

ENGL 298 F: Intermediate Interdisciplinary Writing - Social Sciences: Writing the 2020 Election (5 Credits)

Autumn 2020
SLN 14598

Online- Asynchronous

Optional Synchronous Discussion: Wednesdays 3pm-4pm PST (see Course Calendar for dates)
Zoom Classroom: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/98440863898>

Meet Your Instructor

Julian Barr (He/Him)
jubarr@uw.edu

Office Hours: Fridays: 10am-12pm PST or by appointment
Office Hours Zoom Meeting Link: <https://washington.zoom.us/j/94620867702>

Course Description and Objectives



Whether you believe in “Keep America Great” or “Build Back Better” we are all affected by the 2020 Election in the United States. With COVID-19 still impacting our daily lives, high unemployment, continued state violence against Black lives, and Black Lives Matter protests demanding change, this election could not be more significant. In this course we will be working on your skills as writers, researchers, and podcasters in the context of the 2020 US Election. We will be discussing and understanding the electoral process and how elections change depending on geography. This course draws from the discipline of political geography, which we will discuss further. We will also discuss issues around understanding election polling, understanding election data, news and “fake” news, along with the mechanics of researching and writing about

elections for a public audience. The project of this quarter will be the creation of a class podcast and each of you, in small groups, will create your own podcast episode focused on a “swing state” in the 2020 Election. Your group will examine how the campaigns are being conducted in that state, key issues in the state, and an analysis of the results of the state.

By the end of this course students will be able to...

1. Conduct research by collecting a variety of sources to analyze the 2020 election swing states with a critical social science lens.
2. Write clearly and concisely about complex issues while considering a public audience.
3. Consider ethical practices of writing that take into account differences and oppression.
4. Identify the differences and similarities between various forms of written scholarship and approaches to sharing information and research.
5. Productively work in groups and be able to co-write and edit in a collaborative format.
6. Understand and put into practice the basic skills of writing, recording, editing, and producing a podcast episode.
7. Deeply engage with concepts within the discipline of political geography and scholarship examining elections at various geographic scales.

This course fulfills Composition (C) or Writing (W) credit.

All readings will be made available on Canvas.

Teaching Philosophy

The teaching philosophy of this course is informed by an anti-racist critical pedagogy approach that highlights the struggles, and includes the voices, of the oppressed. I primarily draw on the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire 1970) for guidance. Critical pedagogy acknowledges that language and knowledge production is diverse and that we cannot privilege Eurocentric perspectives, which can be oppressive to students, especially those students learning English, students with disabilities, and students whose prior education was limited. Critical pedagogy tells us to create an environment of learning where the student and teacher are co-learners. So, I aim to be a co-learner with all my students, and I am here to listen to your uncertainties around learning and help you establish realistic goals for individual success.

Assignments and Grading Outline (100% Total)

- Weekly Responses (8 x 2% each= 16%)
- Discussion Participation (7 x 2% each= 14%)
- Required Group Conference Sessions (2 x 5% each= 10%)
- Project (55%):
 - 1: Podcast Response (5%)
 - 2: Podcasting Introduction (5%)
 - 3: Script Outline with initial Bibliography (5%)
 - 4: Script Draft One (10%)
 - 5: Script Draft Peer Review (5%)

- 6: Script Draft Two (10%)
- 7: Audio Files (5%)
- 8: Recorded Episode with Edited Script (10%)
- Final Reflection Essay (5%)

Weekly Course Structure

Course Structure. For Autumn Quarter, this course will be fully online via Canvas due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This course will not use live lectures and is intended to be completed on your own time every week. For each weekly module on Canvas you will find a set of readings, lectures, and other material. Most of the time, unless noted, you can go through the content in whatever order works for you. On most Wednesdays we will have a discussion that is based on a weekly prompt; the discussion does not require that you have gone through all the material for the week. Discussions are either live on Zoom (synchronous) or online via Canvas (asynchronous), whichever works for your schedule. Then AFTER you go through that week's content you will need to complete a weekly response, see below for more information. I will post the module for the week every Monday morning and you should complete everything by Sunday. You will not be able to proceed to the next module until the weekly response is completed. This makes sure you will stay on track every week and not fall behind. Assignments are also to be completed by Sunday unless noted, see the course calendar for due dates.

Discussion. To increase course engagement, we will have a weekly discussion on most Wednesdays (see Course Calendar). You have two options to complete the weekly discussion 1) you can participate in a live discussion with your classmates at 3-4 pm (PST) via Zoom OR 2) respond to an online discussion prompt via Canvas by Wednesday at 11:59 pm (PST). You only need to do one of these for the discussion and you can decide which one works best for your schedule and desire to engage that particular week. Some weeks I will ask you to do a reading or watch a lecture before the discussion, however, watching and reading all the weekly content for the week is not necessary/required. For the live discussion, you do not need to have your video on, though it is encouraged. For the Canvas discussion, you can do a traditional text response, but you can also respond via a video or audio file. These discussions are graded on completion/participation.

Weekly Response. At the end of the week you will have a weekly response based on a prompt(s) provided. These weekly responses should be at least 400 words but no more than 600 words. You should answer the prompt completely and use lecture, readings, and other materials in your response. These are directly turned in via a Canvas textbox, but I recommend you type your response in a Word Doc or Google Doc first. I use these responses to check for understanding of material and a way to check in on course progress.

Course Calendar

Week	Dates	Topic(s)	Discussion*	Assignments Due**
1	September 30- October 4	-Course Intro -Political Geo Intro -US Government Intro	None	Response One
2	October 5- October 11	-US Electoral Geography -US Political Parties -Election 2020: How did we get here? -Election 2020: Swing States -Election 2020: Voting	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Two Assignment 1
3	October 12 - October 18	-Podcasting as Public Scholarship -Research 101 -News and “Fake” News? -Election 2020: Issues and Debates -Election 2020: State Campaigns	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Three Assignment 2
4	October 19- October 25	-Plagiarism and Citations -Outlining and Writing Scripts -Election 2020: BLM, RBG, and COVID-19 -Election 2020: Polls and Predictions	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Four Assignment 3
5	October 26- November 1	-Conferencing (Required)	None	Assignment 4
6	November 2- November 8 Election Day! November 3	-Peer Review & Collaborating -Election 2020: Understanding Initial Election Results	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Five Assignment 5
7	November 9- November 15	-Writing with ethics and accessibility -Election 2020: Who Won and Why? -Election 2020: Understanding Election Data	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Six
8	November 16- November 22	-Recording -Election 2020: Moving Forward	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Seven Assignment 6 (Due November 20)
9	November 23- November 25 Thanksgiving Break November 26-29	-Conferencing (Required)	None	Assignment 7 (Due November 25)
10	November 30- December 6	-Making a Podcast episode -Election 2020: Road to 2024	Wednesday 3-4 OR Online Post by Midnight	Response Eight Assignment 8
11	December 7- December 11	-Reflection	None	Final Reflection Essay (Due December 11)

*All times are in Pacific Standard Time (PST) and in the afternoon (PM)

**Free Writes and project assignments due by Sunday at 11:59 PM unless noted otherwise

Course Policies

Office Hours. All office hours will be held via Zoom. Office hours will be one-on-one or with groups, and I will let students in one at a time to have private conversations. Please see the “Meet Your Instructor” section for time and Zoom meeting ID. I am also available by appointment, just email me and we will set up a time.

Safe Space. In this course we will discuss research tied to social problems and politics, sometimes these issues will be controversial in nature. This classroom aims to be a safe space for both students and the instructor. Please be respectful to the instructor and your fellow classmates. This includes all interactions digitally via email, Canvas, and other platforms. Hateful speech and language directed toward a person or group of people will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, language that can be considered racist, sexist, xenophobic, Islamophobic, ageist, homophobic, transphobic, derogatory toward immigration status, ableist, etc. If you are not sure if something might be offensive, then it is probably best to not say it. I want to encourage open discussion and communication in the digital classroom, but we also have to be respectful to each other. Any student deemed to be breaking this policy will be limited in their class communications.

Communication. You are required to use your University of Washington email or Canvas for communication with the instructor and colleagues for this course. Please check your email and Canvas daily for messages about the course including any announcements or changes. Please feel free to communicate through email or Canvas messaging at any time with questions, concerns, thoughts, etc. Do not post questions or comments on Canvas assignments, there is no guarantee I will see them. I will respond, however please give at least 48 hours (Monday-Friday). If after 48 hours you have not heard from me, please resend.

“Ungrading” Policy. In this course I will be using an “ungrading” policy. According to research, traditional grading does not motivate better work from students and can prevent actual growth in your skills and knowledge, especially focused on writing. You are graded in this course based on completion of assignments and your own self-assessment of the grade you deserve. With each assignment I will include how to fully complete an assignment and as noted in the Assignments and Grading Outline assignments are weighted to your overall completion score based on the amount work required. Each assignment will receive a completed/non-completed score and feedback on your writing. On request, I can also provide a traditional letter grade so you know how you would be doing if this course was using a standard grading policy, just email me after the assignment is graded. You will qualify for a certain range of the 4.0 grade scale, depending on how many of the assignments you complete. A 4.0 scale is how I am required to report your final grade to the university. The scales are:

- 90-100% Completed= 3.5-4.0
- 80-89% Completed= 3.0-3.4
- 70-79% Completed= 2.5-2.9
- 60-69% Completed= 2.0-2.4
- 50-59% Completed= 0.7-1.9

- Less than 50% Completed= 0.0

Finally, at the end of the course your final reflection paper will ask you what numeric grade, within the range you qualify for, you feel you deserve for the work you have done in the quarter and why. We will review the final grade procedure near the end of the course.

Late/Makeup Assignments. I will accept late assignments with a penalty of 5 percent per day of your completion score for up to two weeks after the due date. If you know your assignment will be late please let me know before the due date. If you need an extension on a due date, please contact me before the due date if possible. Extensions are given on a case-by-case basis but usually granted for medical issues, family issues, and other life hurdles.

Academic Honesty. UW has guidelines on how to respond to suspected cases of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating). These cases include plagiarism (using someone else's work or words without giving due credit, including that of other students past and present) in written assignments. You should familiarize yourself with these guidelines outlined in the Student Conduct Code (see <http://www.washington.edu/cssc/for-students/academic-misconduct/>).

I acknowledge that plagiarism can be understood differently in various cultures; however, we will be following the UW definition of academic dishonesty in this course. Always cite your work when using other people's ideas or words. I will discuss this more in class and give you instructions on avoiding plagiarism. If ever in doubt if something is considered plagiarism or cheating, please ask. Students caught cheating or committing plagiarism on an assignment or exam will be given a reduced grade on the assignment the first time. The second offense will result in an automatic zero on the assignment and the third offense will result in a zero for the course. All incidents of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to administration.

Religious Accommodations. "Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](#). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](#)." However, if you do not feel comfortable with this form please meet with me and I will accommodate as needed.

Student Resources

UW ASP-Online Learning. Academic Support Programs has created a one stop page with various resources and programs centered on online learning. These includes best practices, technology access, wellness, time management, and more. [Click here](#) for the resource page.

Student Technology Loan Program (STLP). "The Student Technology Loan Program allows students to borrow laptops, cameras, projectors, and other equipment for free. To be eligible for our program you must be enrolled for the current quarter at the Seattle campus." For more information including a list of equipment and reservation form please visit: <https://stlp.uw.edu>.

The program is still operational Autumn Quarter with some changes, for more information see announcements on their website.

Writing and Learning Support Resources. The Odegaard Writing and Research Center (OWRC) offers free, one-to-one, 45-minute tutoring sessions for undergraduate writers in all fields at the UW. They will work with writers on any writing or research project, as well as personal projects. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please see their website (<https://depts.washington.edu/owrc>). For Autumn Quarter, all appointments are online.

CLUE Writing Center. “If you are an undergraduate student at the UW Seattle campus, we are available to work with you. We can be of help during any stage in the writing process, including: Starting, Drafting, Revising, Researching, and Polishing. We will not proofread or edit a paper for you, but we will either teach or help you learn how to find and correct errors in punctuation, usage, and grammar. Whether you need help talking through ideas, honing an outline you've been working on, evaluating a draft mid-composition, or looking through a final draft—we're confident we can help you write more efficiently and effectively.” For more information please see the [CLUE Website](#). For Autumn Quarter, all appointments are online.

English as an Additional Language. Please let me know if English is an additional language for you so that together we can figure out how to make the course as manageable as possible for you. Also please consult this [helpful guide](#) from the UW Center for Teaching and Learning for resources.

Disability Resources. Your experience in this class is important. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations at your earliest convenience so I know your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

Counseling Center. The Counseling Center offers short-term, problem-focused counseling to UW students who may feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of college, work, family, and relationships. Counselors are available to help students cope with stresses and personal issues that may interfere with their ability to perform in school. The service is provided confidentially and without additional charge to currently enrolled students. The Counseling Center is providing all services via secure Zoom. Please call 206-543-1240 during regular business hours to access services. Additional information can also be found by visiting <https://www.washington.edu/counseling>.

Library Resources.

[UW Libraries Search](#)- find and get items from the UW Libraries and its SUMMIT partners.

[Borrowing information \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - learn about loan periods, check out policies, and more.

[UW GIS Resources](#)- guide to geospatial data and GIS resources at UW

[Audio & Video](#)- guide to media resources within the collection.

[Find It \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - guide to finding other types of information in the Libraries

[Ask Us \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - get in touch with UW librarians by phone, email, or 24/7 chat.

[Articles & Research Databases \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - browse a full list of UW Libraries databases by title.

[E-Journals \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - search for UW Libraries e-journals by title, title keyword, or subject.

[E-Newspapers \(Links to an external site.\)](#) - guide to electronic newspapers within the UW Libraries collection.

COVID-19 Outbreak Resources. For COVID-19 Outbreak resources, please see the COVID-19 Outbreak Resources document on the course Canvas page.

Other Resources. For a more extensive list of UW resources, please see the UW Resources for Students document on the course Canvas page.