PO 325/IR 302: Campaigns and Elections Around the World

Boston University, Spring 2017

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Professor: Taylor C. Boas
Email: tboas@bu.edu
Office location: 232 Bay State Rd., rm. 311B
Office phone: 617-353-4214
Office hours: Wednesday 3–4:30, Thursday 3:15–4:45

Lecture location: KCB 102
Lecture time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:10–11 a.m.

1 Course Description

The media lavish vast amounts of attention on electoral campaigns in the United States, but how do these events play out beyond our borders? This course will examine electoral campaigns in comparative perspective, with examples drawn from Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru), Western Europe (France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, U.K.), Eastern Europe (Russia and Ukraine), and Asia (Japan and the Philippines). In the first part of the course, we examine how campaigns change over time, whether they are becoming more professionalized or “Americanized,” and what role international political consultants play in this process. In the second part, we examine how campaigns vary across countries according to party and electoral systems, campaign finance regulations, the prevalence of vote buying, the nature of the mass media, and use of the Internet and social media. The third part of the course examines how campaigns affect voters. Here we will focus on news coverage, television advertising, and get-out-the-vote campaigning. The course will take a multi-media approach to all of these questions, supplementing course readings with documentary films and clips of televised campaign advertising.

I assume that students enrolled in this course have some background in political science, but not necessarily in comparative politics or campaigns. Those who are primarily interested in American politics are as welcome as those who focus on other regions.
2 Requirements

Grade Breakdown

Attendance and participation: 15%
Response paper 1: 15%
Response paper 2: 15%
Group presentation: 10%
Group paper: 15%
Final exam: 30%

Required Readings

For each week of the course, I have assigned about 60–80 pages of readings, which are available electronically as Mugar Library E-reserves. The easiest way to access these is via an electronic copy of this syllabus (on Blackboard, or at [http://people.bu.edu/tboas/campaigns_syllabus.pdf](http://people.bu.edu/tboas/campaigns_syllabus.pdf)). Click on the hyperlinks in the reading list below (you will need to enter your BU ID and password).

Response Papers

At the end of each of the first two parts of the course, students are required to write a 5–6 page paper (double spaced) that addresses themes raised in lecture and course readings. I will distribute paper prompts for these papers 2–3 weeks before the due dates listed on the syllabus. Late papers are penalized a third of a letter grade (e.g., B+ to B) per day, including weekends and holidays.

Group Presentation and Paper

The final project for this course will consist of a 15-minute presentation and a 10–12 page paper, both of which will be prepared by groups of 3–4 students working jointly. The same grade will be given to all students in the group. For both the paper and presentation, group members will put themselves in the shoes of a political consulting firm, offering advice to a specific candidate or party in an electoral campaign outside of the U.S. that is either underway at the time of the course or has recently occurred (i.e., during the prior semester). We will discuss this assignment in more detail and choose groups early on so students have plenty of time to prepare, and—for those studying upcoming elections—to follow the campaigns over the course of the semester.

Final Exam

A final exam, covering all of the course material, will be held during the scheduled exam period: Monday, May 8, 9–11 a.m.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to do their own work and to accurately and honestly give credit for information, ideas, and words obtained elsewhere. Plagiarism will be dealt with strictly according to the Academic Conduct Code. Please review the website for examples of what counts as plagiarism so you know how to avoid it. If you have questions or concerns about how to properly cite outside sources, please let me know and I will be happy to assist.

The Internet makes it quite easy, and tempting, to cheat by copying and pasting material that you found online, or by buying a paper that someone else wrote. But it also makes it much easier to get caught. I have caught plagiarizers in the past and am always on the lookout. Don’t do it. You will make the semester much better for both of us.

3 Schedule and Required Readings

Note: Each entry contains a hyperlink to the electronic reading, where available.

3.1 Part I: International Influences and Changing Campaigns

3.1.1 Friday, January 20. Americanization, Modernization, and Success Contagion.


3.1.2 Monday, January 23. International Influences on Campaigning.


http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/
3.1.3 Wednesday, January 25. Consultants Abroad: Sawyer-Miller in Chile.


3.1.4 Friday, January 27. Consultants Abroad: Sawyer-Miller in Chile, continued.


3.1.5 Monday, January 30. Consultants Abroad: Greenberg Carville Shrum in Bolivia (movie).

No readings; watch Our Brand is Crisis (2005) in class.

3.1.6 Wednesday, February 1. Consultants Abroad: Greenberg Carville Shrum in Bolivia (movie).

No readings; finish watching Our Brand is Crisis (2005) in class.

3.1.7 Friday, February 3. Consultants Abroad: Greenberg Carville Shrum in Bolivia.


3.1.9 Wednesday, February 8. Consultants Abroad: Americans in Russia.

3.1.10 Friday, February 10. Russia’s “Political Technologists.”


3.2 Part II: Cross-National Variation in Campaign Styles

3.2.1 Wednesday, February 15. The Effects of Party and Electoral Systems.

3.2.2 Friday, February 17. Overview of Countries for Group Project.
No readings

3.2.3 Tuesday, February 21. RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS; Campaigns in Sweden and Spain.

3.2.4 Wednesday, February 22. Campaigns in Japan.


3.2.5 Friday, February 24. Campaigns in Collapsed Party Systems: Italy.


3.2.6 Monday, February 27. Campaigns in Collapsed Party Systems: Brazil and Peru.


Friday, March 3. NO CLASS (Instructor out of town).

3.2.8 Monday, March 13. Campaign Finance and Corruption: Brazil.


3.2.9 Wednesday, March 15. Mobilization and Vote Buying.


3.2.10 Friday, March 17. Mobilization and Vote Buying: Mexico.


3.2.13 Friday, March 24. The Mass Media and Elections: Mexico.


Monday, March 27. NO CLASS (Instructor out of town).
3.2.14 Wednesday, March 29. The Mass Media and Elections: Brazil.

3.2.15 Friday, March 31. New versus Old Media: Brazil and the United Kingdom.

3.3 Part III. How do Campaigns Affect Voters?
3.3.1 Monday, April 3. RESPONSE PAPER DUE IN CLASS; Media Effects: Mexico.

3.3.2 Wednesday, April 5. Media Effects: Brazil

3.3.3 Friday, April 7. Media Effects: United Kingdom.

3.3.4 Monday, April 10. Advertising Effects: Mexico and Brazil.
Scott Desposato, “The Impact of Campaign Messages in New Democracies: Results From An Experiment in Brazil,” unpublished manuscript, University of California, San Diego.

3.3.5 Wednesday, April 12. Advertising Effects: Chile.


3.3.6 Friday, April 14. Get-out-the-Vote: United Kingdom.


3.3.7 Wednesday, April 19. Get-out-the-Vote: Spain and France


3.3.8 Friday, April 21. Group presentations

3.3.9 Monday, April 24. Group presentations

3.3.10 Wednesday, April 26. Group presentations

3.3.11 Friday, April 28. Group presentations

Monday, May 1. NO CLASS (Instructor out of town).

3.3.12 Wednesday, May 3. Conclusion; GROUP PAPERS DUE IN CLASS

3.4 Monday, May 8, 9 a.m.: Final Exam