

Campaigning for Public Office Seminar

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for students who are interested in seeking public office or managing a political campaign. Students will learn the framework for dealing with the challenges and conflicts that arise during the course of a political campaign. Students will be asked to choose a specific local office which they would like to run for and then design a detailed campaign plan designed for that particular race. Most importantly, students will learn to think about campaigning for office in a more tactical and organized manner while developing the leadership skills necessary for dealing with the many roadblocks of a political campaign.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation (20%): Attendance is extremely important because the course will be interactive and elicitive in nature. Participation in class discussions is critical to student learning and to exhibit that the required reading and research is being completed. The onus at the beginning of each class will be on the instructor, but students will be expected to carry the discussion and engage each other in discussions about the assigned readings and writing assignments.
2. Simulation Leadership (30%): This course will include weekly simulations that will deal with real-life situations that could confront your campaign. You will be assigned a leadership role in some of these simulations and will be graded based upon your leadership abilities. This will include your preparation, presentation, and ability to work with other simulation participants.
3. Campaign Plan (50%): The final campaign plan will be the overall purpose of this class. The students will work each week on a different section of their campaign plan. Students will be asked to select and research a particular political office within the first two weeks of class. Once each student has selected a specific political office they will spend the remainder of the semester writing a campaign plan designed to win an election for that office.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Grey, Lawrence. How to Win a Local Election.

Guzzetta, S.J. The Campaign Manual

Wellstone Action. Politics the Wellstone Way

Faucheux, Ronald. Winning Elections

Additional Handouts as discussion requires

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 The Campaign

Understanding the magnitude of a political campaign and all the aspects of what it takes to launch a successful effort. We will begin with the decision to seek public office, understanding the filing requirements, researching the statistical voting history of the office you will be seeking, identifying key allies to support your campaign, establishment of a campaign committee, district geography and demography, campaign theme and strategy. We will talk about all the "little details" that must be addressed before a campaign can begin. Launching a campaign is critical to creating the perception that you are a credible and viable candidate.

DUE NEXT WEEK: Identify a political office that you would be interested in seeking yourself. Write why you are interested in seeking that office, research the filing requirements (what will it take for you to get your name on the ballot), identify who would be on your campaign committee, district geography (a detailed map) and demography, the election statistics from the past 3 campaigns for that particular office, and your overall campaign theme and strategy. Be realistic in the campaign that you choose. Remember this will be the basis for your campaign plan over the course of the semester and will be the framework for your first race for public office so be thoughtful in your selection.

READ: Part 1: How to Win a Local Election: Planning and Organizing the Campaign. Introduction, pp 1-64.

Chapter 1: Politics the Wellstone Way. Starting Out Right: Preparation and Planning pp. 11-21.

Chapter 2: The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta: Characteristics of the Candidates. pp. 7-79.

Week 2 The Stump Speech

Too many candidates put together all the elements of their campaign without giving enough thought to articulating why they are running for office. What a candidate has to say and how they present themselves is critical to gathering support. Campaign contributors, party officials, media, and the voters will make decisions about you and your candidacy based upon what they see and hear. This means that your announcement speech and stump speech must be sharp. Your stump speech should be broad enough to be flexible with different audiences. We will talk about the different ways to present yourself to targeted audiences.

GUEST SPEAKER: TBD

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Write and be prepared to present a 5-10 minute stump speech. This should be your standard speech that you would give at your announcement or before a local civic group. This speech should lay out your basis for running and be a flexible speech that can easily be tweaked for different target audiences/constituencies.

Handouts:

Chapters 83, 84 and 85. *Winning Elections* by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 434-440.

Handout: *Winning Political Campaigns* by William Bike: *Speeches*

Week 3 Campaign Budget & Strategic Plan

Your campaign must have a budget before you begin your fundraising strategy. The budget should include all the possible expenses that your campaign will encounter. Remember: Campaigns that do not plan appropriately end up in debt !! We will discuss how much you should budget for media, direct mail, campaign headquarters, staff, web site, etc.

GUEST SPEAKER: TBD

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Your campaign will be placed in the situation of having to convince a local party chairman that you should be the party-endorsed candidate for the office you are seeking. Prepare for that meeting.

Write a realistic budget for the campaign you have chosen. Be sure to include consultants fees and include money for "unexpected" expense which will almost always occur during a campaign.

READ: Chapter 15 *Money & Fundraising. How to Win a Local Election* by Judge Lawrence Grey

Chapter 6: *Politics the Wellstone Way. Budget and Fundraising* pp. 113-135

Chapter 6: *The Campaign Manual* by S.J. Guzzetta: *The Game Plan, Budget and Cash Flow* pp. 175-194.

Week 4 Fundraising and Endorsements

Raising money is unfortunately the most important aspect of your campaign. Money will drive your campaign strategy, determine how the media perceives your candidacy, and will influence your ability to gather key endorsements. We will discuss various fundraising strategies including telephone fundraising, fundraising events, PAC fundraising, and the increased role of raising money via the internet. We will highlight the importance of raising early money which is often the "make or break" period of your campaign.

GUEST SPEAKER: TBD

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. You will be asked to make a fundraising presentation before a group that you are seeking support from – both money and formal endorsement.

Write a fundraising plan for your campaign. This should include estimating how much money you will need to win, identifying potential contributors, your fundraising strategy, and your "fundraising kits". Also include in your fundraising plans a "call script" which is the script you would use to solicit a large donor via a telephone call.

READ: Chapter 15 Money and Fundraising How to Win a Local Election by Judge Lawrence Grey

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike : Fundraising

Part IV Fundraising. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 248-304.

Chapter 7 - The Fund-Raising Plan: The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta. pp. 195-224.

Week 5 Polling, Contrasting Issues, and Opposition Research

Measuring public opinion, identifying key issues, and knowing your opponents strengths and weaknesses are the areas that will define your campaign strategy. We will highlight the importance of each area and talk about the need to approach each subject in a strategic and thoughtful way in order to give your campaign the best opportunity to win.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Your campaign will be approached by an elected official within your political party and asked to get out of the race due to some recent poll numbers that were published in the newspaper showing your campaign trailing in the polls. Be prepared for this meeting.

Write the polling, issues, and opposition research plan for your campaign.

READ: Part III - Polling and Survey Research. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 154-195.

Part IV - Opposition Research. Winning Campaigns by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 199-221.

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike.

Week 6 Targeting

Identifying and targeting your voters is the difference between winning and losing. We will study how to target your strongest supporters for GOTV efforts, as well as target swing voters for your media/grassroots campaign. Strategic targeting will drive not only how resources are spent, but will command your campaign's greatest asset: the candidates time.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Your campaign will be placed in the situation of having to fire a staff member who's father is politically important. Be prepared for both the meeting to fire the individual staffer and the meeting with the father. Write the targeting plan for your campaign.

READ: Handout: Targeting Your Audience. Winning Local and State Elections. by Ann Beaudry and Bob Schaeffer

Part V: Targeting. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 224-243.

Chapter 5: Field Organizing & Direct Voter Contact. Politics the Wellstone Way. pp. 85-110.

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 202-203

Week 7 Scheduling

The candidate and his/her spouse is often the campaign's greatest resource, especially in a local election where personal contact is more effective. Utilizing a candidate's time is critical to reaching voters. We will look at the most effective ideas for maximizing the campaign's greatest asset.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Your campaign will be placed in the situation of having to deal with a difficult spouse while assembling the weekly schedule for the candidate. Be prepared to deal with this spouse while maximizing the best use of the candidates time. Write a list of key organizations/events in your district that you would attempt to campaign at if you were a candidate.

READ: Candidate Scheduling: 17 Rules of the Road. by Colleen Maguire. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 318-324.

Handout: Scheduling The Candidate. Winning Local and State Elections. by Ann Beaudry and Bob Schaeffer

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 174-176.

Chapter 7: Scheduling for Campaigns. Politics the Wellstone Way. pp. 139-147.

Chapter 8: Implementation. The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta. pp. 225-243.

Week 8 Print and Campaign Materials

Your campaign's print and other materials will be seen by a wide range of voters and must "cut through the clutter" of all the other materials that voters will see. Your campaign logo is an important component to voters identifying your candidacy.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Your campaign paid a large sum of money for printed campaign materials. These materials were done at a local print shop run by a prominent local businessman who was named "Small Business of the Year" by the local Chamber of Commerce last year. The print shop accidentally left off the union logo on some of the printed materials and now is being difficult in rectifying this problem. They want your campaign to pay to fix the problem. Be prepared for this meeting. Create your campaign logo and draft design for a flyer.

READ: Part X. Print Materials and Ads. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 416-430.

The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta. pp. 285-287.

Chapter 17. Literature-The Campaign Brochure. How To Win A Local Election. by Judge Lawrence Grey.

Handout: Leaflets. Winning Local and State Elections. by Ann Beaudry and Bob Schaeffer.

Handout: Campaign Paraphernalia. Winning Local and State Elections. by Ann Beaudry and Bob Schaeffer.

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 30-38.

Week 9 Direct Mail

Targeting your message to the right audience is critical to the success of local campaigns. Direct mail is a great way to accomplish communicating with the right audiences "under the radar screen". We will look at and explore successful direct mail techniques.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. A supportive organization sent a direct mail piece that made controversial claims about your opponent and was designed in poor taste. Your opponent called a press conference and blasted you and this organization and has called for you to issue an apology. Be prepared for a rebuttal press conference on this subject. Write the direct mail plan for your campaign.

READ: Part VIII - Direct Mail. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 340-359.

Handout: Michael Brown direct mail powerpoint.

Chapter 19. Doing an Effective Mailing. How To Win A Local Election. by Judge Lawrence Grey.

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 3-4.

Week 10 Phone Banks

Targeted phone banks are an extremely effective way to communicate with individual voters and identify supporters for the GOTV effort. Phones can also be used to communicate with swing

voters to bring them to your side. We will look at various strategies for utilizing your phone bank to it's fullest potential. Since phone banking is sometimes controversial we will also discuss the ethics of "push polling".

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. A long time volunteer has run the party phone bank operation for 25 years. They are totally out of touch with modern day phone bank operations and are still working off the program they set up in 1979. Your campaign will be running a different, more modern phone bank operation and you have the task of telling this long-time party worker that they will not be running the phone bank this year. This long time volunteer is the Treasurer of the party in the largest county in which you are running and is a supporter of your campaign. Be prepared for this meeting.

Write a phone bank plan for your campaign, including a call guide for strong supporters and a call guide for swing voters.

READ: Part XIV - Telephone Contact. *Winning Elections* by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 543-570.

Phoning. *Politics the Wellstone Way*. pp. 96-99.

Handout: *Canvassing by Telephone. Winning Local and State Elections*. by Ann Beaudry and Bob Schaeffer.

Handout: *Winning Political Campaigns* by William Bike. pp.10-11.

Week 11 TV & Radio

Television and radio is the most effective way to communicate with large numbers of voters and raise your name identification. It is also extremely expensive. We will explore the multitude of ways you can communicate with voters via the airwaves, including targeting cable television audiences. We will look at some effective political ads and discuss what made them effective.

DUE NEXT WEEK: Write the television/radio campaign strategy for your campaign.

READ: Part IX - Television and Radio Advertising and Production. *Winning Elections* by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 363-412.

The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta. pp. 281-282.

Chapter 20 - Radio and Television. *How to Win a Local Election* by Judge Lawrence Grey. pp. 173-184.

Week 12 Dealing with the Media

Dealing with the media is one of the most fundamental parts of seeking public office. Giving interviews, conducting press conferences, visiting editorial boards is critical to the success or failure of any campaign. We will discuss how best to approach dealing with the news media.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Your campaign will conduct an editorial board interview with the largest newspaper in your district seeking their important endorsement. Be prepared for that editorial board interview.

Write the campaign earned media plan. Include the comprehensive list of media in your district, issue ideas for press conferences, and influential newspapers who's endorsement you will seek. Also, come to class prepared to hold a 5-10 minute press conference on a topic of your choosing

READ: Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 150-165

Part XII - Dealing With the News Media. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 470-506.

Chapter 4 - Communications. Politics the Wellstone Way. pp. 65-82.

Media Characteristics of the District. The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta. pp. 105-108.

The Media Secretary and Director of Schedule. The Campaign Manual by S.J. Guzzetta. pp. 269-272.

Week 13 Grassroots

Most local campaigns are won at the grassroots level. Door-to-door, yard sign blitzes, candidate walks, and other creative grassroots ideas can maximize your direct contact with voters and create a positive perception of your candidacy. We will look at successful grassroots campaigns in the past and explore new creative ideas.

DUE NEXT WEEK: In class role play. Work the room.
Write a grassroots plan for your campaign.

READ: Chapter 23. Going Door to Door. How to Win a Local Election. by Lawrence Grey.

Chapter 3 - Base Building. Politics the Wellstone Way. pp. 41-61.

Part XIII: Grassroots Campaigning and Volunteer Recruitment. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 512-538.

Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 97-103.

Week 14 GOTV

In a close election, the campaign with the best Get Out The Vote (GOTV) operation wins. We will discuss all the components of the GOTV plan and provide a detailed check list of everything that must be done to maximize your vote turnout.

DUE NEXT WEEK: Write your campaign's GOTV plan.

READ: Chapter 8 - GOTV. Politics the Wellstone Way. pp. 151-161.

Part XVI - GOTV. Winning Elections by Ronald Faucheux. pp. 620-644.

Handout: Get Out The Vote. Winning Local and State Elections. by Ann Beaudry and Bob Schaeffer.

Cyberspace

Modern election campaigns have used the internet to connect with voters and raise large sums of money. While the Howard Dean presidential campaign lost, it demonstrated how a campaign can effectively utilize the internet. We will explore this new phenomenon in American politics and talk about how the internet can be used in all campaigns at all levels.

DUE NEXT WEEK: Your campaign's cyber plan.

READ: Handout: Winning Political Campaigns by William Bike. pp. 128-134.

WEEK 15 End of class discussion and analysis. **Campaign plans due !!!**