Course Outline and Reading Assignments

The grade for this course is based on take-home mid-term and final exams. Each exam will consist of two three-page papers. The paper topics will be chosen to assess your ability to integrate and synthesize the readings and lectures into a lucid, clearly stated argument backed by the readings.

Required Book:

Maintaining Academic Integrity: Students agree that by taking this course all required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Reading Assignments. All articles assigned are available as E-Reserves through the library. If you are on the UCSD campus or using a dial-in account provided by Academic Computing Services, e-reserves can be accessed immediately at [www.reserves.ucsd.edu](http://www.reserves.ucsd.edu). If you are off-campus and using AOL, Roadrunner or another ISP, you must first obtain a network password and make a few changes to your Netscape or Internet Explorer settings. (The information is at [libraries.ucsd.edu/proxy](http://libraries.ucsd.edu/proxy))

I will hand out the rest of the syllabus next week. I will also post articles on my web site in cases where library regulations make it difficult to download the material in a suitable form. I will announce the URL and content when it becomes available.

Each lecture will cover the readings assigned for that day. The questions following each day's readings have been chosen to help you integrate the readings with the lectures.

Week One

Brownstein, Ron “The First 21st-Century Campaign”; Vargas, Jose Antonio “Obama Raised Half a Billion Online.”
[Sociological, psychological and economic contributions to voting theory.]

How is choosing a candidate different from choosing a PC or Jeans?
What was different in 2008?
Week Two


*When will people spend time gathering information about politics and government? Where are people spending their leisure time and why does it matter?*


*How do changes in media affect voters and how do politicians react to these changes?*

Week Three


*What are the most important information shortcuts voters use about political parties and candidates? (Be sure to read the material on party images carefully)*

How did Obama mange to become “black enough” to win African-American support and still be “white enough” to be a “post-racial” candidate?


*When, and for whom, do endorsements matter? When are religious media important in elections? How did JFK overcome anti-Catholic prejudice? How was JFK’s problem different from Obama’s? Which strategy would work better for a Mormon or Gay person?*
Week Four

Tues., Oct. 16

Thurs., Oct. 18  Brader, Ted “Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions”

[How do positive and negative ads differ in their effects on mobilization, information and partisanship?]
Week Five

Tues., Oct. 23 Popkin, Samuel The Reasoning Voter, Chapter 4; Wattenberg, Martin “Personal Popularity in U.S. Presidential Elections;”
   [Why do candidate biographies get so much coverage and attention? How do we incorporate information and assemble narratives about candidates and government? ]


Week Six

   [How and when can foreign policy matter if voters are so ignorant about the world?]

Thurs., Nov. 1 Popkin, Samuel The Reasoning Voter, Chapter 5.
   Hand out Midterm Exams
   [What do campaigns do and when does it matter?]

Week Seven

   Hand in Midterm Exams
   [How much ‘spin’ is there and whom do we think is getting spun?]

Thurs., Nov. 8 Theilmann, John “Campaign Tactics and the Decision to Attack”
   [When does it make sense to attack and why?]