



WOMEN & POLITICS INSTITUTE  
SCHOOL *of* PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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**GOVT 485/685.03 Women and the 2006 Campaign**  
**March 25-26, 2006**  
**Spring 2006**  
**American University Ward 101**

**Instructor:** Sarah E. Brewer  
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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Course Overview:** This class explores the historic evolution of women as voters, activists, and candidates in national elections. It focuses on the emerging dynamics of gender in the 2006 congressional elections. The class will look at the gender gap in voting and the relationship between political parties and women candidates.

**Course Requirements:** Attendance at all class session is mandatory. A sign-in sheet will be distributed each morning and afternoon. In addition, you are required to write a paper 10-15 page paper on one of the questions listed below. Papers will be returned into the front desk of the Government Department on Monday, April 24, 2006, no later than 4 p.m. For each day a paper is late the final grade on the paper is deducted by one full letter grade. Please contact the Women & Politics Course Coordinator, Sara Halperin, if you need to make any special arrangements.

**Grading:**

**Class Participation:** 20%  
**Paper:** 80%

## Paper Topics

Please write a 10-15 page paper on one of the following questions.

1. Two explanations for the lower number of women in Congress are explored in class. One focuses on the significance of sex-role socialization and ambition and the second places greater emphasis on structural barriers to women's candidacies, namely redistricting and incumbency. Briefly outline each explanation and present a strategy that could remedy both barriers to women's representation in the Congress.
2. Since the first recognition of the gender gap in 1980, many variables have been explored that further our understanding of the political significance of the "women's vote." Please summarize the gender gap literature and identify a new variable or question on the gender gap that warrants further study.
3. The role of media coverage and television advertising continues to be significant to a candidate's electoral success. Summarize the research that has been done on both the coverage of women candidates and the media strategies used by women candidates. Discuss the ways in which you feel the rise of new media, namely the increased role of blogs, web sites, and email, will affect women candidate's coverage in Congressional Elections.

**Saturday, March 25, 2006: The Candidates**

- 9:00-10:00 AM Introduction and Overview  
Professor Sarah E. Brewer
- 10:00-11:00 AM Why Women Don't Run for Elected Office  
Speaker: Sarah E. Brewer, Women & Politics Institute  
Reading: Richard Fox and Jennifer Lawless. 2005. *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- 11:00-11:15 AM Break
- 11:15-12:15 PM Candidate Recruitment and Training  
Speaker: Eureka Gilkey, EMILY's List
- 12:15-1:15 PM Lunch
- 1:15-2:15 PM Raising Money for Women Candidates  
Speaker: Maureen Ward, Women Under Forty PAC  
Reading: Francia, Peter. 2001. "Early Fundraising by non-incumbent female Congressional candidates: The importance of women's PACs." *Women & Politics* 23 (1/2).
- 2:15-2:30 PM Break
- 2:30-3:30 PM Structural Challenges to Women's Candidacies for Congress  
Speaker: Barbara Palmer, American University  
Reading: Barbara Palmer and Dennis Simon. 2001. "The Political Glass Ceiling: Gender, Strategy, and Incumbency in US House Elections, 1978-1998" *Women & Politics*. 23 (1/2).
- 3:30-3:45 PM Break
- 3:45-5:00 PM Perspectives of Women Candidates  
Speaker: Mishonda Baldwin (D),  
Maryland's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District

