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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | ***Campaigns & Elections*** | | |  | | [**Just the Facts, Please**](http://www.wadsworth.com/politicalscience_d/special_features/ext/amgov/political_behavior/ia_campg.html#just)**::**[**Compare & Contrast**](http://www.wadsworth.com/politicalscience_d/special_features/ext/amgov/political_behavior/ia_campg.html#compare)**::**[**Exploration**](http://www.wadsworth.com/politicalscience_d/special_features/ext/amgov/political_behavior/ia_campg.html#exploration) | |  | |  | | **Just the Facts, Please**  1. Center for Response Politics ([http://www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org/)) How much was spent in the 2000 elections? Presidential, Senate, House races? Who are the top individual donors and top corporate donors? How did the major parties fare from these donors?  2. The Federal Elections Commission (<http://www.fec.gov/>) oversees federal elections. What are the current rules for upcoming campaigns and supporting candidates? Summarize the fundraising activities of political parties and political action committees for the years 1996-2000.  3. Campaigns and Elections "Political Oddsmaker" Go to your state and list the odds for the presidential, senate, and house races. How did these odds hold up against the actual vote tallies on Election Day? (<http://www.campaignline.com/odds/index.cfm>)  4. Go to the Vanishing Voter Project (www.vanishingvoter.org). According to Vanishing Voter, what is the American’s view of the election 2000 drama? What methodology did they use? What was the voter involvement and reaction to the campaign? What is the age breakdown of voter involvement? What are the issue questions asked of the candidates?  5. According to the Gallup Organization ([http://www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com/)), what was the public reaction to the election 2000 controversy? How do Americans feel about the Electoral College? What major changes are needed for campaign finance reform?  6. According to the Gallup Organization, how does President Bill Clinton rate eight years after taking office? How does that rating impact Al Gore’s presidential bid? How do Bush and Gore match up on the issues? What is the Nader factor and what is its impact on the presidential election results? Did Ralph Nader spoil the election, and for whom?  7. According to the Gallup Organization, what is the job approval rating for Congress? The Democrats were expected to win in the Congress in election 2000. Why did that not happen? | |  |
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|  |  | **Compare & Contrast**  1. The Commission on Presidential Debates include a web page (<http://www.debates.org/pages/debhis.html>) of past, historic presidential debates. What were the topics and issues discussed at each of the debates? Choose an issue involved in one or more of the debates and compare and contrast each candidate’s approach. If you choose a recent election, go to [http://www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com/) and see whom the public most agreed with.  2. Go to the Rock The Vote site ([http://www.rockthevote.org](http://www.rockthevote.org/)) and take the interactive poll. Compare your answers with fellow classmates. Outline the issues of education, violence, health, and environment. What sources (i.e., newspapers, internet sites) does this website use for its information? What is the history of Rock The Vote? |  |
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|  |  | **Exploration**   1. Common Cause ([http://www.commoncause.org](http://www.commoncause.org/)) is a non-profit organization that promotes government accountability. Using their website, click onto their "Soft Money Laundromat" and summarize the donations made to Republicans and Democrats by name and industry of the donor. Who were the top donors for the years 1996-2000? Who are the "Mystery Donors" and why are they a mystery? Why is soft money such a problem? What solutions for soft money does Common Cause offer?  2. Got to the "FECInfo" Web site at <http://www.tray.com/FECInfo>   1. Select the name of a presidential candidate for the 2000 elections and study the contributions to his or her campaign. Who has given the most money to the candidate? 2. Return to the main page and scroll down to "US House/Senate Campaign Money Info" and select the most recent election for your representative in the House. What categories of people and PACs gave money to the winning candidate? Did money play too large a role in the election of your representative? 3. What percentage of the money given to your representative was from out of state? Do you believe this has a detrimental effect on the election process? Why or why not?   3. The Democracy Project is the portion of Public Television’s website that is devoted to election issues. Visit the site at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/election98/>. The website maintains an archive of information about the elections. Select the link to "The California Senate" in the top left, read the analysis by the two professors of political science, and answer the following questions:   * Characterize the voter groups most likely to support Senator Boxer’s reelection. With which issues was she most strongly linked? Where did Fong’s major support come from? * What is the "Republican dog that did not bark?" * Go back to the main page and select the link to "New York Votes" on the right. Read the analysis. All things being equal, incumbents have a large advantage when running for reelection over their opponents. What reasons did Professor Moss give for Senator D’Amato’s defeat, despite this fact? Who spent the most money in the campaign? * Summarize Professor Moss’s opinion, which can be found at the end of the article, on why D’Amato lost the election. Can you think of other reasons?   4. The electoral college is one of the least-known institutions associated with U.S. elections. Go to [http://www.nara.gov/fedreg/elctcoll/index.html#top](http://www.nara.gov/fedreg/elctcoll/index.html) and you will find the Electoral College’s official website, run by the National Archives and Records Administration. Scroll down and select the link to "Procedural Guide to the Electoral College" under the General Information section. Read the guide and answer the following questions:   * What is the Electoral College? * Who chooses the members of the EC? * Who generally chooses the slates of electors? * When do the electors meet? * What happens if no presidential candidate wins a majority of electoral votes? * What happens if no vice-presidential candidate wins a majority of electoral votes? * Is there a constitutional provision or federal law requiring electors to vote in accordance with the popular vote in their states? * When is Congress scheduled to meet in joint session to conduct the official tally of electoral votes?   5. Go to <http://www.avagara.com/e_c/> and you will be at the Electoral College WebZine site on the internet. The EC WebZine is devoted to defense of the electoral college as an institution. It is often funny, clearly has a point of view, but provides some useful information about how the electoral college operates and the history of the "direct election" movement. Select the link to "Tales of the Unfaithful Electors". Read the article and answer the following questions:   * Discuss the election of 1796. Did every elector vote as pledged? * Discuss Dr. Lloyd W. Bailey’s electoral vote in the 1968 election. Who did he cast his vote for? * Describe the "protest vote" of Margarette Leach. Do you think she got their attention? * Go back to the main page and select the link to "EC’s Election Calculator". Do what many have always wanted to do--control the next election for president!   6. Go to the Non-Partisan Center for Responsive Politics Home Page at <http://www.opensecrets.org/>. The Center for Responsive Politics maintains a profile for all members of congress who ran in the 1998 election. This profile lists all campaign contributions and their sources. Select the link to these profiles, and you will be at the portion of the website that tracks campaign contributions. Select your state on the pulldown menu and select the link to either your senator or congressman. Read the material and answer the following questions for the winning candidate:   * List the total amount of money raised for each candidate in this election. * List the amount and percentage of total funds received from PACs. * Select the link on the left to the "top contributors."   Who were the top contributors of the candidate with the next highest vote total?  Does anything about this campaign finance breakdown surprise you? Why or why not? Be sure to find this information for both 1998 and 2000.   7. Go to the **Project Vote Smart**web site at <http://www.vote-smart.org/>. Hit the link to "Issue Positions" (National Political Awareness Test or NPAT) and then go to that data appropriate to Texas Governor George W. Bush. Similarly, hit the "Special Interest Groups" and Vice-President Al Gore links. After reading the material, answer the following questions:   * What was Bush’s stand on abortion and affirmative action? * What was the Governor’s position on education and environment/energy? * What was Bush’s stand on key gun and health issues? * Regarding Gore, how did his voting record square with various groups dealing with Abortion, Christian Family Issues, Nuclear Arms Control, Organized Labor, and Women’s Issues? * After perusing both data sets, how would you characterize the political philosophy and/or ideologies of the two presidential candidates?   Now hit the link to "Voter Registration Information for Your State." If a person was not registered to vote, how would he or she go about becoming registered in your state? How would an absentee ballot be obtained? What are the time constraints involved in your state’s registration process? |  |