

DePaul University
School for New Learning
Advanced Elective Seminar:
Elections: Democracy in America
Fall Quarter 2007

I. General Information

Instructor: Mark Enenbach
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Meeting Time: Mondays from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. September 10th through
November 19th
Location: Oak Forest campus
Credit: Four quarter hours

II. Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch

In this Advanced Elective course students will examine the process of democracy and its significance and importance to their lives. The course content will review the history of elections and political campaigns in the United States and abroad. The role and impact of the media in the decision making process will be evaluated. Campaign financing, interest groups and voting methodologies will be analyzed.

Critical thinking and writing skills will be strongly emphasized. A variety of learning strategies will be utilized including independent and group research, debates and video presentations.

Mark Enenbach is in his 20th year as a member of the SNL visiting faculty. He is a former professor at Governor's State University and has held numerous administrative and planning positions with the City of Chicago. Currently, he is Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Community and Economic and Development Association. He received his M.A. from Loyola University.

III. Competencies Offered and Requirements

E-1: Written by student/faculty. (Prerequisite Research Seminar)

E-2: Written by student/faculty. (Prerequisite Research Seminar)

1. Identifies a phenomenon, problem, or event of personal significance.
2. Identifies at least two approaches to the creation of knowledge that could appropriately be applied to one.
3. Evaluates the limitations and possibilities of these approaches to the creation of knowledge.
4. Articulates a perspective in relation to this phenomenon, problem or event that integrates aspects of these approaches.

Learning experiences for these competencies must be at an advanced level. Transfer courses must be at the junior or senior level. Other learning experiences must be sufficiently advanced to demonstrate synthesis of complex ideas, understanding of significant research in the field and originality of perspective. The Research Seminar is a prerequisite for SNL courses or new independent learning in these competencies. These competencies can fit anywhere in the Arts and Idea, Human Community, or Scientific World Categories.

IV. Learning Experience

Through a combination of readings, lecture-discussions, films, debate, individual and group research students develop the ability to analyze and comprehend key issues relating to the electoral process. Students utilize this information to evaluate alternative approaches to these issues and articulate their own perspectives relative to improving democracy in the United States and throughout the world.

Learning Strategies

- A. Readings
- B. Lecture-discussions
- C. Films
- D. Independent Research
- E. Group Projects

Required Readings

- A. Mass Media and American Politics by Doris A. Graber. Published by CQ Press, Washington, D.C., 2006
- B. Winning Political Campaigns by William S. Bike. Published by Denali Press; 2nd edition, April, 2001.
- C. Duplicated materials to be provided by the instructor.

Attendance and Participation

Students are encouraged to make every effort to attend classroom sessions. Participation in lecture-discussions and the group project are essential to have a fulfilling learning experience. In the event that students are unable to attend a classroom session, it is recommended that they borrow notes from another student.

Students will be given a wide range of options for fulfilling their competencies, including independent research papers, oral presentations in class or by DVD, video or audio format. The instructor will discuss various research methodologies and strategies with the students on an individualized basis in order to assist in the completion of selected methods of demonstrating competence.

V. Outcomes

By the conclusion of the course students should have achieved the following goals:

- A) An understanding of the election process in the United States and its significance
- B) Knowledge of the historical importance of elections and political campaigns around the world
- C) A basic comprehension of the role and impact of the media in the decision making process
- D) An understanding of campaign financing, interest groups and voting methodologies and their importance
- E) The ability to formulate informed personal beliefs relative to the electoral process

VI. Evidence the Student Will Submit

Students registered for particular competencies will be evaluated on projects submitted to the instructor. Competence may be demonstrated by written or oral presentation. Oral projects may be in audio or video form or as presentations to the class. Written projects require footnotes and bibliography of source material. Oral projects require an outline of the presentation and bibliography. Students registered for two competencies may, in some cases, complete an expanded project, which addresses both competencies.

Students will identify an issue relating to the electoral process. The pros and cons, costs and benefits of different approaches to the issue will be explored. At least two different methodologies should be utilized to demonstrate the students' understanding of various positions taken in relation to the topic.

Independent Research: The 2008 Political Campaign

Students will actively engage in learning through direct participation or observation of a 2008 election campaign. Students will select one of the two options listed below and prepare a report to be shared with the class.

1. Get Involved

Join a political campaign as a volunteer. Keep a journal of your experiences. Prepare an oral report in which you reflect upon your experiences and what you have learned about elections and the campaign process.

2. Be Informed

Select a political campaign and follow its course. Prepare summations of key elements in the campaign. Review campaign strategies and their effectiveness, speeches, announcements, endorsements and their impact, fundraisers, media coverage, changes in polling of votes and projected election results, debates with other candidates and other pertinent information.

Prepare an oral report on your findings and conclusions.

All students will be required to submit a competence proposal at the second class session. Competence proposals will be reviewed by the instructor for pertinence to the competence or competencies addressed. The instructor will offer suggested research methodologies, strategies and resources to the student.

The suggested length for term papers is seven to ten pages for one competence and fourteen to twenty pages for two competencies. All term papers must include footnotes and a bibliography, including at least four sources per competence.

Oral presentations should be seven to ten minutes in length for one competence and fourteen to twenty minutes for two competencies. Students making oral presentations must submit a one page outline of their presentation and a bibliography including at least four sources per competence.

This course will adhere to the principles of academic integrity outlined in DePaul University's Student Handbook.

The DePaul Student Handbook clearly defines plagiarism. Plagiarism will not be accepted and will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly the course. If you need assistance in knowing how to cite a resource, please ask for assistance.

VII. Criteria for Assessment

Assessment will focus on the achievement of outcome measures that are designed to meet the learning goals of the student. Student evaluation will embody the qualities of clarity, integrity, flexibility and empathy. The multiplicity of learning experiences offered in the class affords the opportunity to measure progress through the assimilation of a variety of assessment sources. Among these will be:

- A) Informed participation in both class and group discussions
- B) Independent research
- C) Group projects

As indicated previously, students will be given the opportunity to prepare their own competence proposals, which will be reviewed with the instructor. These proposals will provide students with a framework from which to assess their progress through the course.

Grading will be on the standard A, B, C, D, F format. Unfinished work, or work requiring revision, will be given an Incomplete (IN) grade.

VIII. Class Schedule

September 10	Class Introduction
September 17	Part One: History of Elections in the United States Part Two: Political Campaigns
September 24	The Role of the Media in the Electoral Process
October 1	Political Advertising and the Impact of Technology
October 8	Independent and Group Research
October 15	Part One: Campaign Financing and Special Interest Groups Part Two: Elections in Other Parts of the World
October 22	Reflections on the 2008 Political Campaign
October 29	Independent and Group Research
November 5	Group Debates
November 12	Independent Research
November 19	Competence Papers and Presentations

Group Project

Students will be divided into groups to research issues relating to the electoral process. Groups will be assigned topics to be debated in class.

Each group will select a primary spokesperson for their group to present a three minute opening statement. A three minute rebuttal will be presented by the opposing group. Follow-up statements of under two minutes will be allowed in alternating fashion until the conclusion of the debate.

Debate topics are the following:

1. Direct popular vote versus the Electoral College
2. Voting for judges versus expert panel election
3. Should voting be mandatory?
4. Should there be minimum requirements to vote, such as being able to pass a test demonstrating knowledge of the governmental process?
5. Should the media be allowed to report exit polling results on Election Day before the polls close?
6. Should on-line electronic voting be allowed?
7. Should there be term limits for elected officials?
8. Should we hold national primary elections for the office of President of the United States or continue with the current system of statewide primaries and caucuses?
9. Should candidates be required to participate in runoff elections if they fail to capture a majority of the votes cast?
10. Should tax dollars be utilized to provide minimum campaign support for candidates running for office?
11. Should limits be imposed on the maximum amount allowable to be spent on political campaigns?
12. Should non-citizen residents be allowed to vote?
13. Should public debates require the inclusion of all candidates for public office?
14. Should minor political parties be allowed access to the ballot without having to generate thousands of petitions prior to an election?

15. Should bilingual ballots be mandatory so that all non-English reading citizens be allowed to vote in their native language?
16. Should cumulative voting be adopted?

Addenda

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alternation or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.