

Political Science 4026-1 Campaigns and Elections  
Fall Semester/2020 Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-2:50 in 204 Tureaud  
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Office Hours: 9:00-10:30 T/Th and by appointment

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Elections are the most visible and scrutinized events in American politics. While some are more interesting and exciting than others, those that allow for the possibility of a change in partisan control of government are the most eagerly anticipated. The presidential and congressional contests taking place this fall have that potential, as the two parties seek to gain control of a divided government. Indeed the contests begin with the nomination phase of the presidential elections taking place this spring in the fifty states and US territories. Given the raucous character of the nomination contests so far, and of US politics in general, this seems like the perfect time to examine the nature of campaigns and elections in the United States.

The course is roughly grouped into four sections as described on moodle. The first section looks at the big picture of how elections fit into our democratic processes and what the major models of voting behavior look like. The second examines presidential and congressional elections more specifically. The third looks at the strategic environment of elections; the parties, social networks, and public opinion influence election outcomes. The final section addresses voter choice and electoral decisions.

Throughout the course we will keep our eyes on how the

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