

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Office:** Leutze Hall, room 260  
**Phone:** (910) 962-3225  
**Internet E-mail:** [lowery@uncw.edu](mailto:lowery@uncw.edu)  
**Personal web page:** <http://www.uncw.edu/people/lowery>  
**Course web page:** <http://www.uncw.edu/people/lowery/pls303>  
**Office Hours:** [http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/Weekly\\_schedule\\_Fall\\_2004.pdf](http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/Weekly_schedule_Fall_2004.pdf)

**GOALS**

This course describes and analyzes contemporary American elections from 1952 through 2004. Our focus is on the interrelationships between voter choices, candidate strategies, and larger contextual factors -- such as technological developments in media use, computerized direct mailings, and opinion polling. Attention is also given to the electoral impact of recent changes in the educational, economic, and residential characteristics of the American electorate. Major topics include: turnout, long- and short-term forces in vote choice, campaign finance, media strategy, incumbent and coat-tail effects, the role of the Electoral College, and trends in partisan realignment.

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**

(all 3 are available at UNCW and Seahawk bookstores; the two textbooks available on online booksellers, such as <http://amazon.com> & <http://barnesandnoble.com>.)

- Wayne, Stephen J. 2004. *The Road to the White House 2004: The Politics of Presidential Elections*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. New York: Thompson/Wadsworth Publishing.
- Abramson, Paul R., John H. Aldrich, and David W. Rohde. 2003. *Change and Continuity in the 2000 and 2002 Elections*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- eInstruction, *Student Response Keypad*.

**STUDENT RESPONSE KEYPADS**

Bring your activated *Student Response Keypad* to every class – starting with the first class meeting. You can learn how to activate your keypad by reading the *Introduction to the Course* at:

[http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls303/PLS303-001\\_course\\_introduction\\_Fall\\_2004.pdf](http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls303/PLS303-001_course_introduction_Fall_2004.pdf)

- You will use the keypad in every class meeting to anonymously respond to true/false or multiple-choice questions that arise during class discussion.
- The aggregated class responses are projected on an overhead screen as full-color bar- or pie-charts, so that the class and I can see and comment upon the distribution of class responses.
- I find that the anonymity and confidentiality of this feedback method encourages all students to enthusiastically participate in this interactive form of active learning. Students who rarely or never raise their hand in response to questions are comfortable in responding with their keypads and are more likely to join the resulting discussion of how and why the class divided in their collective responses.
- The keypad responses also give me immediate feedback regarding the extent to which students understand concepts being discussed. This allows me to make informed decisions about the pace and organization of class discussions.

**MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION**

Your course grade will be based on a total of 300 points divided in equal thirds between quizzes, a midterm examination, and a final examination.

- A series of 14 quizzes keyed to the assigned readings will contribute a possible 100 points toward your course grade. A 10-point quiz will be given before class discussion of each of the 14 reading assignments. Your total quiz score will be computed by first deleting the lowest quiz score and then averaging the remaining quiz scores and multiplying that quiz average times 10.
- The midterm and final examinations will each contribute a possible 100 points toward your course grade. Each exam will be one-half essay and one-half multiple choice. A list of essay topics is provided on the course website for each exam. Prior to each assigned reading and class discussion, a chapter outline will be provided on the course website that includes material that relates to one of the essay topics.

- Bonus points can be added to your course average, if you are the first to report to me (by email) any typographical or substantive errors in any course materials (available on the web, handed out in class, or included in a reading assignment). Each *typographical error* (spelling, punctuation, syntax, etc.) is worth 1 point added to your final course average. Each *substantive error* (an error of fact or interpretation) is worth 5 points. Please include in your email the following information:
  - your name,
  - your course number and section (PLS 303-001),
  - where the error was found (if in a textbook, give the book title and page number),
  - what correction you suggest to replace the error.

All components of the final course grade are combined before a course letter grade is determined, using the following scale:

- A = 89.5 to 100.00% of total possible points = excellent performance on quizzes & examinations
- B = 79.5 to 89.49% of total possible points = good
- C = 69.5 to 79.49% of total possible points = average
- D = 59.5 to 69.49% of total possible points = passing
- F = 00.0 to 59.49% of total possible points = failing

***Any form of cheating on any graded work will result in an automatic grade of F for the course, no matter what the quality of all other course work.***

### REQUIRED ATTENDANCE

If you are a full-time, in-state student, the tuition and fees that you pay (\$3625.50 per year) account for *less than one-fourth* of the annual cost of your education at UNCW (approximately \$15,600).<sup>1</sup> The taxpayers of North Carolina pay much of the difference. This public assistance amounts to almost \$12,000 per year (think of it as tuition stamps) for each in-state, full-time student.<sup>2</sup> Out-of-state students pay \$13,335.50 per year in tuition and fees, so even they are paying only about 85% of the annual cost of their education at UNCW. **NC taxpayers (over three-fourths of whom are *not* college graduates) have a right to expect that you attend classes -- *their* money pays for a significant portion of *your* public-university education.**

### PENALIZED ABSENCES

- ***In the real (job) world, unforeseen circumstances (alarm clock doesn't go off, car trouble) are accepted as legitimate excuses for short and infrequent absences from work. Similarly, in this course two un-penalized absences will be allowed (equivalent to a full week's worth of classes in a regular semester). For each additional un-excused absence, your final course grade will be reduced one letter grade.***
- ***In addition, no makeup quizzes or exams will be given for un-excused absences occurring under normal circumstances. An un-excused absence will result in a grade of zero for any quiz, hourly, or final exam.***
- If late to class, it is your responsibility to ensure (*immediately after class*) that you are recorded present on the class attendance roll. Should you fail to ask to be marked present after class, you will have used up one of any remaining un-penalized absences. Your being late to class is not a problem *as long as this happens infrequently*. ***If you are tardy, see me immediately after class to make sure that your name was counted on the roll — otherwise, you will be marked absent.***
- Once in class, it is expected that you will stay until dismissed or unless some foreseen or unforeseen emergency occurs. In the former case, please advise me ahead of class; in the latter case, leave class as quietly as possible and inform me as soon as possible of the circumstances that led to your unexpected departure. ***Otherwise, you will be marked absent for that day.***

### EXCUSED ABSENCES

- In the real (job) world, frequent or lengthy absences are excused only in cases of serious illness or injury, death in the immediate family, or other catastrophic events. Similarly, in this course, ***truly extraordinary circumstances that rarely occur may warrant special arrangements that will be made on a case-by-case basis. Excused absences require written documentation.***
- ***The following circumstances do not constitute an excused absence: job conflicts, an alarm clock that doesn't go off, or an illness that was not serious enough to send you to a healthcare provider who can provide written documentation. Save your two "free cuts" for situations like these.***

<sup>1</sup> \$155,000,000 UNCW 2004-2005 operating budget (estimated) divided by 9935 student FTEs (projected). Revenue sources for the University include tuition and fees (20 percent), state funds (41 percent), federal contracts and grants (10 percent), auxiliary enterprises (25 percent) and others (4 percent). See also <http://www.uncw.edu/ba> and [http://www.uncw.edu/oir/FactSheet\\_Folder](http://www.uncw.edu/oir/FactSheet_Folder)

<sup>2</sup> This public assistance is actually greatly understated because it does not reflect the cost of the state's capital investment in UNCW's buildings and grounds – currently valued at approximately \$210,000,000.