

POLI 100DA: Voting, Campaigning, and Elections

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Candidate Spending Plan

Due: Monday, July 30, 2:00pm
Submit to Turn it In; 15% of Total Grade

Purpose:

The purpose of this assignment is to understand campaign fundraising and spending in American campaigns. This assignment, thus, serves the following primary goals:

1. Learn about publicly available data on campaign contributions and spending
2. Apply knowledge of campaign contributions and spending patterns to developing a successful campaign budget, strategically allocating resources
3. Summarize and concisely communicate a spending plan that reflects an underlying campaign strategy

Assignment:

Your task is to write a 1-page memo explaining your campaign spending plan proposal for your candidate. You will first research how much money your candidate has raised, how much the current incumbent in your district raised in the previous election, and how much money your opponent has raised. Next, you will propose a fundraising goal reflecting how much money your candidate needs to raise. Finally, you will allocate those resources toward various campaign activities, such as voter outreach, phone-banking, print ads, television ads, operating costs, events, and staff wages. You will present this budget in a table to accompany your memo that justifies your decisions.

Research:

- Conduct background research on campaign fundraising and spending by your candidate and in your district using [opensecrets.org](https://www.opensecrets.org). You can navigate to your district and select the election cycle of interest to view how much money each candidate has raised, spent, and has on hand. For example, this page shows the information for Mike Levin and Diane Harkey in CA CD 49 in 2018: <https://www.opensecrets.org/races/summary?cycle=2018&id=CA49>. There is a lot of information about fundraising and spending here! For example:
 - The “Candidates” tab will show you the source of funds (e.g. small individual contributions less than or equal to \$200, PAC contributions, self-financing, etc.) by candidate
 - The “Contributors” tab will show you the top contributors to each candidate (e.g. we can see that Alphabet Inc and the University of California were Mike Levin’s top contributors, while Flutek and Heslin Holdings were Diane Harkey’s top contributors). Note: “the organizations themselves did not donate, rather the money came from the organizations’ PACs, their individual members or employees or owners, and those individuals’ immediate families” (Open Secrets).
 - The “Industries” tab will show you the top industries that contributed to the candidates in your district.
 - The “Sectors” tab will show you how much money candidates raised in each sector (e.g. Agribusiness, Construction, Defense, Energy/Natural Resources, Labor, Ideology/Single-Issue, etc.)
 - The “PACs” tab will show you how much money candidates raised from different types of PACs (e.g. ideological, business, labor)

- The “Geography” tab will show you how much money each candidate raised from in-state contributions and out-of-state contributions.
- Get a sense for your candidate’s campaign expenditures by looking at the FEC (Federal Election Commission) data. For example, Diane Harkey’s page is here:
https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?two_year_transaction_period=2018&data_type=processed&committee_id=C00665513&min_date=01%2F01%2F2017&max_date=06%2F27%2F2018
 - From this website, you can search for your candidate using the box on the left side of the screen:
https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?data_type=processed&two_year_transaction_period=2018&min_date=01%2F01%2F2017&max_date=06%2F27%2F2018
 - Scroll through to look at the amount of money your candidate has been spending on various campaign activities. For example, at the link above we see that Diane Harkey for Congress spent \$18,395 on a media buy and \$2,731 on outdoor signs in May.
- You should conduct enough research to report the following in your memo:
 - How much money has your candidate raised so far?
 - How much money has your candidate spent so far?
 - How much money does your candidate have available (e.g. cash on hand)?

Spending Plan

You should create a table that reflects your spending plan. The table should look similar to the example below. Your plan should reflect how much you anticipate spending for the remainder of the campaign. You do not need to report spending that has already occurred.

Expenditure Category	Amount
Staff	
Media Buy	
Canvassing	
Phonebanking	
Print Mailers	
Outdoor Signs	
Miscellaneous Swag (T-shirts, hats, bumper stickers)	
Transportation	
Fundraising Events	
Total	

Memo

Your task is to write a 1-page memo (300-500 words) explaining your fundraising and spending proposal to your colleagues on the campaign. Campaigns move quickly, so it is important to write concisely. Your memo should be formatted using these guidelines: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/03/>, sample here: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/04/>. There is a detailed example of how your memo should be formatted and what should be included in each section on the next page. Throughout your memo, you should reference the research you conducted for this assignment and class concepts.

TO: Jane Doe, Campaign Manager
FROM: Taylor Carlson, Finance Director, ___ for Congress
DATE: July 23, 2018
SUBJECT: August-November Campaign Spending Plan

[Introduction: ~100-150 words, single spaced, complete sentences]

- Explain the purpose of the memo
- List how much money the candidate has raised so far, has spent so far, and has available (on hand)
- Describe generally from where the funds have been raised (e.g. small donations, large donations, PACs, industries, etc.) and what the key expenditures have been (e.g. media buys, mailers, staff, etc.)
- Conclude with a 1 sentence summary of your proposal that will be detailed in the sections that follow

Fundraising Goals

[Fundraising Goals: ~100-150 words, single spaced, complete sentences]

- Describe how much money you think the campaign can reasonably expect to raise by November
- Describe your plan for how to raise that money (e.g. will you target small donations, particular industries, etc.; will you host events, will you highlight certain policy positions, have an online/social media fundraising campaign, etc.)

Spending Plan

[Spending Plan: ~ 100-200 words, single spaced, complete sentences]

- Reference the attached table, to appear on the second page, that details the spending plan
- Explain how you propose spending the money you hope to raise, and what the purpose of these expenditures will be (e.g. mobilization, persuasion, standard operating costs, etc.)
- Explain why you chose these approaches (e.g. why invest in mailers?)

Summary

[Conclusion: ~50-100 words, single-spaced, complete sentences]

- Summarize the main argument of your proposal

*Insert your table on the next page

Grading:

	F	D	C	B	A
Research 25%	No evidence of research on candidate's fundraising, expenditures, or district spending history	Some evidence of research on the candidate's fundraising, expenditures, or district spending history but it is incomplete and inaccurate (e.g. only one of those categories are researched, numbers are wrong)	Evidence of research on the candidate's fundraising or expenditures, but not both. District spending history is missing. Starts to discuss information from other tabs (e.g. "Industries," "Sectors"), but is overall incomplete or not well-incorporated into the memo	Evidence of research on the candidate's fundraising, expenditures, and district spending history. Discusses information from at least one other tab (e.g. "Industries," "Sectors"), but the information is a bit vague and not fully integrated into the strategy in the memo	Evidence of research on the candidate's fundraising, expenditures, and district spending history. Discusses information from at least two other tabs (e.g. "Industries," "Sectors"). The information is clear and specific, giving example dollar amounts for both fundraising and expenditure examples. The research is fully integrated into the strategy in the memo
Writing 20%	Writing does not meet the length requirement; includes severe grammar or spelling errors	Writing is close to the length requirement; includes many grammar or spelling errors	Writing meets the length requirement but includes many grammar or spelling errors	Writing meets the length requirement, may include some grammar or spelling errors, but is generally clear	Writing meets the length requirement, is free of grammar or spelling errors, and is clearly written
Fundraising Goals 30%	Fundraising goals section is missing	Memo includes a fundraising goal, but there is no justification for the goal nor a plan for how to reach it	Memo includes a fundraising goal and a vague justification for it. The plan for how to reach the goal is vague, incomplete, or missing altogether	Memo includes a fundraising goal and a justification for it. The plan for how to reach the goal is specific. The justification or plan lack references to class concepts or the research conducted for this memo	Memo includes a fundraising goal and a justification for it. The plan for how to reach the goal is specific. The justification or plan include references to class concepts and the research conducted for this memo
Spending Plan 25%	Spending plan section is missing	A vague discussion of a spending plan is included, but the table is missing (or the table is there, but no discussion of it)	The spending plan discussion and table are included, but are vague and do not make reference to class concepts or the research conducted for this assignment	The spending plan discussion and table are included. The table includes a detailed spending allocation and the justification is thoughtful and complete. The justification does not accurately reference class concepts or fully apply research conducted for this assignment	The spending plan discussion and table are included. The table includes a detailed spending allocation and the justification is thoughtful and complete. The justification accurately references class concepts and fully applies research conducted for this assignment