Political Science 4860
Elections in Canada
Fall 2010
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30 – 4:45pm (slot 20)
Science Building, room 2033

Course Description
This seminar course features an examination of election campaigns and electoral systems in the Canadian political system, with an emphasis on candidates, parties, voters, electioneering activities and campaign regulations. Students are expected to have some existing familiarity with the Canadian system of government (as obtained in POSC 2800 and a POSC 38xx course) and/or with political parties, the media and voting (as obtained in POSC 3350, 3390 or 3860). This course is particularly suitable for anyone interested in getting involved with the Canadian political process and those who have an interest in the practical side of politicking.

Instructor
Alex Marland, Assistant Professor  
Webpage: www.mun.ca/posc/people/Marland.php
Office: SN-2037  
Student office hours: Tuesdays 10:30-11:45am and Thursdays 12:30-1:45pm

Learning Objectives & Skills Development
Upon completing this course, students should have:
- A comprehension of key concepts associated with Canadian elections in academic literature.
- An increased awareness of election trends.
- A foundation understanding of Canadian election campaign regulations and processes.
- An awareness of campaign strategies and tactics, from an academic and a practitioner perspective.
- Experience working on a major project with peers, including written work and a presentation.

Teaching Style
Students will be expected to take notes on slides presented in class. Different styles of learning will be accommodated by integrating photographs, cartoons and videos. Students should feel comfortable asking questions and chatting with their classmates about course material at appropriate times. Independent study of assigned readings is required and students may seek clarification from their peers and from the course instructor. The course should therefore be engaging, interesting, informative and, dare it be said, even fun.
Required Resources

Textbook
- Chapters 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11-13 only

Other readings


Videos
- 2008 leaders’ debate highlights (http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/elections/clips/17087/)
- Vote-rigging scandal emerges (http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/provincial_territorial_politics/clips/13656/)
- Campaigning, northern style (http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/provincial_territorial_politics/clips/13654/)

Websites
- Canadian Election Study (http://ces-eec.org/)
- Elections Canada (http://www.elections.ca)
- Getting to the Gate (http://gettingtothegate.com/)
Administration & Policies

Supplementary instructions that constitute part of this syllabus are available online at http://www.mun.ca/posc/courses/policies.php. This includes information about campus support services, a statement about equity and instructions regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. Students are expected to review this online information and to be familiar with this course’s policies surrounding academic honesty, classroom demeanor, the conduct of examinations, the requirement to use a university email account and the use of recording devices in classrooms.

Class Meetings

PowerPoint presentations cannot be e-mailed to students who miss class. Anyone registering late for the course and/or has serious difficulty with the English language is encouraged to speak with the instructor to coordinate the provision of notes from a helpful classmate. Students will be tested on major concepts raised in documentary videos and/or by guest speakers.

Class Cancellations

On rare occurrences classes may be cancelled. In such an event, the instructor may circulate class materials to students’ “@mun.ca” email, and they will be responsible for covering this on their own. Any cancellations affecting a scheduled event will be automatically rescheduled for the next available class, unless the instructor indicates otherwise. If a class is cancelled then any scheduled testing will be administered in the next available class.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are asked to contribute to a positive learning environment for everyone. If you must arrive late or leave early, do so quietly without distracting others; if you have a compulsion to check email or Facebook, sit at the very back of the classroom; if you have a cellphone, turn it off; if you have food or drink, consume it outside of the classroom; and if you must whisper to a friend, hold off until the end of class. Please be respectful of a range of opinions however if a classmate is causing distraction you should bring it to the instructor’s attention after class.

Missed Testing and Late Assignments

Students who miss the midterm review test and who provide valid documentation (e.g., medical note) to the instructor will qualify for a dissimilar make-up review test. E-mail or other technological problems, including problems with MUN email, do not constitute a valid excuse for any late submissions of course assignments.

Late policy – individuals: If a member of a team is unable to participate in the team presentation or submit his/her essay contribution then a separate individual presentation to the class or essay submission will be scheduled for a later date. Without medical documentation a 20% per class penalty per item—including other assignments (bibliography, promotional piece, journal)—will apply exclusively to that individual. All students must complete all grading assignments. Any cancellations affecting a scheduled reading discussion and/or a scheduled group presentation will be automatically rescheduled for delivery in the next available class, unless the instructor indicates otherwise.

Late policy – teams: A team may unanimously request that they delay their due date(s) for their presentation and/or essay. This will trigger a 20% per class late penalty per item. For presentations, the instructor will attempt to allocate time in the next class however the team’s request must not “bump” another team’s presentation (and therefore may be subject to a 40% or more penalty).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 (Sept 9)</th>
<th>Tips and strategies for getting elected (guest speaker)</th>
<th>Read Chapter 2, “Forty and Counting” (Courtney) – appendices are optional</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COURSE OVERVIEW</td>
<td>Tips and strategies for getting elected (guest speaker)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 2, “Forty and Counting” (Courtney) – appendices are optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2 (Sept 14 &amp; 16)</td>
<td>Political party (partisanship, leader, candidate, caucus, discipline, policy, platform, headquarters, spokesperson, members, chairs, EDAs, youth organizations, nominations), Canada’s party system, cadre vs confederal parties, third party, official party status</td>
<td>Read Chapter 13, “Patterns of party identification in Canada” (Everitt, Gidengil, Fournier and Nevitte)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CANADIAN POLITICAL PARTIES</td>
<td>Political party (partisanship, leader, candidate, caucus, discipline, policy, platform, headquarters, spokesperson, members, chairs, EDAs, youth organizations, nominations), Canada’s party system, cadre vs confederal parties, third party, official party status</td>
<td>Table tents circulated. Discussion about campaign research and presentation. Survey of celebrity, party, team and province preferences; rank-ordering of presentation dates.</td>
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<td>Week 3 (Sept 21 &amp; 23)</td>
<td>Pspehology, functions of elections, general elections in Canada, by-elections, referendums, party conventions, the franchise, election turnout, Sayers’ types of election candidates, parachuted candidates, SMP electoral system</td>
<td>Read Chapter 11, “Overview of voting behaviour theories” (Perrella)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CANADIAN ELECTIONS</td>
<td>Pspehology, functions of elections, general elections in Canada, by-elections, referendums, party conventions, the franchise, election turnout, Sayers’ types of election candidates, parachuted candidates, SMP electoral system</td>
<td>Instructor will bring binders of sample electioneering materials to class. Team details finalized.</td>
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<td>CANADIAN ELECTION REGULATIONS</td>
<td>Timing of election call, Elections Act, Elections Canada, Official Campaign Period, National Register of Electors, voting regulations, polls, size of electoral districts, campaign workers, campaign finance, free &amp; lowest rate advertising, quarterly financing, donations, expenditure refunds, electoral campaign returns, spending limits, “bending the rules,” Canadian Code of Advertising Standards, limits on third parties</td>
<td>Read Chapter 4, “Canada’s election law: Less than meets the eye?” (MacIvor)</td>
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<td>Week 5 (Oct 5 &amp; 7)</td>
<td>Election Day: voting, party leaders, workers, GOTV, bingo system, news coverage, election night, after E-Day, online voting Strategy: research insights, campaign objectives, top issues, hot button issues, ballot question, segmentation, target groups, types of seats, positioning, makeovers, brand, franchise coordination, key messages, message themes, creative, emotions, human resources, media training, pollsters, war room, financial resources, budgeting, timing of advertising expenditures, momentum</td>
<td>Read Chapter 8, “Campaign strategy: Triage and the concentration of resources” (Flanagan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dates &amp; Topic</td>
<td>Class Content</td>
<td>Reading &amp; Evaluation</td>
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| **Week 6 (Oct 14)**  
CAMPAIGN TACTICS & PERSONAL CAMPAIGNING  
(no class Oct 12 due to semester break) | Tactics: activities, media mix, symbols, props, post-campaign evaluation  
Personal Campaigning: reference groups, opinion leaders, word of mouth (door-to-door canvass, gladhanding, personal communications devices, Blackberry, electors’ Internet activities) | **Read** Chapter 6, “Constituency campaigning in Canada” (Eagles and Hagley)  
Questionnaire on campaign teams’ progress circulated to university email accounts. |
| **Week 7 (Oct 19 & 21)**  
NON-PERSONAL CAMPAIGNING | Non-Personal Campaigning: print, radio, television, Internet  
1) Media relations: news coverage, interviews, news releases, media kits, news conferences, special events, speeches, town halls, leaders’ debates, local debates, photo ops, editorial boards, letters to the editor, op-eds, open line, soundbites, spin  
2) Direct marketing: postcards, personalized post, faxes, records, non-broadcast video, blogs, podcasting, phone canvass, outbound email, online fundraising  
3) Endorsements: opinion leaders, testimonials, advertising  
4) Promises: written platforms, pledges  
5) Public appearances: speeches, town halls, touring, headquarters, rallies  
6) Advertising: newspaper, magazine, signs, billboards, placards, posters, downloadable materials, mass transit, brochures, flyers, paraphernalia, audio ads, video ads, Web sites, banner ads | **Read** Chapter 9, “Still waiting for an Internet prime minister” (Small) |
| **Week 8 (Oct 26 & 28)**  
CONTROVERSIAL CAMPAIGN TACTICS | Campaigning ethics, incumbency advantage, mudslinging, personal slander, dirty tricks, video imaging, cybersquatters, spoof sites, subliminal messages, phone banks, robocalls, push polls, stealth campaigns, viral advertising, off the record, pseudo-scandals, online polls, oppo, reality checks, gaffe patrols, quick response teams, attack Web sites, attack blogs, propaganda, nationalism, adwatches, PACs | **Read** “Political marketing in modern Canadian federal elections” (Marland)  
**Watch** CBC online video: Vote-rigging scandal emerges |
| **Week 9 (Nov 2 & 4)**  
GROUP PRESENTATIONS | Nov. 2: presentation by team Ontario (Tory)  
Nov. 4: presentation by team Prairies (Liberal) | **Review** these Websites:  
Canadian Election Study  
Elections Canada  
Getting to the Gate |
| **Week 10 (Nov 9)**  
REVIEW TEST  
(no class Nov 11 due to Remembrance Day) | n/a | **Tuesday, Nov. 9: Midterm test** |
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<th>Dates &amp; Topic</th>
<th>Class Content</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11 (Nov 16 &amp; 18) GROUP PRESENTATIONS</td>
<td>Nov. 16: presentation by team Pacific (Green)</td>
<td>Watch: 2008 leaders’ debate (highlights) Campaigning, northern style</td>
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<td>Nov. 18: presentation by team Quebec (Bloc)</td>
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<td>Week 12 (Nov 23 &amp; 25) PRESENTATION &amp; EFFECTS OF ELECTION CAMPAIGNS</td>
<td>Nov. 23: presentation by team Atlantic (NDP)</td>
<td>Read Chapter 12, “Voter turnout” (LeDuc and Pammett)</td>
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<td>Nov. 25: Do campaigns matter: change in voting intentions, impact of debates on vote, impact of promotional efforts, impact of negativity</td>
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<td>Week 13 (Nov 30 &amp; Dec 2) WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY</td>
<td>Nov. 30: “Political management as a discipline” (guest speaker)</td>
<td>Read “Rational choice theory and the paradox of not voting” (Fedderson)</td>
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<td>Dec. 2: Electioneering in Newfoundland &amp; Labrador (guest speaker)</td>
<td>Thursday, December 2: campaign essays due</td>
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**Evaluation – Team Work**

This course features group projects to help you develop professional teamwork and presentation skills that will be expected in the workplace. Team or individual marks may be awarded; expectations will be higher for larger teams. Any student who experiences difficulties working with a classmate should attempt to resolve those issues and may opt to bring them to the attention of the course instructor if necessary.

Students are to collaborate in teams in a hypothetical scenario whereby a Canadian celebrity is running as a party’s candidate in the next federal election and has hired the team to prepare a campaign plan to help him or her get elected in the next general election. Through this exercise you will become familiar with election campaign strategy and the various tactics (and limitations) that are available to help win votes in Canada.

Each group will field a candidate in an electoral district in one of Canada’s five regions by one of the parties who were represented in the 2008 leaders’ debates. Choices are a Green party candidate in the Pacific region; a Liberal candidate in the Prairies; a Conservative in Ontario; a Bloc candidate in Quebec; and an NDP candidate in the Atlantic region. Teams, candidates, electoral districts and presentation dates will be identified in consultation with the instructor, who reserves the right to assign such details. Teams must:

1. Rank-order their preferences for available party/region choices.
2. Select a famous Canadian. This entertainment, sport, activist or other type of celebrity must be running for election for the first time. No two teams may use the same candidate.
3. Select an electoral district within your assigned region. Because this has to be a challenge you may not run a candidate in one of your party’s safe seats. You therefore have two choices: (1) select a district where your party lost in the previous general election or (2) select a district where your party won the previous election by 3% or less. This information is available online, such as through Elections Canada or various news organizations.
Campaign Presentation  20% (Nov. 2 to 23, as assigned)
Learning objectives:
• Achieve significant progress on the campaign essay and obtain preliminary feedback on ideas.
• Gain experience with skill sets that are a feature of graduate school and the workplace.
• Inform peers about election campaign challenges faced by a different party and area of Canada.

Each team will make a professional presentation in class that outlines the content of their campaign plan and which presents a persuasive argument as to why this will get their candidate elected. Existing audio-visual technology in the classroom may be used; students are responsible for bringing electronic and paper back-ups in the event of technological problems. Presenters are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, from appearance through to delivery. All presenters are expected to be very informed about the relevant subject matter. Those reading directly from notes and/or who appear to be unfamiliar with the content will receive a correspondingly weak grade.

The audience will be expected to ask questions and to provide constructive criticism that will help the presenters produce a stronger quality essay. At the conclusion of the class the instructor will provide some verbal feedback and will follow this up with a written evaluation. Presentations made later in the course may be graded slightly more rigorously than those delivered earlier.

Tips for a Successful Group Project

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<tr>
<td>• Agree on project goals, deadlines, and preferred methods of communication at the beginning.</td>
<td>• Gossip about other team members.</td>
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<td>• Establish regular meeting times and locations – and attend them.</td>
<td>• Make assumptions about your teammates, particularly regarding standards of communication and work output.</td>
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<td>• Share contact information and maintain good communication.</td>
<td>• Rely on technology. Always have backup files.</td>
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<td>• Listen, compromise, and be flexible – but lead if necessary.</td>
<td>• Let your teammates down. If you foresee a problem delivering work, inform them right away.</td>
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<td>• Assign responsibilities that match team members’ strengths.</td>
<td>• Be afraid to inform the course instructor of any significant challenges or conflicts.</td>
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Campaign Promotional Pieces  10% (Nov. 2 to 23, as assigned)
Learning objectives:
• Opportunity for students to improve their awareness of electioneering strategy and tactics.
• Incorporation of a creative and fun evaluation component that recognizes different learning styles.
• Development of skill sets not ordinarily used in Political Science courses.

As part of their presentation, teams are to distribute and/or show multiple campaign promotional items to the audience. This may include brochures, direct mail letters, an election sign, newspaper advertisements, a poster, a Web site, a blog, a radio ad, Sorry-I-Missed-You doorknockers, a video, etc. Marks will consider creativity, professional appearance, original content, thematic messaging and especially overall effort. Students are strongly encouraged to review the binders of sample electioneering material from across Canada that the instructor has collected for this course.
Essay (campaign plan)  30% (December 2)

Learning objectives:
• Demonstrate comprehension of theoretical and practical information about elections in Canada.
• Refine a high standard of research and writing skills.
• Gain experience following detailed instructions and organizing contributions from different authors.

Teams are to prepare a well-researched, well-sourced, and well-analyzed essay that draws in part on bibliographic sources compiled earlier in the course. The essay must use the following campaign plan headings within which the specified content must be dealt with in an intellectual manner.

Executive Summary
1. Theory
   How voters decide, campaign effects, Canadian election studies
2. Rules
   Fundraising, spending, administrative requirements
3. Context
   Electoral district, demographics, recent elections, incumbent SWOT, party nomination
4. Audience
   Electors’ issues, opinion research, targeted electors, wedge issues, promises
5. Strategy & Tactics
   Emotional appeal, campaign theme, messages, symbols, media mix
6. Resources
   Fundraising, budget, staffing, organization
7. Calendar
   Timelines, key dates, daily campaign schedule

Works Cited
   Present the sources used as per CJPS Style Guidelines

Well-researched and tightly-written submissions must be approximately 3,000 words per student (excluding title page, bibliography and appendices). Therefore, a team of four students would need to submit a 12,000 word paper. Word counts significantly under or over the total will lose marks. The written component must be submitted electronically as a single Microsoft Word file on a storage medium that will be returned (if submitted by email it is the responsibility of the student to ensure this is received – technical problems do not constitute a valid excuse). A paper copy is not required.

Tips for a Successful Essay

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<td>Display evidence of having read and analyzed academic literature, notably books and journals.</td>
<td>Leave it up to the reader to analyze the implications of information, statistics and other data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use Elections Canada’s “Election handbook for candidates, their official agents and auditors”.</td>
<td>Work on sections of the essay in isolation of other team members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stay in regular communication with group members and share information and ideas.</td>
<td>Ignore the word count specifications or other written instructions.</td>
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<td>Identify a ringmaster to ensure that all elements of the essay meet expected standards.</td>
<td>Overlook innovative strategies and tactics used in the USA that might be viable in Canada.</td>
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<td>Compile a draft well before the due date.</td>
<td>Use too much content from online resources; avoid using any from non-reputable sites.</td>
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<td>Edit and proofread the final essay, many times.</td>
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Evaluation – Individual Work

Class Participation 20% (entire course)

Learning objectives:
• Encourage interactivity during seminars, including constructive peer feedback on group presentations.
• Provide an opportunity to discuss readings with peers and to seek clarification from the instructor.
• Develop abilities to engage in intellectual conversations and a critical reflection of Canadian elections.
• Prepare for graduate level seminars and for workplace team meetings.
• Promote a general level of professionalism towards all aspects of the course.

Students will be expected to participate in all classes, particularly when time is allocated for in-class group discussions. At the start of each class table tents will be circulated with each student’s first name. At the end of the course a participation grade will be assigned based on observations of students’ intellectual contributions to discussions, including participation in break-out groups, contribution to overall class discussion and responses to students’ presentations. The instructor may also take into consideration the quality of participation, collaboration and general professionalism that each student exhibited in the team work exercises (campaign presentation, promotional pieces, essay).

Conversational Etiquette

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<th>Do</th>
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<tr>
<td>Look your conversation partner directly in the eye</td>
<td>Talk ceaselessly about yourself or boast.</td>
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<td>Listen as well as speak.</td>
<td>Make critical or insulting remarks to anyone present or behind any mutual acquaintance’s back.</td>
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<td>Talk in turn. Don’t dominate the conversation.</td>
<td>Whisper to one person in a group.</td>
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<td>Credit the source of ideas.</td>
<td>Seek desperately to fill in every moment of silence in a conversation. Let a conversation develop a pace of its own. Don’t force it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relax and be natural. Don’t be overly concerned about controversial opinions.</td>
<td>Finish the sentences for someone else who’s telling a story.</td>
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<td>Keep prejudice and bitterness out of an argument.</td>
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<td>Give compliments privately.</td>
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Midterm Test 20% (Tuesday, November 9)

Learning objectives:
• Review of course material leading to improved short-term awareness and long term recall.
• Improved familiarity with concepts which are relevant to the campaign assignment.

This test will review class content and assigned online resources identified in weeks 1-8 of the weekly outline provided elsewhere in this syllabus. A combination of close-ended questions (e.g., fill in the blanks, true/false, matching) and open-ended questions (e.g., definitions, short essay) will be used, with a marks emphasis on the latter.