

FALL 2007 PROJECT: PRESIDENTIAL POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING

As well-informed, open-minded speech and debate enthusiasts, we can all appreciate the role of communication in our society. To enhance understanding of applied communication and of the political system, including – but not limited to – public and professional image, public speaking, rhetoric, propaganda, media, current events, national and international issues (economic, social, cultural, political, etc.), campaign strategy and public scrutiny, you will be participating in a mock U.S. presidential political campaign.

**** For purposes of this project, “the media” is represented by Coach Gaba. ****

1. Break into groups of 5-6 (groups should be roughly equal-sized). Divide responsibility among group members – candidate, running mate, public relations specialist, campaign strategist, media liaison, advertising specialist, etc. Each individual group member must be assigned a particular job in assignment/campaign to complete the following tasks. All group members should perform a roughly equal amount of work. (You may create your own political party name, titles, positions, etc.)

2. Research political campaigns and strategies; contact local campaign headquarters, search the Internet, research the library for guidelines and strategies for a successful campaign.

3. Create a biography for your candidate and running mate: childhood, parents, education, culture/heritage, socioeconomic upbringing, religion, work history, links with organizations, coalitions, unions, etc., military, marital status, children, extended family, past political affiliations, etc.

4. Design a platform: foreign involvement, welfare, taxes, abortion, capital punishment, guns, nuclear weapons, tobacco, family issues, crime, gay marriage, domestic violence, space exploration, drugs, the economy, education reform, racial issues, health care, global warming, the environment, etc. (Groups may discuss these in advance so the same issues will be researched and debated by all candidates.) Each group should collect current event stories on these topics, as well as on 2008 presidential candidates and their positions on these issues.

5. Advertising: slogans, flyers, radio broadcasts, newspaper ads, television commercial(s) (taped or on DVD) – all advertising must only be done in the debate room (in other words, the debate room is the “world” in which you are advertising, not the hallways, other classrooms, the cafeteria, etc.). Your videotape/DVD commercials will be shown to all debate classes. You must use your own supplies. Debate room equipment (i.e., the copier) and supplies (i.e., debate team markers, posters, copy paper) may *not* be used in creation of print advertising (posters, flyers, etc.) for any candidate/party.

6. Debate between candidates: questions submitted by “the media,” cross-examination, time restrictions, videotaped for viewing by all debate classes.

7. Media information: each campaign group/political party is responsible for providing “the media” with stories regarding their candidate (places visited, organizations addressed, speeches given, any additional information about your candidate your group wants published).

8. Damage control: without warning, a “leak” will be made about your candidate (it may involve illegal campaign contributions, past business involvements, etc.). Your group must decide on a strategy to best deal with the situation, issue a press release, make a statement, work out the problem so the candidate and campaign are not destroyed.

9. Your “constituents” will be the two novice classes. They will receive and read the candidate bios, see the news stories, be exposed to the advertising, and be the audience for the videotaped debates. Polls will be taken periodically by “the media” to record the success of each

candidate as the campaign progresses. Any information (except for posters or display ads) you want your “constituents” to know must first be given to “the media.” They will be responsible for dissemination of information about candidates and campaigns.

10. Grades will be based on the following: (1) group delegation of campaign responsibilities; (2) weekly campaign reports given to “the media;” (3) semi-weekly updates regarding campaign strategies (should be kept in a binder and information collected continually); (4) semi-weekly reports by candidates, running mates, public relations specialists, campaign strategists, media liaisons, advertising specialists, etc.; (5) participation by all group members; (6) elements of campaign; (7) current events and 2008 presidential candidate information collected.

ALL GROUPS MUST KEEP A BINDER WITH WEEKLY ENTRIES REGARDING CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES, GROUP MEMBER ASSIGNMENTS, COPIES OF ALL REPORTS GIVEN TO “THE MEDIA,” ADVERTISING, ETC.

DUE DATES

Thursday, November 1 – list of individual group member responsibilities due

Friday, November 9 – biographies of candidate and running mate due

Tuesday, November 13 – Newsletter, Volume 1 information (typed) due to Coach Gaba (this should include candidate bios and head shots/campaign photos)

Thursday, November 15 (LTM day) – Newsletter, Volume 1 distributed

Monday, November 19 – campaign platform position papers due (include any research regarding political, social and economic issues, professional campaigns, etc.) ** Research must be included – cite all sources (including date)

Monday, November 26 – begin advertising!

Friday, November 30 – Newsletter, Volume 2 information (typed) due to Coach Gaba (should include information on political platform)

Tuesday, December 4 – Newsletter, Volume 2 distributed

Thursday, December 6 (LTM day) – group/coach conferences regarding campaign strategies, group work, etc. (group binders checked).

Wednesday, December 12 – Newsletter, Volume 3 information (typed) due to Coach Gaba (should include statement from groups and/or candidate regarding allegations about candidate/group).

Friday, December 14 – Newsletter, Volume 3 distributed.

Tuesday, December 18– trial debates between candidates (questions to be posed by class; this will help determine guidelines of actual debate scheduled for First Semester final exam date)

Thursday, December 20 – Newsletter, Volume 4 information (typed) due to Coach Gaba (reaction to trial debate, comments about candidates’ responses, focus of upcoming debate – including topics/questions)

Monday, January 7 – Newsletter, Volume 4 distributed

Week of January 7-11 – preparation for debate

FIRST SEMESTER EXAM DAY (actual date TBD) – debate! (election binders due)

NOTE – advertising, updates of group binders, information to “the media,” etc. should be ongoing throughout the nine week marking period. All group members should be actively participating in all aspects of campaigning, including contribution of information in binders.