This seminar will cover the 2020 Democratic primaries in real time. Students are required to write two short papers (approximately 1,200 words each) and a final examination paper (approximately 1,500 words).

**Paper #1:** Analyze the results of a Democratic primary or caucus held that week. Example: The 2020 New Hampshire Democratic Primary: What Did It Mean?

What factors produced victory for the winning candidate? Did other candidates benefit from a good showing? Why did some candidates fail? And what do the results say about the Democratic Party in 2020?

Each week, one student will be assigned to deliver a class presentation based on his or her paper. Other students should hand in their paper in any class on or before March 6 (Spring Break).

**Paper #2:** Analyze the impact of an issue in the 2020 campaign. You may choose an issue from this list: immigration, health care, taxes, economic inequality, trade, race relations or foreign policy. Alternatively, you may select a different issue to write about after getting the instructor’s approval. What impact is the issue you are writing about having on the presidential campaign?

Each week, one student will be assigned to deliver a class presentation based on his or her issue paper. Other students should hand in their second paper in any class on or before the end of term May 1.

**Final paper:** Will be due by email On Wednesday, May 6, on a topic to be distributed in class.
Course materials

Required for purchase:


Recommended:


Campaign News and commentary

Students will be expected to follow the Democratic primary campaign regularly in at least one mainstream news source, at least one liberal blog and at least one conservative blog.

Mainstream news sources:

- The New York Times
- The Washington Post
- Politico
- Axios
- Vox

Liberal blogs:

- The Maddow Blog (MSNBC)
- Daily Kos
- Think Progress
- Talking Points Memo

Conservative blogs:

- Fox News
- Breitbart
- Daily Caller
- Rush Limbaugh
Weekly topics:

January 24  The Democratic Party

January 31  The Law of the Missing Imperative

Read:
  Schneider, chapters 9 and 10.
  Sides, Shaw, Grossmann and Lipsitz, ch. 1

February 7  a. The 2016 election:
  What role did "identity politics" play?

Read:
  Schneider, chapter 11
  Kane, chapter 2

b. The Iowa Democratic caucuses
  Who won and why?

Read:
  Sides, Shaw et al.  pp. 248-257
  Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, chapter 4

February 14  a. The New Hampshire Democratic primary
  Who won and why?

Read:
  Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, chapter 6

b. The impact of media
  Was media coverage of the N.H. campaign biased?

Read:
  Kane, chapter 5
February 21

a. The Latino vote
   *Is there a Latino vote?*

   Read:
   * Schneider, chapter 6

b. The Nevada caucuses
   *What will we learn from Nevada?*

   Read:
   * Sides Tesler and Vavreck, pp. 182-185

February 28

a. The African-American Vote
   *Why are African-American voters so strongly Democratic?*

b. The South Carolina Democratic primary
   *What will we learn from South Carolina?*

   Read:
   * Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, chapter 6

March 6

a. The role of money
   *How did Michael Bloomberg’s money affect The Super Tuesday results?*

   Read:
   * Sides, Shaw et al. chapter 4

b. The California Democratic primary
   *What did we learn from the California results?*
SPRING BREAK – No class March 13

March 20

a. Issue: Immigration
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?

b. Issue: Immigration
What’s the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:
Schneider, pp. 128-134
Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, chapter 8

March 27

a. Issue: Health care
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?

b. Issue: Health care
What’s the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:
Schneider, chapter 5
Kane, chapter 3

April 3

a. Issue: Taxes and inequality
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?

b. Issue: Taxes and inequality
What’s the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:
Kane, chapter 3
Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, chapter 7
April 10  

a. Issue: Guns  
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?  

b. Issue: Guns  
What's the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:  
Schneider, pp. 117-127

April 17  

a. Issue: Climate change  
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?  

b. Issue: Climate change  
What's the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:  
Kane, Chapter 5

April 24  

a. Issue: Trade  
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?  

b. Issue: Trade  
What's the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:  
Kane, Chapter 7
May 1  

a. Issue: Foreign policy
What are the leading Democratic candidates proposing?

b. Issue: Foreign policy
What's the Republican response (White House and congressional Republicans)?

Read:
Schneider, chapter 8

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Students with disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

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Policy on Plagiarism

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a
prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the Schar School takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (eg. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.

<http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html>