

PSC 4002: ELECTIONS 2018

Senate Election Analysis and Prediction—Fall 2018

For this assignment students will develop an original analysis of an assigned Senate election. The topics discussed in this analysis may vary slightly depending on the specifics of each state's election, but each student should provide an organized analysis of the election's candidates, electorate, and campaigns. Please focus your analysis on the two major party candidates. Papers should be eight to ten double-spaced pages in length with one-inch margins in 12-point Times New Roman font.

Students will present their preliminary analysis in class during weeks 9 and 10. The written assignment is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, November 1. In addition to submitting a paper copy of your proposal, students should submit an electronic copy via Canvas. To submit your paper, (1) log-in to Canvas, (2) click on the "PSC 4002" link, (3) click on the "Assignments" link, (4) click on the "Senate Election Analysis and Prediction" link, (5) click on the "Submit Assignment" link, (6) copy or upload your essay, and (7) click on the "Submit Assignment" link. Electronic papers not received by 11:59 P.M. on November 1 will be considered late even if the paper copy has been turned in.

All writing assignments must follow the American Political Science Association (APSA) style manual, which I have posted on Canvas. Any time you quote, paraphrase, or reference ideas, data, or other material from a resource, it must be cited at the point in the essay where it is mentioned. APSA style uses parenthetical citations that include the author(s) name(s) and year. If you are quoting directly from a resource, you must also include the page number(s) where the quote is located. It is not sufficient to simply have a works cited page. Papers should not be written in the first person. This means avoiding words such as I, me, my, and so on. Your academic writing should also avoid using slang or contractions. Failing to adhere to the formatting requirements and grammatical or spelling mistakes will result in a lower grade. Please proofread and revise your literature review before turning it in.

There are a wide variety of sources available to students to assist with their research. I will provide links to several resources on Canvas. Please be sure to document where you are obtaining your information for this project and use citations throughout your paper.

Candidates

- Who is running? Is one of the candidates an incumbent? If so, briefly characterize their record in Congress. What are the candidates' credentials? Do the candidates have prior political experience? How do the candidates present themselves on their campaign websites? What appear to be the primary strengths and weaknesses of each candidate?

Electorate

- Describe important characteristics of the electorate in terms of demographics and partisanship. Have there been any discernable trends in voting behavior over the past decade in presidential or other statewide elections? What do recent polls tell us about the current state of the election?

Campaigns

Fundraising

- How have the campaigns done, relative to one another, in terms of raising money? Where are the donations coming from (e.g. individual donations, PAC donations, in-state, out-of-state, etc.)? What is your impression of how the campaigns have used these resources? What significant independent groups are seeking to influence the election? Do you expect fundraising play a role in deciding the outcome of the race?

Issues

- What issues are at the forefront of this campaign? Why have these issues been so important? Are the issues of national importance or are they more state specific? What are the candidates' positions on critical issues? Do certain issues advantage one candidate over the other? Have the campaigns focused on different sets of issues?

Strategy

- How has each campaign approached the election? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each campaign? View some television advertisements from each campaign and discuss how each candidate is appealing to voters. What strategies have the campaigns utilized? Are the campaigns competing for certain blocs of voters?

Prediction

- Which candidate will most likely win the election? Provide some details about how you arrived at this prediction.

Candidates	10 pts
Electorate	15 pts
Campaigns	20 pts
Prediction	5 pts
Academic writing style	10 pts