

Appendix

Teaching Students to Hear the Other Side: Using Web Design and Election Events to Build Empathy in the Political Science Classroom

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Pre-Assignment Questions

Students were asked about each of the following candidates: Donald Trump, Ben Carson, Carly Fiorina, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, John Kasich, and Rand Paul

On a scale of 1 – 10, ten being the highest, how competent do you think (candidate's name) is to be president?

On a scale of 1 – 10, ten being the highest, how likely do you think it is that (candidate's name) will be the Republican nominee for president?

What is your first name? (asked to match students with their assigned candidates)

Post-Assignment Questions

Students were asked about each of the following candidates: Donald Trump, Ben Carson, Carly Fiorina, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, Jeb Bush, John Kasich, and Rand Paul

On a scale of 1 – 10, ten being the highest, how competent do you think (candidate's name) is to be president?

On a scale of 1 – 10, ten being the highest, how likely do you think it is that (candidate's name) will be the Republican nominee for president?

What is your first name? (asked to match students with their assigned candidates)

Relative to the beginning of the semester, what are your thoughts about the candidate that you were assigned?

Do you have any feedback for the instructor about this assignment?

Campaign Website Project
POLS 200: Introduction to Political Behavior

Assignment Goals

1. Students understand and apply concepts within political behavior.
2. Students integrate concepts, exhibiting an understanding of the connections between them.
3. Students identify and construct different approaches or perspectives used to deal with political issues (audience).
4. Students demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use different political science methodologies/epistemologies.
5. Students possess high-level written communication skills.
6. Student demonstrates ability to create and organize content in WordPress.

Assignment Instructions

This assignment asks students to work as campaign strategists. Each of you will be assigned a political candidate who has announced their intention to run for the Republican nomination in the upcoming presidential election. Using the material that we will discuss throughout the semester (what drives public opinion, how emotions influence judgement, etc.), you will design a campaign website for your assigned politician ***aimed at increasing support for that politician.*** You'll choose how to portray the personal characteristics of the candidates, which issues positions to emphasize, which events or images to use, etc.

You will complete this project using WordPress. We will spend one class period together familiarizing ourselves with the platform. I will also provide you with resources to help you use of WordPress. Students are expected to work on their website throughout the semester. I will be monitoring progress on your websites.

At the end of the semester, each of you will write an eight to ten page paper explaining why you believe your website will increase support for your candidate. In particular, you will be asked to explain how you used course material to shape your website.

Your paper will be graded on your understanding of political behavior concepts. You will also be graded on the quality of your website. More detail on grading will be provided in a grading rubric given with these assignment instructions.

Campaign Website Project Paper Rubric

1. Students understand and apply concepts within the field of political behavior.
2. Students integrate concepts, exhibiting an understanding of the connections between them.
3. Students identify and construct different approaches or perspectives used to deal with political issues (audience).
4. Students demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use different political science methodologies/epistemologies.
5. Students possess high-level written communication skills.
6. Student demonstrates ability to create and organize content in WordPress.

Student fails to identify relevant concepts within the field of political behavior	Student identifies relevant concepts, but does not properly define or apply them	Student identifies and defines relevant concepts, but cannot apply them	Student identifies and defines relevant concepts, but can only apply them with guidance	Student identifies and defines relevant concepts, and applies them independently
Student cannot break ideas into component parts or understand how these parts interact with one another and with related concepts	Student demonstrates the ability to break ideas into component parts, but does not understand how these parts interact with one other and related concepts	Student breaks ideas into component parts and understands how these parts interact with one another, but student does not connect ideas with other relevant concepts	Student demonstrates the ability to break ideas into component parts and to understand how ideas relate to other relevant concepts with guidance	Student demonstrates the ability to break ideas into component parts and to understand how ideas relate to other relevant concepts independently
Student demonstrates an inability to consider issues from perspectives/ approaches other than their own or to recognize assumptions inherent in different perspectives	Student begins to demonstrate a willingness to consider the strength and limitations of different perspectives, but cannot identify assumptions underlying those perspectives /approaches	Student demonstrates the ability to recognize assumptions inherent in other's perspectives /approaches, but cannot recognize the assumptions inherent in their own	Student understands the strength and limitations of different perspectives /approaches, and can identify the assumptions underlying different perspectives with guidance	Student demonstrates the ability to consider issues from multiple perspectives /approaches and can identify the assumptions that underlie those perspectives without guidance
Student fails to demonstrate any understanding of the various epistemologies employed in political science	Student identifies various epistemologies, but remains unable to completely define them	Student identifies and defines various epistemologies, but does not grasp their different utilities enough to apply them	Student identifies and defines various political science epistemologies, but cannot appropriately apply them without guidance	Student identifies and defines various political science epistemologies, and can appropriately apply them to problems independently
Student fails to demonstrate ability to create and organize their own written content and fails to demonstrate any mechanical skills	Students creates content, but quality of content is poor and weak grasp of mechanics impedes understanding of argument	Student creates and organizes content that exhibits a clear argument, but content and mechanical errors appear consistently throughout	Student creates and organizes content, but written work includes a small number of rudimentary mechanical errors (typos, failure to include transitions)	Student demonstrates mastery of all aspects of writing (content, organization, and mechanics)
Student fails to demonstrate ability to create and organize their own written content/images and fails to demonstrate any technical skills	Students creates content, but quality of content is poor and weak grasp of technical skills impedes understanding of argument	Student creates and organizes content that exhibits a clear argument, but content and technical errors appear consistently throughout (factual inaccuracies, inability to organize menus, etc.)	Student creates and organizes content, but website includes a small number of rudimentary technical errors (typos, inability to center images, etc.)	Student demonstrates mastery of all aspects of WordPress and associated technical skills (content, organization, and integration of various plug-ins)