

Political Science 225

Government and Politics in the United States I

Problem Paper

Instructor: Dr. Barry Kay

Due: November 15, 2016

In addition to the presidential election on November 8, 2016, congressional elections will be held in the 435 districts composing the House of Representatives, as well as 34 states where senate seats are being contested. Analyze the 2016 US congressional election as if you were a political consultant hired by one of the candidates (whichever one you like) to assess the conduct of their campaign. Select a candidate, and given your familiarity with public opinion and the American political process, review their strategies for winning votes in different parts of their state or district and among the various segments of the electorate. You may also wish to analyze the reasons for the relative success or failure of your candidate in the election, and make recommendations as to how they could have performed better, however that isn't necessary. Good advice should be tailored to the specific attributes of your candidate and the nature of their state or district in addition to knowledge of the American political system. Your comments can focus upon specific issues that will have particular appeal in the district or state you choose, the appeal to particular interest groups, the management of a media campaign, fund-raising or whatever other campaign concerns you think to be important.

In undertaking this project you might want to make use of newspapers such as the nytimes.com and washingtonpost.com magazines, the *Almanac of American Politics*, CQ.com, the pollster.com, realclearpolitics.com and politico.com web sites and other media material in addition to consulting the various course texts. Those papers submitted late will be subject to a penalty.

N.B. Students who wish to write a paper on some other topic may be permitted to do so only if they have prior approval from the instructor. This will normally require a specific

proposal being submitted by October 18. Those considering this option should speak to the instructor before this date.