

POLS 200

Campaigns and Elections

3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County
Common Course Outline

Description

POLS 200 – Campaigns and Elections: introduces students to the study of the electoral process in the United States with an examination of the history of national, state, and local elections. The course explores several features and topics of political campaigns and elections in America; political socialization, voting behavior, public opinion, media, political parties, interest groups, the influence of money, and the aftermath of elections in relation to policy decisions and outcomes. Students analyze campaign strategies and experience working on a political campaign of their choice for 40 hours during the semester. Students investigate the questions of who wins elections and why in American Politics. Course will be offered to coincide with Maryland and Presidential elections.

Pre-requisites: POLS 101 or POLS 111 or permission of the program coordinator

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. discuss the current political environment;
2. outline the history of American election;
3. identify major election laws;
4. explain what the Constitution says about voting;
5. describe the role of the courts and Congress in American elections;
6. trace the history of political campaigns in the US;
7. analyze the role and influence of media in campaigns and elections;
8. explain how citizens develop their political ideology and its influence on American Politics;
9. determine how political parties influence the election process;
10. compare and contrast how various political parties run political campaigns;
11. investigate the role and influence that interest groups and political action committees have in the political process;
12. assess how polling and public opinion influence campaign decisions;
13. identify the structure and central figures of a political campaign;
14. analyze the role of money and its influence on political campaigns using a variety of technological resources; and
15. debate the elements of a successful or unsuccessful political campaign using and citing academic sources based on criteria discussed in the course according to the timeliness, credibility and reliability.

MAJOR TOPICS

I. The Foundations of Elections

The Common Course Outline (CCO) determines the essential nature of each course.

For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

- a. History of American elections
 - b. Role and functions of campaigns
 - c. Role of the courts in American elections
 - d. The Constitution and election laws
 - e. Maryland election laws
- II. Outside Players in Campaigns
- a. Political culture and socialization
 - b. Public opinion and role of citizens
 - c. Media and politics
 - d. Interest groups and political actions committees
 - e. Political Parties
- III. Campaign Organization and Structure
- a. How a campaign is built for victory
 - b. Key individuals
 - c. The influence of money in the campaign and election process
 - d. Ethics and winning

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- Class participation in at least 5 collaborations, debates, oral presentations and/or online discussion forums about current political events and topics using appropriate academic sources when doing research
- Two examinations and two quizzes
- Service learning for 40 hours on a campaign of the students' choice
- Campaign journal/notebook

Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

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