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MEDIA ADVISORY: UNH Class Gives Students Opportunity to Participate in History-making Presidential Primary

Contact: [Erika Mantz](#)
603-862-1567
UNH Media Relations

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DURHAM, N.H. -- The New Hampshire Presidential Primary has been the first in the nation since 1920, but it wasn't until 1952 that citizens had the right to vote directly for a presidential candidate, not just delegates. With just one exception, no candidate losing in New Hampshire has ever made it to the White House.

That means any student studying at the University of New Hampshire will have the opportunity to shake hands with the next president of the United States at some time during their four years. UNH professors Mark Wrighton and Andy Smith recognized this as a great learning opportunity and designed a class that will allow students the chance to study the New Hampshire presidential primary up close and personal.

"This is a once-in-a-college-career opportunity," Wrighton and Smith said. "The candidates are here and our students have the chance to experience the political process in a unique way."

The class meets Wednesdays from 5- 8 p.m. in Murkland Hall's Richards Auditorium. The following class topics and guest speakers have been confirmed:

Sept. 10 The New Hampshire Political Landscape

Dante Scala, assistant professor of politics at Saint Anselm College
Andrew Smith, director of the UNH Survey Center
Michael Chaney, executive director of the N.H. Political Library

Sept. 17 A Frontloaded Process

William Mayer, associate professor of political science at Northeastern
William Gardner, New Hampshire secretary of state

Sept. 24 Campaign Strategy

Karen Hicks, state director of Dean for America campaign
Tom Rath, political analyst and advisor to presidential campaigns
Arnie Arnesen, political commentator and former candidate

Oct. 1 The Nomination Ain't Cheap – Fundraising

William Shaheen, chair of Al Gore's 2000 New Hampshire campaign
 Anna Barbara Hantz, former head of the N.H. Republican State Committee

Oct. 8 Group Activity in the Primary

Kathy Sullivan, New Hampshire Democratic Party Chair
 Jayne Millerick, New Hampshire Republican State Committee
 Matt Vaughan, government relations, BAE Systems
 Rob Werner, Smoke-Free NH Alliance

Oct. 15 NO CLASS

Oct. 22 Covering the Campaign I – National Media

Richard Benedetto, national political correspondent at USA Today
 Jon Greenberg, executive editor at NHPR

Oct. 29 Covering the Campaign II – Local and electronic media

Kevin Landrigan, Nashua Telegraph
 Scott Spradling, WMUR Channel 9
 Dan Tuohy, Lawrence (MA) Eagle Tribune

Nov. 5 Taking the Pulse of the Electorate – Polling

Andy Smith, director of the UNH Survey Center

Nov. 12 Doing It the Right Way – Campaign Ethics

Peter Wielhouwer, director, Regent University's Center for Grassroots Politics

Nov. 19 A Candidate's Perspective

Michael Dukakis, won the 1988 New Hampshire Democratic primary

Nov. 26 NO CLASS

Dec. 3 & 10 Evaluating the Campaigns

Students will do group presentations on the presidential campaigns. Campaign representatives will be invited to hear their observations.

Editors, News directors: You are invited to attend any of the classes. Mark Wrighton, assistant professor of political science, and Andrew Smith, director of the UNH Survey Center, are co-teaching the class. They are available for interviews (Wrighton, 603-862-2792; Smith, 603-862-2226).