

# CAMPAIGNING FOR CONGRESS: CANDIDATES, PARTIES, INTEREST GROUPS, AND VOTERS IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

Government and Politics 479C

Fall 1998

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This seminar focuses on congressional campaigns, drawing examples from the 1998 elections. Congressional campaigns will be examined from several perspectives, including those of candidates, party officials, and interest group leaders. The class will explore the backgrounds of congressional candidates, the decision to run for office, campaign organization, campaign finance, strategy, communications, and related topics.

The seminar will draw on the expertise available in the Washington area. Party officials, PAC directors, and other consultants who work in congressional elections will brief the class. Students are advised that they may need to adjust their schedules to attend some of the briefings.

## *Course Requirements:*

Students will be required to complete three written assignments, participate in class, and make some field trips to Washington, D.C. to visit various political organizations. Two of the written assignments involve a case study of one congressional election. Students will first write a paper on the conditions in their congressional district prior to the election, the backgrounds of the primary candidates, the roles of interest groups in the campaign, and the outcome of the primary contests. The second paper will focus on the general election, including the candidates' campaign strategies, fundraising, advertising, and get-out-the-vote activities. It will also assess party and interest group efforts. The two papers should be roughly 20 pages each. The third written assignment, roughly 3 pages, consists of a short prediction of the election outcome. More information about the papers is available at [www.books.cq.com](http://www.books.cq.com) (in the free resources area).

## *Grades will be based on the following:*

First paper: 30%  
Second paper: 30%  
Election prediction paper: 10%  
Class participation, quizzes, and miscellaneous assignments: 30%

## *Textbooks and Other Required Readings:*

Deborah Beck et al. Issue Advocacy Advertising During the 1996 Campaign, Annenberg Public Policy Center, 1997, available at [www.asc.upenn.edu/appc](http://www.asc.upenn.edu/appc) (use Adobe Acrobat Reader)  
Robert Biersack, Paul Herrnson, and Clyde Wilcox, eds., After the Revolution: PACs, Lobbies and the Republican Congress, Allyn and Bacon, forthcoming 1998, provided free.

Anthony Corrado, et al. Campaign Finance Reform: A Sourcebook, Brookings Institution, 1997, also available for free at [www.brook.edu/gs/newcfr/sourcebk.htm](http://www.brook.edu/gs/newcfr/sourcebk.htm)  
Paul Herrnson, Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington, CQ Press, 1998.  
Thomas Kazez, ed., Who Runs for Congress? Ambition, Context, and Candidate Emergence, CQ Press, 1994. (on reserve on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of McKeldin Library)  
E. Joshua Rosenkranz, Buckley Stops Here: Loosening the Judicial Stranglehold on Campaign Finance Reform, Twentieth Century Fund, 1998.

Optional Textbooks:

Gary Jacobson, The Politics of Congressional Elections, Longman, 1997.  
Frank Sorauf, Inside Campaign Finance, Yale, 1992.

All of the textbooks are available at the university bookstore or on the Internet, except for Kazez. They have all been placed on reserve.

In addition to the above reading, students will be expected to follow the events connected with the upcoming elections as they unfold. Students should read a major newspaper and consult Congressional Quarterly, Weekly Reports, National Journal, Roll Call, or The Hill on a regular basis. They should also clip newspaper stories and monitor the Internet for information about their case studies.

*Assignment Schedule:*

September 2 Introduction

September 9 The Strategic Environment

Herrnson, Introduction and ch. 1  
Corrado et al., pp. 5-24, 27-35, 53-57, 59-60, 63-77, 87-92

September 16 Congressional Candidates and Campaign Organizations

Herrnson, chs. 2,3  
Kazez, pp. 23-43, 82-99, 119-135, 150-163

September 23 Required Tutorials (students sign up in advance)

September 30 Political Parties

Herrnson, ch. 4  
Corrado et al., pp. 167-177, 198-213, 217-222

October 7 Political Parties (continued)

\*Briefing at the National Republican Congressional Committee, 310 First St. SE, Washington, D.C. (near Capitol South metro stop)

October 14 Student Presentations

\*First paper, press clippings, and interview notes due in class

## October 21 Interest Groups

Herrnson, ch. 5

Biersack, et al., chs. 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14

Beck et al., pp. 1-10; 11-13, 28-29, 45-46, 65; 38-40, 47; 43, 58-59; 44

Corrado et al., pp. 227-242, 267

\*Briefing at the National Committee for an Effective Congress, 122 C St. NW, suite 650, Washington, D.C. (near Union Station and Judiciary Square metro stations)

## October 28 Campaign Fundraising/Optional Tutorials (students sign up in advance)

Herrnson, ch. 6

\*Briefing by a professional fundraiser in class

\*Election predictions due in class

## November 4 Voting Behavior

Flanigan and Zingale, entire book

## November 11 November Campaign Strategy and Communications

Herrnson, chs. 7,8

## November 18 Election Outcomes

Herrnson, ch. 9

\*Briefing by managers from two opposing campaigns

## November 25 Elections, Governance, and Campaign Reform

Herrnson, chs. 10-11

Rosenkranz, entire book

Corrado et al., pp. 95-120, 337-343, 379-392

## December 2 Student Presentations

## December 4 Conference on Congressional Elections (optional)

\*Location to be announced. Students are urged to attend this conference, which will feature presentations by campaign consultants and academics on six of the most interesting 1998 House races.

## December 9 Student Presentations

\*Submit final paper, press clippings, and interview notes for both papers due in class