



Campaigns and Elections

Dr. Patrick Scott

Campaigns and Elections

- The Changing Nature of Campaigns
 - Internet Web Sites
 - Polling and Media Consultants
 - Computerized Mailing Lists
 - Focus Groups



Presidential Campaign strategies:

- Run to the Middle
- Preserve your base while trying to win over the undecided
- Focus on the states with the most payoff

CAMPAIGN FINANCING:

- In 2004 the average cost to run for the House – roughly \$530,000.
 - Roy Blunt spent \$3.5 million
- For the Senate, close to \$6.5 million.
 - Kit Bond raised \$8.9 million



Presidential Campaign Spending

- Kerry: \$310 million
- Bush: \$345 million
- Both received about \$75 million in public funds

Overview of Campaign Finance Reform

- **The Federal Election Campaign Act - 1971** (Applies to **Presidential** candidates). Designed to:
- Prevent undue influence by any one individual donor by limiting individual contributions:
- Prevent large imbalances in the level of money candidates received by setting up a system of public financing of presidential campaigns.
- Limit the amount of money that Presidential candidates could spend out of their own pocket IF THEY CHOOSE TO ACCEPT FEDERAL FUNDS -

Role of the Federal Election Commission

- Monitor Campaign Contributions and Expenditures
- Specific Rules:
 - For individuals, \$2,000 limit per candidate per election
 - Individual contributions of up to \$25,000 to a national party committee

The Role of Political Action Committees

- What are PAC's?
- Specific Limits
 - \$5,000 limit from an individual to any one PAC per year
 - \$5,000 limit from a PAC to a candidate per election

The Growing Influence of PAC' s

- Indirect PAC contributions – no limits
- Who do PAC' s support?
- Effects of PAC Influence

Two Persistent Problems

- Soft Money
 - Funds raised by the two major parties that are not subject to limits
 - Supposed to be used for “party building activities” (e.g., get out the vote drives; voter registration activities)
 - In 2000, soft money contributions to both parties were about 500 million.

Two Persistent Problems

- Independent Expenditures
 - *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976) upheld use of independent expenditures

Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (McCain-Feingold)

- Banned Soft Money
- Increased limits for individual contributions

The New Players: 527's

- 2004 – over \$500 million contributed
- No disclosure requirements, no contribution limits, no spending limits
- Is this good or bad for democracy?

Reforming the System

- All federal campaigns publicly financed?
- Lower the costs of elections
 - Shorten the campaign season
 - Require broadcasters to provide free or low-cost advertising for candidates

Reforming the System

- Eliminate PAC contributions?
- Eliminate 527's?
- Set spending limits on campaigns?

Presidential Nominating Conventions

- How have they changed over time?
- Convention delegates - who are they? What do they do? What is their purpose?

ELECTIONS

- **Caucuses** - yesterday and today
- **Primaries** - What are they? What is their purpose?
- Who votes in primaries? Effects?

Types of Primaries

- **open**
- **blanket**
- **closed**



Electoral college

- What is it?
- How does it work?