

CMST 4100
POLITICAL COMMUNICATION
FALL 2015

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OFFICE HOURS:
M,W,F: 8:50-9:20
11:40-12:20

THE COURSE:

"We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office." - Aesop

In this course we will examine the various rhetorical genres, structures, and strategies employed in contemporary political activity. To accomplish this task, we will engage communication theories, critical assessments, and campaign artifacts concerning our political process. Additionally, we will cast an eye on the ethical tenor attending American campaigns, both formal and informal, in the early 21st century.

THE TEXT (*required*):

- 1) Hollihan, T.A. (2009). *Uncivil Wars: Political Campaigns in the Media Age*. 2nd ed.
Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martins.

THE SIMPLE MATH:	<u>PTS.</u>
Mid-Term Exam	400
Final Exam	400
Short Paper	150
Quizzes	50
Total	<u>1000</u>

THE GRADING SCALE:

<u>%</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>LETTER</u>
97	≥970	A+
93	930-969	A
90	900-929	A-
87	870-899	B+
83	830-869	B
80	800-829	B-
77	770-799	C+
73	730-769	C
70	700-729	C-
67	670-699	D+
63	630-669	D
60	600-629	D-
<60	<600	F

THE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	Class introduction, etc: C1
WEEK 2	Ctd., C2
WEEK 3	Politics and society: C3
WEEK 4	Ctd., C4
WEEK 5	Campaigns, media, and political advertising: C5; <i>Paper topic</i> – date to be announced
WEEK 6	Ctd., C6
WEEK 7	Ctd
WEEK 8	Ctd., <i>Mid-Term Exam</i>
WEEK 9	Civic discourse and public space (campaign effects, political performance, and new tech): C7
WEEK 10	Ctd., C8
WEEK 11	Ctd., C9
WEEK 12	The “Tone:” C10
WEEK 13	Ctd., C11: <i>Short Paper due</i> – precise date to be announced
WEEK 14	Ctd., C12
WEEK 15	Where next?: Epilogue
FINAL EXAM	<i>Final Exam</i> – *University policy requires that this exam be given during the scheduled final exam period. Since we are employing CBT in this class, the five-day (M-F) window within which to take your final exam must be during final exam week. Keep this imperative in mind when making end-of-semester plans!

THE ASSIGNMENTS:

Exams: Your mid-term and final exams will be computer-based and comprised of multiple choice questions. I will open a five-day testing window for both exams that we may avoid scheduling conflicts.

Short Paper: I will require you to select a topic of interest to you as well as relevance to the course and prepare a short paper on that topic. Your effort should be about 4-5 pages in length and prepared in a generally accepted scholarly form. Additionally your work must reflect a rigor appropriate to a 4000 level class. Essentially, I'm looking for what would be called a commentary, response, or research note in the academic publishing arena. More will come later.

Quizzes: There will be seven random, unannounced quizzes. *There will be no opportunity to make-up missed quizzes under any circumstance.* Two will be dropped to account for unavoidable absence.

THE RULES:

I'm not going to insult your intelligence with a litany of specific rules. Rather, I simply expect decorum appropriate to a senior level class.

A note on attendance/participation: Both are important in any class at this level. You are certainly going to find out what I think -- I want to know what you think as well. It is through such a dialectic that knowledge is sharpened, wisdom gained. You will find that it is important to your overall success that you keep up with the reading schedule and attend class. My experience teaches me that these two factors correlate tightly with the final grade earned by a student.

FINALLY:

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations can be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, you must meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.