

This course is an examination of presidential nominations and elections, with a focus on the 2008 election. Topics include voter decision making, media coverage, campaign finance, delegate selection rules, the Electoral College, and kindred concerns.

In general, each of the first five exams constitutes just over 10 percent of your course grade. The sixth exam counts for just over 20 percent of the course grade. The research paper assignments each count for just over 10 percent and class participation (in part, unscheduled quizzes on the assigned reading to reward those who do and understand the readings) constitutes roughly 5 percent of your course grade.

Ultimately your grade turns on my impression of how well you have done in this course. What impresses me? Think of this course as your job and approach it with professionalism. Take this course seriously and let me know that. How? Attend class; be prepared for class—read the assignments for understanding, be ready to ask and answer questions, take an informed role in discussions; arrive early to class; remain for the entire class; be attentive in class without distracting me or your classmates with cell phones, text messages, side conversations, bathroom trips or any other reason for coming-and-going, and so forth; take exams when scheduled and complete assignments when due; demonstrate your understanding on the exams, quizzes, and research paper assignments.

After three unexcused absences I drop you from the course. An excused absence is almost exclusively restricted to religious reasons, certain university activities, documented medical conditions, or documented family emergencies. Absences for religious reasons or for university extracurricular activities necessitate communication with me in advance. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, see me in advance. Each of you must meet with me for 15 minutes in the first weeks of the semester. Sign up for an appointment time during the first day in class. Be punctual.

All readings should be on reserve in Fondren. The books ordered through the bookstore include Wayne, *The Road to the White House 2008*, 8th ed (abbreviated W,WH in readings below); Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde, *Change and Continuity in the 2004 and 2006 Elections* (AAR); and Wayne, *Is This Any Way to Run a Democratic Election?* 3d ed. (W,Any Way?) Also required but not listed below: you are expected to supplement the listed readings with media accounts of the ongoing politics of the 2008 presidential election. Understand that assigned readings listed here for specific pages in Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde include the endnotes (not listed here) associated with those pages. You will be evaluated in part on your knowledge and understanding of the current presidential campaign.

There may be changes in the readings and assignments below. This course requires use of Blackboard at <https://cmsbb2.systems.smu.edu/webapps/login/>.

Office: 316b Carr Collins, x8-2529; HStanley@SMU.edu (e-mail works best); office hours W 10-11:30 a.m. and by appointment

Read MSNBC "First Read: First Thoughts" [<http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/>] each day that it appears; also follow other media coverage to become and remain informed about the 2008 presidential selection process

W, 1/16 * Introduction: The '08 Presidential Election; 1/3-IA; 1/8-NH; 1/5-WY(R); 1/15-MI

F, 1/18 * W,WH, c.5. Campaigning for the Nomination, 137-172; assignment to be handed in during class: syllabus quiz on Blackboard

W, 1/23 * W,Any Way?, c.7. The Nomination Process: Whose Is It Anyway?, 162-185; 1/19-NV, SC(R)

F, 1/25 * W,WH, c.4. Party Rules and their Impact: The Legal Environment, 116-136

W, 1/30 * W,WH, c.6. Spring Interregnum: Consolidating Victory and Posturing for the Election, 173-211; 1/26-SC(D); 1/29-FL

F, 2/1 * Exam 1 (40 minutes); W,Any Way?, c.9. Elections and Government, 213-239; W,WH, c.9, Understanding Presidential Elections, only 325-333

- W, 2/6 * Super Tuesday; W,WH, c.1. Presidential Selection: A Historical Overview, 1-31; W,*Any Way?*, c.3. How Representative Are American Elections?, only 61-67 (on the Electoral College); 2/1-ME(R); 2/5-AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, GA, ID(D), IL, KS(D), MA, MN, MI, NJ, NM(D), NY, ND, OK, TN, UT
- F, 2/8 * The '04 Presidential Election: I, AAR, Part 1. '04 Presidential Election, 1-14; AAR, c.1. The Nomination Struggle, 15-33;
- W, 2/13 * The '04 Presidential Election: II, AAR, c.2. General Election, 34-48; AAR, c.3. Election Results, 49-72; AAR, Part 4. The '04 and '06 Elections in Perspective, 299-303; 2/9-LA, KS(R); 2/10-ME(D); 2/12-DC, MD, VA
- F, 2/15 * Exam 2 (40 minutes)
- W, 2/20 * W,WH, c.7, Organization, Strategy, and Tactics, 214-253; 2/19-HI(D), WA, WI
- F, 2/22 * W,WH, c.2. Campaign Finance, 32-74
- W, 2/27 * W,*Any Way?*, c.4. Has Money Corrupted Our Electoral Process?, 79-107
- F, 2/29 * Exam 3 (40 minutes)
- W, 3/5 * W,WH, c.8, Media Politics, 254-297; 3/4-OH, RI, TX, VT
- F, 3/7 * *No class*, read W,*Any Way?*, c.8. Campaign Communications, 186-212; *paper due, 1,000 words: explain the outcome of one of the following 2008 nomination contests—Iowa (Democratic or Republican), New Hampshire (Democratic or Republican), Michigan (Republican)*
- W, 3/12 and F, 3/14 * *No class*, Spring Break
- W, 3/19 * W,*Any Way?*, c.5. News Media: Watchdog or Pit Bull?, 108-137; 3/8-WY(D); 3/11-MS
- F, 3/21 * *No class*, Good Friday, University Holiday
- W, 3/26 * W,WH, c.9, Understanding Presidential Elections, only 300-325, 333-336
- F, 3/28 * Exam 4 (40 minutes)
- W, 4/2 * W,WH, c.3. The Political Environment, only 75-88
- F, 4/4 * W,*Any Way?*, c.2. The Popular Base of American Electoral Politics, 21-49
- W, 4/9 * AAR, c.4. Who Voted?, 79-106
- W, 4/9 * W,WH, c.3. The Political Environment, only 95-107; AAR, c.5. Social Forces and the Vote, 107-133
- F, 4/11 * Exam 5 (40 minutes)
- W, 4/16 * AAR, Part 2. Voting Behavior in the '04 Presidential Election, 73-78; AAR, c.6. Candidates, Issues, and the Vote, 134-159
- F, 4/18 * AAR, c.7. Presidential Performance and Candidate Choice, 160-181
- W, 4/23 * W,WH, c.3. The Political Environment, only 88-94; AAR, c.8. Party Loyalties, Policy Preferences, and the Vote, 182-206; 4/22-PA
- F, 4/25 * *paper due, 1,000 words: explain the outcome of the 2008 nomination process to date for either the Democrats or Republicans, focusing on why one candidate is better positioned to secure a majority of delegates at the national convention*; W,*Any Way?*, c.6. Are Political Parties Still Representative?, 138-161
- W, 4/30 * W,*Any Way?*, c.1. Democratic Elections: What's the Problem?, only 1-6; W,WH, c.10, Reforming the Electoral System, 343-375
- Sat, May 3 * Exam 6 (80 minutes) * 11:30 am - 12:50 pm; [later nomination contests: 5/6-IN, NC; 5/13-NE, WV; 5/20-KY, OR; 5/27-ID(R); 6/3-MT, NM(R), SD]