Inside the 2024 Presidential Election and Transition - Fall Semester 2024 PUBPOL 3471

I. Course Information:

Instructor: Rep. Steve Israel
Contact: sji23@cornell.edu
Class Schedule: Class will run from 1-3:30 pm on the following days:
Thursday Sept. 5
Thursday Sept. 26
Thursday Oct. 10
Thursday Nov. 7
Thursday Nov 14: This session will be held at the U.S. Capitol

1 Credit

Office Hours By Appointment

TEACHING ASSISTANT: Joaquin Suriel - jes547@cornell.edu

II. Course Details:

Rationale for Offering
The 2024 presidential and congressional elections will be the most important in recent memory. In a highly polarized environment, against a backdrop of often shallow punditry and sound bites, this course will provide real-time analysis of the elections; and provide students with a deep understanding of the structure, organization, and strategic imperatives of the presidential and congressional elections. It will also analyze the presidential transition and the reorganization of a new Congress. This course is intended for students pursuing careers related to the worlds of politics and public service.

Course Description
The course explores the organization, structure, elements and strategic imperatives involved in the 2024 Presidential and congressional elections. Students will learn the inner dynamics of both the Republican and Democratic campaigns. The course will analyze, in real time, the state of play in the 2024 election. Students will learn the roles of campaign staff; how campaigns are financed; the electoral battleground; data analytics; and the unique dynamics of the 2024 election as it unfolds. After the election, the course will explore the real-time dynamics of the presidential transition process as well as the organization of the incoming Congress. Each session is

scheduled to feature bipartisan guest lecturers drawn from presidential and congressional campaigns. Students will be expected to track a specific candidate and analyze and assess that candidate's strengths and weaknesses at various points during the semester.

Course Objectives
Students participating in this course will learn:
- Analyze how presidential and congressional campaigns are organized and structured. ● Discover how campaigns develop strategic battlegrounds and pursue operational goals within corresponding electorates.
- Examine and comprehend the operations and dynamics of the presidential transition and the reorganization of a newly elected House and Senate.
- Develop the skills needed to work on a presidential/congressional campaign in order to explore career paths.

III. Course Materials and Grading Perquisites:

None.

IV. Required Texts & Publications:

Given the unique dynamics of the 2024 campaign and the real-time tracking of this course, reading assignments will be drawn from various weekly platforms including The Cook Political Report, 538, Punchbowl and others. All required readings will be made available on Canvas. Students will be notified via Canvas announcements.

Recommended Reading
- Steve Israel's Op-Eds in *The Hill*
- Staying current with the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Politico, Punchbowl News*
- Presidential and congressional polling tracking platforms to be assigned.

Special Note: This course will track real-time developments and the state of play at the presidential and congressional levels. To ensure topicality, classroom lectures may change quickly, and scheduled speakers may be forced to cancel at the last minute. Students are advised to check Canvass regularly on the status of classroom topics and speakers. Students will be notified by email of changes to this syllabus.

V. Grade Distribution:

Attendance 10%

Participation 25%
Primary Review 30%
Final Written Deliverable 35%

Letter Grade	Percentages	GPA
A+	98-100	4.3
A	93-97	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	65-66	1.0
D-	62-64	0.7
F	< 62	0.0

Attendance (10%)

Learning is a collective endeavor, and attending class prepared to discuss assigned material is essential to developing the knowledge necessary to complete your projects. As such, we will be

tracking attendance each day. Please contact the TA with questions about attendance or conflicting circumstances.

Participation (25%)

This course will track, in real-time, key events in the 2024 presidential and congressional elections cycle. Participation grade distribution will be based on each student's engagement in class discussions about related news events, as well as each session's discussion of developments in the political and policy worlds.

Primary Review (30%)

Students will be required to submit one 1-page review (single-spaced and 12 pt. font) tracking key developments in the presidential or congressional primary they have chosen. Papers should include high-level assessments of strengths and weaknesses. Grades will be based on the student's integration of course discussion on structure, organization, messaging, and strategic imperatives of campaigns. All papers should be emailed to jes547@cornell.edu **as a Word Doc**. Late papers without approval from Rep. Israel will be penalized with a reduction in grade. **Due by October 10 at 12:00pm.**

Final Written Deliverable (35%)

The final assignment is a 5-page essay (double-spaced and 12 pt. font) analyzing the structure and organization of the campaign selected to be tracked by each student and the strategies and tactics of the campaign. This will require paying close attention to news stories and public tracking of the selected campaign. Grades will be based on how effectively students integrate course materials into their writing, and on the quality of analysis/writing.

Written deliverables should be emailed to jes547@cornell.edu **as a Word Doc**. Hard copies or late submissions will not be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances. Late papers without approval from Rep. Israel will be penalized with a reduction in grade. **Final essay due no later than TBD.**

VI. Course Modules:

Thursday September 5, 2024, 1-3:30 p.m.

Introduction to the course, a review of the structure and organization of presidential and congressional campaigns. Students will select a specific presidential or congressional campaign and begin tracking its progress. Topics will include:
- 3-5-minute presentations by each student on your background, why you enrolled in the course, and which campaign you have selected to track during the semester. ● A history of presidential campaign ads.
- The elements of a political campaign.
- The fundamentals of a presidential campaign.
- The allied organizations of presidential campaigns (DNC, RNC, independent expenditures, etc.)
- Current events discussion.

- *Scheduled Guest Lecturer: **TO BE SCHEDULED***
- **Reading Assignment**: Guest speaker bio and any readings posted in the "Week 1" module on canvas.

Thursday September 26, 2024, 1-3:30 p.m.
This session will focus on the real-time state of play in the 2024 presidential campaign, including battlegrounds and schedule
- The 2024 presidential election cycle: where are the battleground states and why?
- Battlegrounds, Undecideds and Late-Break Voters
- The current state of play.
- Current Events discussion.
- *Scheduled Guest Lecturers: Robby Mook, Fellow at Harvard's Belfer Center, Campaign Manager of Hilary Clinton's 2016 Presidential Campaign. Molly Donlin, Founder and President of Regent Strategies, Former Deputy Chief of Staff at the Republican National Committee*
- **Reading Assignment**: Guest speaker bios and any readings posted in the "Week 2" module on canvas.

Thursday October 10, 2024, 1-3:30 p.m.
This session will focus on the state of play in the House and Senate elections. Topics will include:
- Congressional campaigns:
  - The role of DCCC and NRCC in the congressional election cycle, specifically candidate recruitment.
  - The creation, design, and building of congressional campaigns.
  - The staff structures of congressional campaigns.
  - How the battlefield of competitive districts is established.
  - The real-time state of play in key congressional races.
- Current events discussion.
- *Scheduled Guest Lecturer: Tom Davis, Partner at Holland & Knight, former United States Representative*
- **Reading Assignment**: Guest speaker bios and any readings posted in the "Week 3 module on canvas.
- **Writing Assignment:** Students must submit a 1-page review (single-spaced and 12-point font) tracking key developments in their chosen presidential/congressional primary by October 10th before 1 p.m. More details will be provided in class

Thursday November 7, 2024, 1-3:30 p.m.
 This session will focus on a recap of the Presidential and Congressional elections,

including: • Lessons learned from key election outcomes.

• What went right/wrong for different campaigns.

• An assessment of the successes and weaknesses of individual presidential campaigns. • What do the results teach us about studying and understanding future elections? ● A review of polling before and after the race.

● Current events discussion.

● *Guest lectures (continued)*: **TO BE SCHEDULED**

● **Reading Assignment**: Guest speaker bios and any readings posted in the "Week 4" module on canvas.

Thursday November 14, 2024, 1- 3:30 p.m.

This session will focus on the real time dynamics of the transition to a new presidency and Congress. The course will explore:

• The presidential transition process, including the organization of the Cabinet, key appointments and nominations.

• The organization of the new Congress, including how committees will be structured and filled, and the formulation of new rules governing the legislative process. • A special tour of the United States Capitol.

• **Reading Assignment**: Guest speaker bios and any readings posted in the "Week 5" module on canvas.

VII. Diversity, Integrity and Respect; Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity

Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all Cornell University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of campus resources. Students in this course are expected to read and comply with Cornell University's Code of Academic Integrity, and cases where student(s) are found to misrepresent their work, fraudulently or unfairly advance their academic position in violation of Cornell's Code of Academic Integrity, will be submitted to the Academic Integrity Hearing Board. For information on Cornell's policies on academic integrity, please visit Cornell University's Code of Academic Integrity. Students should also note that all written assignments in this course will be screened using Turnitin, a web-based plagiarism detection program.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Students should review Cornell's policy towards plagiarism (plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu). Your

work must be yours and yours alone, not copied from others. In this context, "others" includes content created or unearthed by Artificial Intelligence. If you are referring to the ideas of someone else or you are quoting another's writing, be sure to cite them properly. All suspected cases of plagiarism are sent to the appropriate university officials for further review. If you are not sure whether something counts as plagiarism, ask the instructor or TA.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Cornell University is committed to full inclusion for all persons to its educational program and services. Services and reasonable accommodations are available to persons with temporary and permanent disabilities when conditions cause barriers to equal educational opportunity. Student Disability Services (SDS) determines the eligibility of students to receive accommodations and works collaboratively with the student and university faculty and staff to recommend appropriate accommodations. Students are advised to contact SDS as early as possible in the semester to ensure appropriate accommodations: www.sds.cornell.edu, 607-254-4545.

Use of Recording Devices
Students must request permission from the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices to record lectures, discussions, etc. If such permission is granted, neither the resulting recordings, nor any form of copies of transcripts of the recordings may be used for any other purpose than as a replacement for notes taken in class. Permission to make recordings will not be withheld if such recordings are reasonably necessary to accommodate a student's disability.