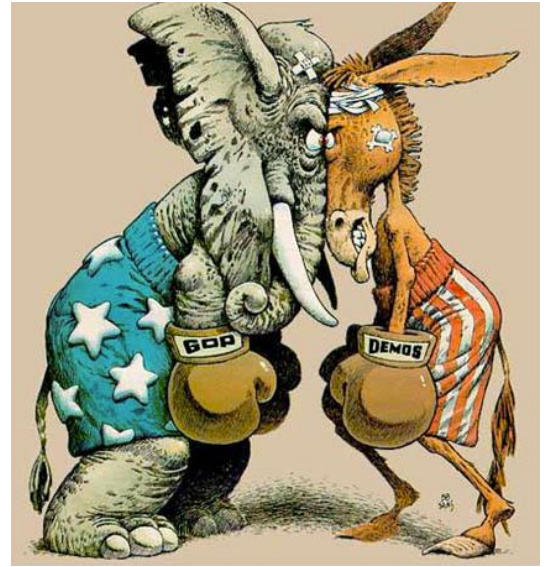


2008 Presidential Election

The Issues

Your responsibility in this assignment will be to know the issues...in particular the issues that you have selected to concentrate upon. In order to do well here you need to read! Americans don't read enough when it comes to politics - they watch 30 second TV commercials; they choose TV commentators and just parrot others' thoughts. It will be up to you to sift through all of the spin and come up with a pro-active position on the issues based upon the knowledge of your own research. Then you will be required to teach the rest of us! Work with other issue captains from other groups to solidify your position. Talk with Mr Wood. Talk with one another. If something doesn't make sense...ASK ABOUT IT! If a candidate's position is inconsistent with reality - duh he's lying - call him on it. Dig in! Find the facts! State your position and feel confident in your knowledge of the issues in this presidential election.



YOUR GRADE

Your grade will be split between three grades.

- #1 - Your performance on the issue debates will count 1/3 of your grade. (100 pts)
- #2 - Your team's performance in total will count 1/3 of your grade. (100 pts)
- #3 - Your performance on final test - on November 5 - will count 1/3 of grade. (100 pts)

PRESENTATION DATES / FORMAT

- We will present two issues per day from October 29 to November 7.
- The class period will be split between the two issues
- Issue captains will sit at the front of the room - everybody else in the audience

ISSUE PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

- We will begin with six one minute summary presentations of the issue
- Within that presentation - Issue captains summarize each candidate's position
- Summaries may go over 1:00 - however should run no more than 2:00
- Remainder of the 1/2 period will consist of Q/A from the moderator and audience.

While you MUST present both candidates positions on the issues - you may choose to agree with one over the other - the only catch - you must back up your choice with solid facts!

PRESENTATION ISSUES - We'll debate eight

Each team will have an "Issue Captain" responsible for each specific issue.

- 1 - Health Care
- 2 - Economy
- 3 - Education (k-12 & College)
- 4 - Energy
- 5 - Environment
- 6 - Foreign Policy
- 7 - Immigration
- 8 - Gay Marriage / Abortion

YOUR PRESENTATION GRADE

Your grade will be split between three parts.

- 1 - Opening statement - time element and positions of candidates
- 2 - Q & A - How well do you field questions from moderator and audience.
- 3 - Knowledge - Do you know your stuff?

KNOW THE ISSUES - KNOW THE ISSUES - KNOW THE ISSUES

Tips for Success

- Use multiple sources.
- Share info with other issue captains / work with other issue captains.
- Articulate your position - it will help you to clarify your position.
- Touch base daily with your Precinct Captain.
- Stay organized
- Ask questions.
- Work hard.

As you do all of this, the issues will begin to crystalize before you. You'll gain confidence from knowledge. And in the end you'll know more than 98% of the American voters who will be deciding this election.

WHERE TO GET YOUR INFORMATION FROM?

#1 - Democrat and Republican Party Platforms

Start here. Each candidate's website states basic issue positions. It may also look at the opposition position as well. Remember however, that these will be one sided. They may not always be totally straight forward. You will at least get a stated position of the party candidate. I would also suggest that you do this with another individual working on the same issue - that way you can talk about it as you go.

#2 - Special Interest Groups

Special Interest groups specialize on single issues. They work for and against political candidates. They have stated positions on candidate's policies. These can be quite useful, particularly when looking at the negatives of the opposition. Again be careful that you do not base all of your information on one special interest group. It may be so negative towards a candidate that it stretches the truth.

#3 - Independent News Source

This will be your most reliable source of news. Tap into legitimate News Sources. Check newspapers - New York Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe, Dallas Morning Star, Muskegon Chronicle? - anyone you wish. Dig into articles and editorials. Be very very skeptical of crazy people's web pages. A website is not a news source. Keep reading. The more that you know the better you will be able to separate fact from fiction and make some educated choices.

#4 - Your gut

In the end you need to go with your gut feeling. You could feasibly look at the issues forever, and still not sift through half the information. Make some gut calls. But do it baed on the facts.

Assignment Requirements:

Organization will be of utmost importance. So, you need to follow format.

- 1 - Keep Individual Issues separated in SCI Notebook.
- 2 - Print each issue proposal located at the candidate's website. This may be a few pages long, but will be important to know it thoroughly.
- 3 - READ the above proposals of both candidates - until you understand them!
- 4 - Dig up editorials and news paper articles concerning the issues.
- 5 - Copy and include them in your notebook.

You could be absolutely buried by information if you don't stay organized, so stay organized. You'll need to update yourself, your position, by sifting through the stuff that matters. Keep a log - preferably located at the front of each issue, which identifies the information which is important to YOU! Note the source so that you can go back to it if you need to. Keep this paper updated as you find new information. In the end, your knowledge of a candidates position will begin to crystalize. Your ideas should be noted on this "Stuff that matters" sheet.

Final Thoughts...

- Don't get discouraged. There's a lot of info out there. Most American's give up and never look. That's why we're in the shape we are in.
- Keep an open mind. You'll be amazed at what you'll learn.
- Share your ideas with colleagues. And with issue captains searching the same issue.
- When you present to the class - be organized.
- Use the information that you've gained down at party headquarters.
- Ask candidates at Party HQ what they think about the issues.
- When you go door to door, don't be bashful in informing voters what you know.

In the end, be proud that you are doing what all American's who vote, should do. You are learning the issues. You can then hold your president accountable to the truth and ultimately they may earn your most prized political possession - your vote.

...or at least your respect and sweat, if you can't yet vote.

GOOD LUCK.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA NEEDS IT'S YOUNG PEOPLE TO RISE UP AND TO OWN THIS GOVERNMENT.

Awareness and involvement is the only way which we can truly go forward into the 21st century and shape a just and efficient nation. It may the only way that we can keep this planet from falling apart.

It is your duty. It is your responsibility. It is your right under the United States Constitution. **So get to work!**

THE ISSUES - THE TEAMS

Zach Jenkins - Precinct Captain

Dominique Oudsema

Joe Line

Robert Porter

Sam Eely - Precinct Captain

Dominique

Joe Line

Robert Porter

Sara Musser - Precinct Captain

Haley Knight

Mike Eacker

Almanda

Blair Thompson - Precinct Captain

Sierra Hanchera

Shelby Ippen

Jesse Thome

Sarah Pennell - Precinct Captain

Alberto Garza

Jenna

Murphy

Emily Morgan - Precinct Captain

Sasha from Deutschland

Ashley Weaver