential Elections* (pp. 134-149)

**Final Exam: Friday, December 9, 3:30-5:30**