PubPol 683

Elections & Campaigns Syllabus

Fall Semester, 2020

Rusty Hills

Tuesday 5:30 to 8:20 p.m., 1120 Weill Hall (Annenberg Auditorium) and Online.

Office Hours: I have an Open Door and Open E-mail policy.

First option is by appointment, Room 5303 or any coffee shop in town; before or after class.

If that doesn’t work, we’ll come up with something. I want you to succeed.

Phone: Cell phone (517) 648-2520

E-mail: [rustyhills@gmail.com](mailto:rustyhills@gmail.com)

Most Important

Be Safe

**Course Overview**: The purpose of PubPol 683 is to examine campaigns and explain what happens and why. **Remember: There is no policy without victory.**

This course will introduce you to the practical side of political campaigning: how to win elections. There will be a strong emphasis on political communication, including speeches & debates, earned, paid and social media, and crafting and framing a message.

In addition, other topics to be discussed include campaign planning and management, polling and research, identifying, targeting and turning out voters, conventions, scheduling budgeting and fundraising and Get Out The Vote (GOTV) efforts.

PubPol 683 will also feature several special guests to discuss their experiences in politics, government and winning elections.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Register to Vote.**
2. **Vote, by absentee ballot or on Election Day, November 3rd.**
3. **This I Believe essay**. (3-page limit.). This is a personal testament – what is it that is most important to you? For examples, please visit the website [www.thisibelieve.org](http://www.thisibelieve.org) for sample essays.
4. **Class Debate**. The University of Michigan has opted out of the 2020 Presidential debates. So, PubPol 683 will fill the void by doing our own 2020 Presidential debate in class. Students may choose to join the President’s team, the Vice President’s team, or to serve as moderators of the debate and ask questions. **Every student, in-person or online, must participate**. First, both the President and Vice President’s team must prepare **Briefing Books** for their candidate in preparation for the debate, and these briefing books will be graded. (NOTE: the two teams do not have to be even. In addition, you need not agree with the President or Vice President to serve on their teams, just as in Debate you may not agree with the topic you are assigned to defend.) The moderators will also have to prepare their own Briefing Book, and that will be graded. Second, each team must utilize every member of the team to answer at least one question during the debate (team members may answer more than one question), and each moderator must ask at least one question of each team.
5. **Book Review** (6 pages.) “Shattered,” by Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes. NOTE: Students may choose to read and review an alternative political title (any book about the President, for example, or similar recent books.). **Consult with Professor first about the book you choose to read and review.**
6. **Final Project**: Write a campaign plan. (10 pages.)
   1. Select one upcoming election in 2022 – gubernatorial, senatorial, congressional, state house or state senate, local or a ballot issue.
   2. Then, write a ten (10) page paper that includes the following elements:
      1. Prepare a Win Number. (5% of paper.) How many votes do you need to win your election? Explain how you arrived at that number.
      2. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the paper should be devoted to the following points:
         1. SWOT analysis {Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats}
         2. Voter Coalition
         3. Message
      3. The **SWOT analysis** is straightforward: list for me the various elements in each category for the candidate whom you have selected. For example, what are the candidate’s strengths? What are her or his weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?
      4. For the **Voter Coalition** portion of your final paper, list and give a reason for the voter groups – the voters, coalitions & interest groups – that will support your candidate, and how those groups combine to achieve 50% plus one of the electorate. In other words, tell me how you plan to assemble a winning coalition. How to you get to your win number?
      5. For the **Message** portion of your paper, tell me what is your candidate’s message, and why you have selected this message. Explain how you will apply your candidate’s message to the voter, coalition & interest groups you are appealing to. Why will these groups vote for you? What is your message to them?

**Class Format:** The class will combine lecture with discussion, supplemented with guest lecturers. Most of the learning will come from your questions.

Lectures will be delivered in-person and online from the beginning of the semester up until the Thanksgiving break, public health and safety allowing. After the Thanksgiving break, classes will be online only. All classes will be videotaped. Your health and safety is the most important consideration.

No student should feel forced to attend in-person, and any student who does not feel well should protect herself or himself, as well as fellow students, and stay home.

There is no advantage, and no penalty, for taking the class in-person or online. Both will be graded equally.

**Required Texts: (1) “Political Campaigning in the U.S.,” by David A. Jones, and (2) “Shattered,” by Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes.** But the real textbook will be each days’ headlines and news stories that pertain to politics and government.

Because you are a student at the University of Michigan Ford School, I expect you to be conversant with national and state politics. The New York Times and Washington Post are excellent resources for national politics. I also recommend the Politico and Real Clear Politics websites. The Detroit Free Press and Detroit News, and the Michigan state government reports, Gongwer and MIRS, provide solid coverage of state politics. Read the news each day and come prepared.

**Help with Writing:** We areblessed to have an outstanding Writing Center at the Ford School, and I would encourage students to take advantage of all the services that the Center offers. For more information, I would direct you to [www.fordschool.umich.edu/writing-center/](http://www.fordschool.umich.edu/writing-center/)

**Course Requirements:**  Attendance is required, whether in-person or online. Student participation is critical to understanding the material, and therefore is a healthy percentage of your final grade.   Students are expected to arrive on time (or log in on time), finish assignments on time, be prepared for the weekly discussions and topics, participate in discussions, AND be respectful of the opinions of all other students and guests.

Exceptions will be made for those students who are online and in differing time zones.

NOTE:  Even if you miss a class, **all assignments are** still **due on the date assigned**. What does that mean? Your grade will be lowered for each class period that an assignment is not handed in.  In other words, missing a class is not an excuse for failing to complete an assignment.

**Public Health and Safety**: In order to participate in any in-person aspects of this course, including meeting with other students to study or work on a team project, you must follow all safety measures mandated by the State of Michigan, the University of Michigan and the Ford School.

This includes maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others and properly wearing a face covering at all times while on campus. In addition, it is expected that you will protect and enhance the health of everyone in the Ford School community by staying home and following self-isolation guidelines if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, are awaiting a test result, or have engaged in a higher-exposure activity such as attending an indoor social gathering of more than 10 people.

If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to all prescribed safety measures, you will be accommodated through remote access to all aspects of this course.  Additional information on public health safety measures is described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](https://campusblueprint.umich.edu/uploads/Wolverine_Culture_of_Care%20sign_8.5x11_UPDATED_071520.pdf) and the [University’s Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](http://ehs.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/U-M-Face-Covering-Policy-for-COVID-19.pdf).

**Ford School of Public Policy Inclusivity Statement**

Members of the Ford School community represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We are committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

* share their unique experiences, values and beliefs
* be open to the views of others
* honor the uniqueness of their colleagues
* appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community
* value one another’s opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
* keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
* use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in Ford classes and across the UM community

**Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources**

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students.  We acknowledge that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students’ academic performance.

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact [Counseling and Psychological Services](https://caps.umich.edu/) (CAPS) and/or [University Health Service](https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs) (UHS). For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please let your instructor know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of courses may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make your instructor aware of your needs, they can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help determine appropriate academic accommodations. Any information you provide will be treated as private and confidential.

Please review additional information and policies regarding academic expectations and resources at the Ford School of Public Policy at this link:

<http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectation>

**Grading:**  Students will be graded on class participation and the successful, on-time completion of the four individual assignments:  essay, speech, book review and Memo to the Candidate.

Grade               Points             Percentage

A                     4.0                   94-100

A-                    3.7                   93-90

B+                   3.3                   89-86

B                      3.0                   85-80

B-                    2.7                   79-75

C+                   2.3                   74-70

C                     2.0                   69-64

D+                   1.3                   59-56

D                     1.0                   55-52

D-                    0.7                   51-50

E                      0.0                   Less than 50

**Plagiarism:**  In a word -- Don't!  Plagiarism is grounds for failing the class. The University of Michigan and the Ford School take this offense seriously.

Zoom Link

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://umich.zoom.us/j/91078566749>

Meeting ID: 910 7856 6749

Passcode: 856

If you have any problems with connecting to class by Zoom, please report them to me or our Technology Corps student immediately.

TOPIC SCHEDULE\*

September 1

Class Overview

Review of syllabus, all assignments and expectations, topics to be covered, questions answered.

Read:

1. **The Front-Runner’s Fall, by Joshua Green, The Atlantic.**
2. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/09/the-front-runner-s-fall/306944/
3. **Skim the highlights of Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Michelle Nunn’s Campaign Plan, from the Washington Post.**
4. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/07/28/how-to-read-the-leaked-michelle-nunn-campaign-plan/>
5. **Political Campaigning, David Jones, Chapter 1.**

September 8

Campaign Planning & Management

All the elements of a political campaign.

Strategy (Your overarching path to victory).

Tactics (how to implement your strategy.)

SWOT analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. **Win Number.**

**Assignment #1**: Go to [www.thisibelieve.org](http://www.thisibelieve.org) and review "This I Believe" essays.  Then, write your own personal testament, your own "This I Believe."

**Due date:  September 22**

September 15

Speeches & Debates

Tips & tricks of the trade for crafting successful speeches and for winning debates.

**Read: Political Campaigning, Chapter 4, Earned Media**

September 22

Earned Media

Generating press and media coverage without paying for it. Press releases, debates, speeches, newspaper and other endorsements.  How to deal with the press? Is that even possible? If so, how?

&

Crafting a Message & Message Development

Television, Internet, digital and social media, direct mail, newspaper. Comparative communications (otherwise known as negative ads).

Who defines whom? And who gets there first?

Targeting messages.

Different messages, different audiences, different mediums, different timing.

Big Picture.  Framing.  Going on offense, setting the agenda.

**Assignment #1 is DUE.**

**Assignment # 2:**

**Class Debate**. The University of Michigan has opted out of the 2020 Presidential debates. So, PubPol 683 will fill the void by doing our own 2020 Presidential debate in class.

Students may choose to join the President’s team, the Vice President’s team, or to serve as moderators of the debate and ask questions. Every student, in-person or online, must participate.

First, both the President and Vice President’s team must prepare Briefing Books for their candidate in preparation for the debate, and these briefing books will be graded. (NOTE: the two teams do not have to have an even number of students. Why? Because campaigns are rarely even. In addition, **you need not agree** with the President or Vice President to serve on their teams, just as those who have participated before in Debate may not agree with the topic they have been assigned to defend. **Your job is not to agree with one or the other candidate. The purpose of this exercise is to better understand how to prepare for, and execute, a debate.**

The moderators will also have to prepare their own Briefing Book, and that will be graded.

Second, each team must utilize every member of the team to answer at least one question during the debate, and each moderator must ask at least one question of each team.

**Due Date:  October 20**

**Read: Political Campaigning, Chapter 5, Paid Media.**

September 29

Paid Media

Television, Internet, digital and social media, direct mail, newspaper. Comparative communications (otherwise known as negative ads).

Who defines whom? And who gets there first?

**Read: Political Campaigning, Chapter 3, Voter and Candidate Research.**

October 6

Polling & Research

1. Polling as a snapshot in time. What polling can do, what polling cannot do. Why bother to pay for polling if every media outlet is already polling?

2. Research. Know yourself, your strength and weaknesses; know your opponent, strength and weaknesses; know your voters, your state, your environment, your issues.

**Read: Political Campaigning, Chapters 2 and 7, Targeting, Persuasion and Mobilization, and The Ground Game.**

October 13

Voter Contact

Identifying, differentiating, targeting & turning out Voters.

Microtargeting. Who are our voters, and how in the world do we find them?

October 20

Class Debate

**Assignment #2 .**

**Assignment #3:**

Write a book review of “Shattered,” by Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes or another political book that has been approved by the Professor beforehand.

Key points for your book review:

1. What was the main point of the book?
2. Did you agree or disagree with the author(s)?
3. Why or why not?
4. Was anything important missed?

Limit it to no more than 6 typewritten pages, double-spaced.

**Due Date:  November 3 (Election Day)**

**ALSO: Remember to vote, by absentee ballot or in-person.**

**Read: Political Campaigning, Chapter 6, Social Media.**

October 27

Social & Digital Media

The new communications. How has the changing nature of communications, new media, digital and social media, affected campaigns?

Digital Data. How do we mine data, and what is the most effective use of data?

November 3

Election Day – Remember to Vote!

Role of Conventions

Conventions play a large and unappreciated role in national politics, and in many state elections, including the state of Michigan.

For example, in Michigan, candidates for Secretary of State, Attorney General, Lieutenant Governor, and all eight statewide education board races, including the University of Michigan Regents, are nominated at a state convention.

Book Review

**Assignment #3 is DUE.**

**Assignment #4**

Final Project: Write a campaign plan.

1. Select one upcoming election in Michigan in 2022 – gubernatorial, senatorial, congressional, state house or state senate, local or a ballot issue.
2. Then, write a ten (10) page paper that includes the following elements:
   * 1. Prepare a Win Number. How many votes do you need to win your election? Explain how you arrived at that number.
     2. Ninety-five (95%) of the paper should be devoted to the following points:
     3. SWOT analysis {Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats}
     4. Voter Coalition
     5. Message
     6. The SWOT analysis is straightforward: list for me the various elements in each category for the candidate whom you have selected. For example, what are the candidate’s strengths? What are her or his weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?
     7. For the Voter Coalition portion of your final paper, list and give a reason for the voter groups – the voters, coalitions & interest groups – that will support your candidate, and how those groups combine to achieve 50% plus one of the electorate. In other words, tell me how you plan to assemble a winning coalition. How do you get to your win number?
     8. For the Message portion of your paper, tell me what is your candidate’s message, and why you have selected this message. Explain how you will apply your candidate’s message to the voter, coalition & interest groups you are appealing to. Why will these groups vote for you? What is your message to them?

**DUE DATE: December 8**

November 10

Analysis of the Election – Who Won, Who Lost, and Why

**Read Political Campaigning, Chapter 8, Fundraising.**

November 17

Fundraising, Budgeting & Scheduling

The not very glamorous, but absolutely essential elements of all winning campaigns. How to raise money, 101.

Strategic scheduling (P.S. Don’t ever be the Scheduler!)

November 24 (No Class)

Happy Thanksgiving

December 1

Online Only

Transition to Power

The votes have been counted. The election is over. Now it is time to transition from campaigning to governing. What needs to be done, and who should do it?

Is policy really personnel? Should all campaign staff transition to public service? What’s most important? How are issues sequenced? Must all campaign promises be fulfilled?

December 8

Online Only

Final Thoughts, Lessons from Winning & Losing

**Assignment #4 is DUE.**

**\*NOTE**:  The dates on which topics are to be covered are subject to change, but **assignment due dates** will **remain the same**.