

**POLM 5011  
Political Campaigns**

**Office Hours**

I am available for in-person meetings in one of the two instructor meeting rooms to discuss course content and assignments for 30 minutes before class (5:30 to 6:00 p.m.) and after class (9:00 to 9:30 p.m.). I am also available for phone or Zoom discussions on other days upon request. Please reach out via e-mail to schedule either an in-person or virtual discussion.

**Course Description**

A strategic approach to developing and executing political campaigns, including: campaign ethics, strategy, message, communications planning, paid media, earned media, policy, public opinion, issues management, budget, campaign structure, debates, local campaigns, and GOTV.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will develop the skills needed to take on major roles on political campaigns. They will develop a deep understanding of the strategic decisions facing political candidates, and the tactics used by modern campaigns.

**Texts**

Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course.

Course readings are listed in the section of this course outline titled “Details of Seminar Topics, Content and Advance Reading”. Students are expected to complete readings before the class they are listed under.

Most of the readings are available electronically through MacOdrum library. In addition, the full copy of many of these books are on reserve at MacOdrum library.

Inclusion on the reading list does not imply endorsement of the content or any strategy, tactic, policy or position described therein. The readings are intended to help students form their own individual judgements about what works and what doesn’t work in campaigns.

## Course Calendar

Lesson 1 - Introduction & overview / Campaign ethics

Lesson 2 - Strategy

Lesson 3 - Message

Lesson 4 – Communication Planning

### ***Assignment 1 due***

Lesson 5 – Paid Media

Lesson 6 – Earned Media

Lesson 7 – Policy

### ***Assignment 2 due***

*Break Week – No Classes*

Lesson 8 – Public Opinion

Lesson 9 – Issues Management

### ***Assignment 3 due***

Lesson 10 – Budget / Campaign Structure

Lesson 11 – Debates

### ***In-Class Exam***

Lesson 12 – Local Campaigns

### ***Assignment 4 due***

Lesson 13 – GOTV

*(not a seminar date)* ***Take-home exam due***

This plan is only a guide. We will depart from the seminar plan slightly when discussion of some topics takes longer than a full class, or to accommodate guest speakers.

## Seminar Protocol

Students may use laptops, personal data assistants, smart phones and other devices to take notes, non-disruptively, in seminar. Students may not use technology to make a video, audio or photographic record of any part of the seminar, or to broadcast any part of the seminar content.

## Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on four assignments, an in-class exam, and a take-home exam.

The in-class exam will be conducted November 25, during the first 60 minutes of class. It will be worth 20% of the final mark. It covers all lecture content, mandatory readings, and guest speakers through the first ten lessons. It will be primarily multiple choice and short answer questions.

The take-home examination will be worth 20% of the final mark. It will be assigned December 2 and due December 23. To complete it, you should pull from all lecture content, mandatory readings, and guest speakers covered throughout the entire term.

The four assignments will be worth 15% each, for a total of 60% of the final mark.

- Assignment #1 (SWOT, targeting):  
Distributed September 16 via Brightspace and in class  
Due September 30, 6:00 pm  
To be completed individually
- Assignment #2 (campaign ad):  
Distributed October 7 via Brightspace and in class  
Due October 21, 6:00 pm  
Can be completed with a partner  
To be presented in class
- Assignment #3 (campaign announcement):  
Distributed October 21 via Brightspace and in class  
Due November 11, 6:00 pm  
To be completed individually
- Assignment #4 (crisis management):  
Distributed November 11 via Brightspace and in class  
Scenarios due November 16, assigned November 18 in class  
Due December 2, 6:00 pm  
Can be completed with a partner (but must be a different partner than assignment #2)  
To be presented in class

The oral presentations may be made on the submission deadline, or the following week, depending on the volume of course business. Students should be prepared to present on the submission date and, if not called to present, should come prepared the next class. Part of the mark for the two assignments presented in class will be based on classroom discussion around the presentations and around related course readings.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

## Submitting Assignments

Assignments must be submitted via Brightspace (Brightspace will automatically log and backup all submissions, so there is no risk of bouncing e-mails). Each student should write the student number on the front page and each subsequent page of the assignment. **The name should not appear anywhere on the assignment.**

Assignments must be submitted by the deadline. Late assignments will lose 10% of the mark for each 24-hour interval, or fraction thereof, that it is late. For example, if an assignment due Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. is received after 6:00 p.m. Wednesday but before 6:00 p.m. Thursday, 10% will be deducted from the mark. If the assignment is received after 6:00 p.m. Thursday but before 6:00 p.m. Friday, then 20% will be deducted from the mark, and so on.

After receiving the grade for an assignment, a student has the option to redo and then resubmit the assignment for re-grading. The content for the resubmitted assignment must be different from that of the original assignment. The resubmitted assignment must be resubmitted within two weeks after the graded assignment is returned. It is always possible that the grade of the resubmitted assignment will be the same as, or lower than, the original grade.