

POLI 3302-115, CRN 80734, ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Fall 2018

Texas A&M University-Central Texas

TR 2:30-5:15

FH-313

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. John Koehler

Office: Warrior Hall 428 (Shared Adjunct Office)

Phone: NA

Email: j.koehler@tamuct.edu

Office Hours:

TR 1-2:30 and by appointment

Mode of instruction and course access:

This is a lecture course with required attendance. Attendance will be taken for each class. Readings are expected to be completed prior to each meeting so that students are roughly familiar with the material and prepared to participate in class activities. In addition to in class assignments, some assignments will be completed online. This course uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].

Student-instructor interaction:

University email is the preferred method of communication. Every attempt will be made to respond to emails within 24 hours, however longer response times may take place over weekends and holidays. Students are welcome to come unannounced during office hours but appointments or notice is appreciated.

911 Cellular:

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management) [<https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

Course Overview and description:

The course studies the electoral process in American national, state, and local political systems. Emphasis will be placed on the evolution of the structure and functions of political parties,

interest groups, the news media, and other participants in the electoral process.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students should be able to 1. Describe the history and structure of the major political parties in American politics. 2. Analyze and synthesize information about political socialization and participation in the United States. 3. Demonstrate understanding of the role that political parties play in American democracy. 4. Identify structural and institutional interaction with campaigns and parties (Campaign finance, electoral rules, Parties and the legislative branch) 5. Understand and predict the outcomes of elections in the United States.

Required Readings

Brewer, Mark D. and L. Sandy Maisel. Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process. 8th ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Additional readings such as journal articles can be found through the libraries database or be provided by the instructor.

The book is required and available for purchase at the bookstore. You are under no obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignment	Points	Percentage		
Reading Summaries	150	15		
Congressional District Paper	150	15		
Take Home Midterm	250	25		
Attendance and Participation	150	15		
Final Exam	300	30		
Total Possible	1000	100		
895+ = A	795-894=B	695-794=C	595-694=D	594 or lower = F

Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion

Reading summaries will consist of responses to particular questions related to each weeks readings. They will be due in hard copy or by email on Sept 20th and Oct 11th in preparation for the exams. Expectations for the paper are provided below. The attendance score will be reduced by 1 point for each unexcused absence. Exams will contain a mixture of question types such as short answer and multiple choice.

Posting of Grades

Grades will be posted on Canvas within a couple of days of each assignment.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

	Title	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 Aug 28/30	American Parties and Organization	Ch 1-2 Aldrich and Lee 2015 Why Two Parties?	
Week 2 Sept 4/6	Voting and other forms of political participation Representation and Gerrymandering	Ch 3; pp 194-197 Abramowitz and Webster 2016 The Rise of Negative Partisanship and Nationalization	
Week 3 Sept 11/13	Party in Government	Ch 11 Gardbaum 2017 Political Parties, Voting systems, and the Separation of Powers	
Week 4 Sept 18/20	Organized groups in the political process and Campaign Finance	Ch 4-5 Jacobson 2015 Its nothing personal: decline of the incumbency advantage	Sept 18: Analyzing a Congressional District—paper and presentations Reading Summaries due
Week 5 Sept 25/27	State and local nominations and elections	Ch 6-7	Take Home Midterm Due
Week 6 Oct 2/4	Presidential nominations elections	Ch 8-9	
Week 7 Oct 9/11	Media and the electoral process	Ch 10 Lies Inc. (Scan on Canvas) Gerber et al. 2011 ...Persuasive effects of TV campaign ads..	Reading Summaries Due
Week 8	the role of	Ch 12	

Oct 16/18	parties	Hutter, Kriesi, and Lorenzini 2018 Social Movts in interaction with political parties	
Oct 18	FINAL EXAM		

Excused Absences, Make-Up Work, and Late Work

Late work will reduced one letter grade for each day late. No exam will be made up without an excused absence. Make up exams are scheduled at the instructor’s convenience.

Important University Dates:

- Aug 27** -Add, Drop, and Late Registration Begins for 16- and First 8-Week Classes. \$25 fee assessed for late registrants.
-Classes Begin
- Aug 29** Deadline for Add, Drop, and Late Registration for 16- and First 8-Week Classes
- Sept 3** Labor Day
- Sept 4** Deadline to Drop first 8 week classes with no record
- Sept 12** Deadline to drop 16 week classes with no record
- Oct 1** Deadline for teacher education and professional certification applications
- Oct 5** -Deadline to drop first 8 week classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)
-Deadline for graduation application for ceremony participation
-Student end of course survey opens for first 8 week classes
- Oct 12** Deadline for Fall admissions applications
- Oct 15** Deadline for Clinical teaching applications
- Oct 19** Classes end for 1st 8 week session

Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].

Username: Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)
Password: Your MyCT password

Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [http://hdc.tamu.edu]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Drop Policy.

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf) [https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf].

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity.

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Academic Accommodations.

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Office of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive

equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) webpage[<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>].

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students.

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) web page[<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html>]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines online](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf), please visit the website [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

Tutoring.

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to login and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Writing Center.

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) at [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu for any assistance needed with scheduling.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

If you have any questions about the UWC, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

University Library.

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all

ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php) [https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php].

Analyzing a Congressional District. **Due Sept 18**

First, find the Congressional district you were born in, where you grew up, or where you want to end up (I am from NY-4 and grew up in FL-18). When you pick one, beware that districts can change, my FL district used to be FL-16, then FL-22!

Second, Describe in essay form (not a chart or bulletpoints!!) the descriptives of your district including:

Something about the area that distinguishes it (perhaps relating to the economy: a mining town, a large college, major fishing industry)

District population

Median or average income

Ethnicity by percentage

Education level (at least include HS grads and College grads)

Employment by percentage (blue collar, white collar, military)

Results (percentages) from at least **the last 2 presidential elections** (2012;16)

Who is the representative? What party are they? How long have they been in office? Give me the results of **the last two House elections for the district** (even if this Rep was not in them both): what were the percentages of votes for each party and how much money did each side spend in these elections?

Concluding paragraph: using the descriptive statistics try to explain the election results you've found

Use **double spaced 12 pt Times New Roman font** and **1" margins**. I also want essay format, this is to practice research AND writing. You should have an introduction (you can tell me what city and where it is in relation to a big city or introduce your rep), then a paragraph about the statistics, then a paragraph on election results, then your analysis. I don't care about the order but I want all the info and I want to see you know how to write.

The info can be found in *The Almanac of American Politics* by National Journal (JK 271 .A49). You can also find all this info online (<https://www.nationaljournal.com/almanac?mref=primary-nav>). Also use Census.gov/mycd and a Google search for this information. Income and employment were also on Wikipedia, for instance "Alabama's 3rd Congressional District". Other sources may include: govtrack.us; opensecrets.org