

The 2018 Elections

A midterm fix for "political junkies"

Purpose: Political and social forces have dramatically altered the landscape of this country since 2016. This course will provide context for key campaigns and issues that are likely to shape, or impact, the coming election.

Moderator:	Nancy Mihevc
Co-moderator:	Margaret Russell
Date and Time:	Wednesday afternoon, 1:30-3:30 10 weeks, starting September 26 (no class Nov.21)
Format:	Seminar
Location:	Smith College, Lilly Hall room 308

Description: In every Presidential election year since its founding, 5CLIR has offered a seminar on the general election. The current political climate and the talk of a "Blue Wave" similar to the Tea Party Movement of 2010 suggest that the upcoming election cycle will attract significant attention and merit an 5CLIR seminar.

Presentation topics in the seminar may include: historical context (e.g., other important midterm elections); key 2018 campaigns (candidates, key issues, media coverage, ground game, etc.); aspects of the political process that have the potential to shape the conduct and perhaps determine the outcome of the campaign (e.g., gerrymandering, political activism, political finance, etc.); and factors influencing voting behavior (party affiliation, media coverage, group membership, economic well-being etc.). The moderators will work hard to ensure that the topics are discussed from a "fair and balanced" perspective.

Role of participants: Participants will give 20-25 minute presentations on a 2018 campaign, an aspect of the process, or factors influencing voting. Meetings will consist of two presentations, a short question-answer period and, after a break, a round-table session for all participants to discuss recent and upcoming developments in the various campaigns.

Resources: Participants will have a choice of several recommended resources, including Gary Jacobsen, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 8th edition; Andrew Busch, *Horses in Midstream: US Midterm Elections and Their Consequences*, 9th edition; and Larry Sabato, *Pendulum Swing*. Given the "breaking news" nature of the topic, participants will need to be comfortable with internet research as well as standard library research.

About the Moderators: Nancy Milhevc owns a market research company that has done political polling at the Congressional level. Prior to becoming an entrepreneur she taught communication studies at UMass including seminars that analyzed political campaigns. Margaret Russell worked in the newsroom for 20 years of a weekly newspaper on Cape Cod, most of that time as editor and co-publisher, in a community dominated by local politics and citizen activism.

Maximum number of participants: 16

Auditors accepted: yes, up to 2

Course # 18FTE