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Sabato announces partnership with iTunes U to host “The Kennedy Half Century” free online course

(CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va.) — Prof. Larry J. Sabato’s free online course about President John F. Kennedy’s life, administration and legacy is now available on iTunes U.

The four-week, massive open online course (MOOC), “The Kennedy Half Century,” will begin on Oct. 21, with two hours of video instruction each week by Prof. Sabato. Registration for the free course is now available through the iTunes U app on mobile devices or through the iTunes store.

This is the second major platform where the course will appear; last month, “The Kennedy Half Century” course went live on Coursera, an educational website that partners with some of the world’s top universities, including the University of Virginia, to provide free online courses. Anyone can register for the course at www.coursera.org/course/kennedy.

The course content of the iTunes U and Coursera versions will be similar. The iTunes U version of “The Kennedy Half Century” features optional, interactive assignments for participants, such as interviewing an older relative or friend who lived through the Kennedy assassination, along with other activities.

“Offering the course on both the popular Coursera and iTunes U platforms is designed to reach the broadest possible base of people interested in exploring President Kennedy’s life, assassination and legacy,” Prof. Sabato said.

The MOOC is one of several initiatives the U.Va. Center for Politics is unveiling this fall in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of JFK’s assassination. Prof. Sabato’s latest [book](#), *The Kennedy Half Century: The Presidency, Assassination and Lasting Legacy of John F. Kennedy*, will

be released on Oct. 15, a week before the free course begins. Later in October, the Center will premiere a one-hour [national PBS documentary](#) on the same subject, which is being produced in partnership with Community Idea Stations. The Center for Politics and Community Idea Stations recently received an Emmy Award for their previous documentary, “Out of Order,” which is about political dysfunction in Washington.

A trailer for the “The Kennedy Half Century” class is available by clicking on the course logo below:



The course begins with the early legislative career of John F. Kennedy and progresses through the 50 years since Kennedy’s death, focusing on how each president, Lyndon Johnson through Barack Obama, has used JFK to craft their own political image. The class offers more than eight hours of video consisting of 40 lessons averaging 10-20 minutes each in length. Each week, there will be at least two new hours of content, including historical footage from each of the 10 presidential administrations of the last half-century. Prof. Sabato will focus four lessons around Kennedy’s assassination as the nation marks the 50th anniversary of 11/22/63.

Online learning is not new to the U.Va. Center for Politics, which has provided online education tools through its Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) since 1998. YLI conducts regular [mock elections](#) for students, as well as an interactive legislative simulation called [E-Congress](#).

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Founded by political analyst and Professor Larry J. Sabato, the U.Va. Center for Politics (www.centerforpolitics.org) is a nonpartisan institute that seeks to promote the value of

politics, improve civics education, and increase civic participation through comprehensive research, pragmatic analysis, and innovative educational programs.

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