

**B8648-001 The Marketing of an American President**  
**Wednesday: B-Term 2:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Uris 332**  
**Spring, 2019**

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Course Overview:

In 1952, advertising guru Rosser Reeves convinced Dwight Eisenhower that airing TV commercials on popular programs would reach more voters than other forms of advertising. Eisenhower's opponent, Adlai Stevenson, in contrast, was quoted as saying, "The idea that you can merchandise candidates for high office like breakfast cereal is the ultimate indignity to the democratic process." Needless to say, he was a two-time loser to Eisenhower! Therefore, as with consumer product marketing, political advertising via television was initiated emphasizing the USP or "unique selling proposition", the key feature that would differentiate the product (candidate) from the competition.

This 6-week course will highlight the marketing principles and strategies utilized to run political campaigns in the U.S. Although the course primarily will focus on the stages of Presidential races, including polling, fundraising, communication strategies, media, and television commercial evaluation, the marketing techniques employed can be applied to congressional, state and local elections. Students will analyze campaign case studies from both the 2012 and 2008 election cycles and examine the results of the 2016 Presidential campaign based on the above criteria, in addition to 2020 projections.

Guest speakers will enhance the learning experience by providing their individual expertise on the specified topic. Regarding fundraising, for example, the New York Tri-State Finance Directors for both Hillary Clinton and Obama for America demonstrated the marketing tactics employed in that arena. Other speakers have included Senator Cory Booker, former Senators Evan Bayh and Joe Lieberman, Obama for America's Digital Director, Teddy Goff, who ran Hillary Clinton's digital campaign, Obama's National and Battleground pollster, Daniel Franklin, whose founding partner, Joel Benenson, was Hillary's Chief Strategist for her 2016 campaign and Donny Deutsch, a frequent panelist on MSNBC's, Morning

Joe, and branding expert. Finally, there will be a team project where each group chooses any Presidential political campaign and analyzes the effectiveness of the communication strategies utilized for both the winner and loser.

### Course Objectives:

1. To provide strategic insight into and understanding of political marketing strategy and communication and demonstrate the similarities to consumer marketing techniques.
2. To enhance student's ability to evaluate the effectiveness of political advertising.
3. To increase student's knowledge of both the political media planning process and the use of traditional and new media.

### Readings **(WORKING SYLLABUS; SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

1. Required (To be purchased or read from library reserve)
  - Baker, Frank W. Political Campaigns and Political Advertising: A Media Literacy Guide (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2009), 1<sup>st</sup> Edition
  - Burton, Michael John and Daniel M. Shea. Campaign Craft: The strategies, Tactics and Art of Political Campaign Management (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2015), 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.
  - Kaskowitz, Gary. Brand it Like Barack! How Barack Obama sold himself to America and what you can learn from this (Indianapolis: Dogear, 2010), 1<sup>st</sup> Edition
  - **The cases will be included in a course pack to be picked up in Uris Ops, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, before the first class.**
2. Recommended
  - Agranoff Craig, and Herbert Tabin. Socially Elected: How to Win Elections using Social Media (Pendant, 2011), 1<sup>st</sup> Edition.
  - Heilemann, John, and Mark Halperin. Doubledown: Game Change 2012 (New York: Penguin Press, 2013)
  - Lees – Marshment, Jennifer. Political Marketing: Principles and Applications (New York: Routledge, 2009), 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
  - Luntz, Frank. Words that Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear (New York: Hyperion, 2007), 1<sup>st</sup> Edition.

- Sabato, Larry. Barak Obama and the New America: The 2012 Election and the Changing Face of Politics (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013)
- West, Darrell M. Air Wars: Television Advertising and Social Media in Election Campaigns (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2018), 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.
- Wolffe, Richard. The Message (New York: Hachette Book Group, 2013), 1<sup>st</sup> Edition.

### Websites

- <http://pcl.stanford.edu/campaigns/2008>
- <http://www.techpresident.com>
- <http://www.politifact.com>
- Current candidate websites
- <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php> (campaign resources)
- <http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/elections/index.html> (historic polling data)
- <http://www.historycentral.com/elections> (historic election resources)
- <http://www.campaignsandelections.com>
- <http://www.politicsresources.net/election.htm#america> (varied political resources)
- <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org> (presidential campaign commercials)

### Grades

- Written exercises (3 of 5): 15%
  - Class participation: 30%
  - Case Studies (1 of 4): 15%
  - Project: 40% (Type A)
- Attendance is mandatory and will be checked at the beginning of each class. Students who miss 2 classes due to unexcused absences will receive a maximum grade of "P". Students who miss 3 will receive an "F". If anyone leaves during the break without staying for the guest speaker, he/she will receive an unexcused absence for the entire class.
- Written exercises based on the reading will be assigned each week, as per syllabus, advanced handout or Canvas. Students are required to hand in at least 3 but will be expected to participate in

- class discussion for all 5. Everyone is to prepare the exercises due for the first class.
- Class participation is a critical portion of the final grade, and students will be judged on the quality of their comments.
  - 4 cases (during 3 class periods) will be discussed, as per syllabus, and each student must submit at least 1, but, again, everyone will be expected to participate in class discussion, regardless of whether he/she prepared written answers. (Another case is assigned for reading, only, for the first class).
  - Students are not permitted to use electronic devices during class, or when guest speakers are present.
  - Please bring name plates to every class.

Course Outline:    **(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

All readings and write-ups are to be completed before the assigned class date. Cases and written exercises are to be handed in at the beginning of class. (Keep an extra copy for class discussions).

I. Introduction/Polling – March 27th

- Course Parameters
- Overview of the Electoral Process
- Polling/data analysis – types of surveys, strengths/weaknesses, how used, etc.
- Guest Speaker – Daniel Franklin – Principal, The Benenson Strategy Group – and was National & Battleground pollster for the 2008 & 2012 Obama Campaigns. Currently, he is pollster for Senator Cory Booker.
- Readings
  - Burton & Shea, “Campaign Craft,” Ch 3 & 5
  - Kaskowitz, “Brand it Like Barack,” Ch. 1 & 7
  - Case reading: “Electoral Gold and Silver: Obama versus Romney 2012”
- Websites
  - <http://www.Fivethirtyeight.com>
  - <http://www.pollster.com>
  - <http://www.realclearpolitics.com>
  - <http://www.pollingreport.com>

Written Exercises: (can do in bullet form)

- Polling guru Nate Silver's 538 website predicted Hillary's odds at victory at about 72% on election day. By midnight, the odds were reversed, projecting a Trump win at 84%. What went wrong? Please give specific rationale detailing polling techniques to support your response.
- When Hillary Clinton referred to the Trump voter as a "basket of deplorables," she received a lot of negative feedback. Is this an example of Opposition Research (OR)? How could she have utilized OR effectively during the general election? Please give specific examples.

II. Marketing/Communication Strategy – April 3rd

- Candidate branding, message, key issues
- Targeting: Demographic and Psychographic
- Group Selection for Project
- Guest Speaker: Jon Reinish – Senior VP SKDKnickerbocker with expertise in strategic communications and media, advising high-profile political candidates and elected officials. Former aide to Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.
- Readings:
  - Burton & Shea. "Campaign Craft," Ch. 6
  - Kaskowitz, "Brand it Like Barack", Ch. 2-6, 8-11.
  - Case Assignment #1: Please answer question #1, and choose either #2 or #3 from the following cases:  
(can do in bullet form)
    1. "Barack Obama: Organizing for America 2.0", Pages 1-6
      - a. How did Obama's background and experience influence his communication strategies for the '08 election?
      - b. Why was his target audience and message emphasis for his on-line organizing efforts during both the primary and general election so successful?
    2. "Obama versus Clinton: The YouTube Primary".
      - a. What were Senators Obama and Clinton's respective brand strengths and challenges going into the campaign? Please support your responses.
    3. "The 2012 Republican Presidential Primaries"

a. Compare and contrast the brand identities of Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum and Ron Paul.

- Written Exercises:
  - Some pundits have referred to Donald Trump as a branding genius. What key elements did he focus on to successfully brand himself as a candidate? Do you think his 'brand' will support him for a 2020 re-election win? Please be specific.
  - David Axelrod has argued that presidents tend to be succeeded by their opposites. Do you agree that Donald Trump is Obama's temperamental opposite? Please explain.

### III. Fundraising – April 10<sup>th</sup>

- Role of Donations
- Strategy and Tactics: - Direct mail, voter contact, internet, telemarketing, events, etc.
- Guest Speakers -
  - Marisa Faitelson – DNC Tri-State Finance Director and Former NY Finance Director of Hillary for America;
  - Zach Allen – Fundraising consultant and former NY Tri-State Finance Director of the DNC.
- Readings:
  - Burton & Shea, "Campaign Craft," Ch, 7, 10
  - Kaskowitz, "Brand it Like Barack," Ch. 17-18
  - Website: [Http://www.4president.us/](http://www.4president.us/)
  - Case Assignment #2 – "The Obama Campaign Strategy".
  - (written exercises and handouts – TBD)

### IV. Media- April 17<sup>th</sup>

- Media strategy, tactics, execution
- Traditional and new media
- Role of media consultant
- Guest speaker – Steve Jacobs – Managing Principal of Precision Strategies' NYC digital team; held key digital roles at BlueState Digital, the 2012 Obama Campaign and Mayor Bill DeBlasio.

- Readings:
  - Baker, "Political Campaigns & Political Advertising," Ch. 3
  - Burton & Shea, "Campaign Craft," Ch. 8
  - Case Assignment #3 – "Obama vs. Clinton: The YouTube Primary."
  - (written exercises and handouts – TBD)

#### V. Communication Analysis and Evaluation – April 24th

- Political Advertising Techniques – Power of TV
- Effect of "Earned" Media – debates, news coverage, etc.
- What makes an effective ad
- Guest speaker – Donny Deutsch – Chairman of Deutsch, Inc. and frequent guest on MSNBC's Morning Joe.
- Readings:
  - Baker, "Political Campaigns & Political Advertising," ch. 6 & 7
  - Burton & Shea, "Campaign Craft, " Ch. 9
  - Kaskowitz, " Brand it Like Barack," Ch. 12-16
  - (written exercises and handouts TBD)
- Website – Attackwatch.com

#### VI. Presentations – May 1<sup>st</sup>

- Specific criteria will be provided during 2nd class
- Each group will comprise 2 – 4 students, depending on class size.