

COMM 417: Wo/Men & Elections

(Alternative title: *Maiden/Mother/Crone/Candidate: The Competing (Communication) Roles of Public Woman*)

Christina Knopf α Morey Hall 248 α Ext. 2883 α knopfc@potsdam.edu

Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday 12:45-3:30

Course Rationale, Description, & Goals:

The year 2008 put the Oval Office within conceivable reach of a woman, thanks to the countless public women who had gone before - negotiating their platforms, their identities, their femininity, their language use, their speaking styles, their wardrobes, and their hairstyles in order to gain entrance to the man's world of citizenship, business, politics, and equality.

Campaign rhetoric is infused with implicit messages about masculinity, as political leadership has long been predicated on masculinized ideals of speech, conduct, and character. Further complicating matters for the women that have been increasingly involved in the American political sphere for the last 100+ years is that the media coverage of women reveals that stories about women, female candidates or elected representatives, and so-called women's issues often fail to generate quality media coverage.

This course will examine the lives, communication styles, media coverage, and social expectations of the women of modern history who dared to stand up and speak out.

This class is designed to acquaint students with important issues dealing with women, politics, and public communication. The goal of this course is to engage students in a discussion of the variety of ways gender issues intersect with American politics, in terms of leaders, voters, and the symbolic roles of women. It will look in depth at the presidential bids by Margaret Chase Smith, Patricia Schroeder, Elizabeth Dole, Carol Moseley Braun, and Hillary Clinton. It will also discuss Shirley Chisholm, Barbara Jordan, Ann Richards, Helen Gurley Brown, Z. Budapest, and other prominent female politicians, leaders, and activists, with consideration given not just to women politicians, but also to second wave and third wave feminist activism.

By using a broad view of gender issues, this course will ask students to consider the tensions between masculine imperatives and possible "feminization" of politics that affect both men and women as leaders and voters. Topics may include:

- α Background in gender studies & the feminist public sphere: Why do gender studies? What's feminist research? And where's the public sphere?
- α A Brief History of American Women: Votes for Women, or the First Wave.
- α Women's Political Participation – Then & Now: From raising leaders to being leaders: leaving the quilting bee and entering the arena.
- α Men and Women as Political Participants: A Look at the Gender Gap: The Soccer Mom & the NASCAR Dad - "men's issues" and "women's issues"
- α Masculine Metaphors and the Heroic Monomyth: Politics is war, & women aren't allowed in combat.
- α Media Representations of Wo(men) & Symbolic Woman: Heroine or harpy? Savior or seductress?
- α Communicating Gender & The Feminine Style: Double-breasted suits to high-heeled boots – being a woman in a man's world means playing by their rules, or making your own.

Course Outcomes:

Through lecture, readings, examples, open dialogues, discussion of current events, reports of current research, and the examination of popular culture artifacts, students will learn to identify, discuss, and critique the following:

- **The historical aspects of women's participation in American politics.**

This will be emphasized through course readings & knowledge will be assessed through reading comment cards & discussion.

- **The implications of voter orientations and the "gender gap."**

Comprehension & application will be assessed through the campaign project.

- **The relationship between gender ideals and political policy and style.**

This will be emphasized in class discussions. Comprehension & application will be assessed through blog posts and campaign projects.

- **The media's role in enforcing cultural imperatives of gender expectations.**

This will be emphasized in readings & discussions. Comprehension and critical application of the knowledge will be assessed through blogs and the campaign project.

- **Differences in rhetorical behavior between male and female politicians.**

This will be emphasized, and comprehension will be assessed, through class discussions. Application of the knowledge will be assessed through the campaign project.

- **The symbolic roles of women in society.**

This will be emphasized in discussion. Comprehension and application of knowledge will be assessed through reading comment cards & discussion.

General Education Description & Goals:

This course is consistent with the goals of the American History (AH) Mode of Inquiry.

Through its examination of women in the public sphere, this course emphasizes both unity and diversity: the diversity inherent in a minority/disadvantaged group (women generally, as well as women of color in some cases) challenging the status quo, and the unity of a movement (ie: activist groups, campaigns, ideologies). It is especially concerned with the effects of media institutions, governmental institutions, religious institutions and the legal systems on women in society. All of these common institutions have shaped and continue to influence the speaking styles and political strategies of women and other oppressed groups in American society, and must therefore be examined & discussed throughout the course. Discussion and examination of female leaders from around the world, representations of women in other countries, and the political place of women in other countries will be part of understanding the public woman. This may include emphasis on U.S./Middle-East relations in regards to "woman's place" in politics and society, and the efforts of groups like Amnesty International to change to status and treatment of women around the world. As focused scholastic research books (rather than "catch-all" textbooks), the required texts exemplify the use of historical artifacts to analyze and discuss the presidential bids of several female candidates. Within the First Lady for President! Group Project students will gather both primary and secondary sources on a former First Lady in order to create a campaign plan for her modern-day presidential bid. Additionally, we will compare political strategies of women candidates of today versus their predecessors and discuss how changing social and political climates and historic events have advanced and challenged the women's movement. A central component of this course will be looking at the speeches and statements of female candidates and activists themselves and analyzing these sources in class (rhetorical criticism).

Required Texts:

Falk, E. (2007). Women for President: Media Bias in Eight Campaigns. University of Chicago Press.

Gutgold, N.D. (2006). Paving the Way for Madam President. New York: Lexington Books.

Assignments & Assessments:

LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED except in extreme circumstances with documentation. (Note: Extreme circumstances are things like college sanctioned events, hospitalization, serious illness, religious observances, or death in the immediate family. They do not include events like hangovers, colds, roommate disputes, flues, funerals, romantic troubles, vacations, weddings, various appointments, work conflicts, or exams and papers in other classes. Documentation must come from official sources like coaches, doctors, lawyers, or clergy. They are not notes from your parents.)

If you know in advance you will not be in class when an assignment is due, turn it in early.

I don't like being rigid about deadlines but they are a fact of life and there's no good reason why this class should be any different. In the working world, lateness carries serious consequences - from having to make-up for missed time, to reduced pay, to termination. Besides, it's not fair to the people who made the effort to do the work on time to pretend the deadlines don't matter.



SYLLABUS QUIZ 5 BONUS POINTS

On the second day of class, you will take an open-book, 10 question, short- answer quiz about the contents of the syllabus. This is to emphasize its importance to your success in the course and to ensure that you read the syllabus. The points you earn will be added to your overall course grade.

CHAPTER READING COMMENTS 15 POINTS

For each assigned chapter, you will come to class with a comment, question, or discussion starter written on a 3x5" index card. I may collect these cards for use during class time or may randomly call on people to help further discussions. One point each card.

This assignment replaces exams in this course. Exams allow me to evaluate retention and comprehension of materials, but reading responses allow me to assess comprehension. Furthermore, because there are no "wrong" answers in this kind of work, I hope to advance the higher education goals of individual and community growth through learning.

THE MEDIATED WOMAN BI-MONTHLY BLOG 25 POINTS

At six times during the semester (twice in February, March, and April) you will be expected to post to a self-created blog reflecting on one or more current media (re)presentations of women or women's issues (preferably, though men's are OK, too) These entries should be thoughtful, critical, and related to course content (connecting current events to readings or class discussions), and should be 2-6 paragraphs in length. Each entry is worth 4 points – awarded for completion, insight, and course relevance. Students may read and comment, constructively, on each other's blogs for extra credit.

You can use any blogging site you want – just make sure you give or send me the address. A few popular blogging networks are: blogger.com, blog.com, wordpress.com. (You can also use a Facebook blog application, just make sure you set it so I can see it.) Pseudonyms may be used, as long as I have them.

Again, because there are no "wrong" answers in this kind of work, I hope to advance the higher education goals of individual and community growth through learning.

FIRST LADY FOR PRESIDENT! GROUP PROJECT 60 POINTS

<i>Political Biography</i>	<i>5 points</i>
<i>Campaign Speech (with class presentation)</i>	<i>10 points</i>
<i>Campaign Advertisement (with class presentation)</i>	<i>15 points</i>
<i>Campaign Plan</i>	<i>30 points</i>

Objective: To help you understand the complex image-construction process involved in American presidential campaigns, and how gender complicates that process. To allow you to act as communication professionals and strategize a media plan for a presidential candidate. To give you the opportunity to work in groups.

Overview: In this project, you will work in groups of 3 to devise a media/campaign plan for a presidential candidate, and her family (where appropriate) – but there's a catch: the candidate will be a former First Lady. The goal of the group is to devise a communication strategy for the candidate to run in 2012. You will need to know the history and background of the candidate and her family, but will also use some latitude and creativity to imagine how she would be today (for example, imagine Abigail Adams as a modern woman or consider how Edith Wilson's involvement would be scrutinized by modern media.)

The plan will detail the following:

- a political biography of the candidate, including relevant personal information (family, background, interests, scandals, etcetera – as appropriate) and political/public activities and involvement. Graded on completion, grammar, and accuracy.
- strengths and weaknesses: the candidate's strengths in dealing with the media & public, and any problems she will need to overcome
- media events: a schedule of rallies/stump speeches for the candidate & family for a 1 month period, including locations, target audiences, & expected media coverage.

- speeches: provide basic talking points that the candidate & her spouse would use at a typical rally. Students will develop one candidate speech fully, and present it, as part of the project.Δ
- media appearances: list talk shows, morning/late night shows, etc., that the candidate & her spouse should be on, & explain the benefit of these particular appearances
- interviews: list the media outlets that would be targeted for sit-down interviews with the family & why
- advertisements: a 2-3 page statement explaining how the candidate would be advertised, identifying the various media outlets and the core messages. Students will fully develop & present one ad for the project. ΔΔ
- guest appearances/endorsements: a list of names/organizations that would support the candidate and garner media attention for the campaign
- miscellaneous: anything else you think is essential to the successful campaign of the candidate. This will vary by candidate

ΔCampaign speech genres include: Announcement speeches, Acceptance speeches, Apologias, News conferences, and “Why I Am Running” speeches tailored to particular audiences.

All group members should have some active part in the presentation. Potential roles include introductory speaker, candidate, supporters, running mates, family members, closing speaker

Graded on the following components:

Speech employs the basic skills of public speaking (intro, organization, evidence, delivery, conclusion)	No (0)	Somewhat (1)	Definitely (2)
Shows evidence of audience analysis, correctly identifying a worthwhile audience & message	No (0)	Somewhat (1)	Definitely (2)
Is sensitive to the image needs of the candidate (her weaknesses, strengths, obstacles) in the campaign	No (0)	Somewhat (1)	Definitely (2)
Describes a problem/issue & visualizes a solution/plan	No (0)	Somewhat (1)	Definitely (2)
All group members participate in a cohesive and well planned way	No (0)	Somewhat (1)	Definitely (2)

Speechwriters are often not experts in a particular policy area, but they are typically more alert to issues such as image construction, meaning, significance, audience analysis, and how certain issues are likely to “play in Peoria.” This is the kind of thing you should consider in writing your speech.

ΔΔCampaign advertisement genres include: Ads extolling the candidate’s virtues, ads condemning/attacking/questioning the opponent, and ads responding to attacks/innuendos/accusations.

These ads may be concept ads – relying on images to make an impression; personal witness or “man on the street” – using ordinary citizens to make claims; neutral reporter – relying on informational statements to lead the audience to a conclusion, comparative – contrasting the opponent’s record to the candidate’s; neutral authority – use of headlines and news quotes to make an argument; or, humorous – using jokes or novel approaches to get the audience’s attention or to make attacks more palatable.

Ad formats may be radio spots, TV commercials, Web pages, fliers, publications, etcetera.

Presentation may be in the form of a video, PowerPoint, display & explanation of a story board, skit, etcetera. Be creative. All group members must have some active role in the presentation.

Graded on the following components:

Visual materials and information are neat, free of errors, comprehensive, well planned, & presented clearly.	No (0)	Partially (1)	Mostly (2)	Completely (3)
Demonstrates relevant application of communication theory & research	No (0)	Partially (1)	Mostly (2)	Completely (3)
Is sensitive to the image needs of the candidate (her weaknesses, strengths, obstacles) in the campaign	No (0)	Partially (1)	Mostly (2)	Completely (3)
Shows evidence of audience analysis, correctly identifying a worthwhile audience & message	No (0)	Partially (1)	Mostly (2)	Completely (3)
All group members participate in a cohesive and well planned way	No (0)	Partially (1)	Mostly (2)	Completely (3)

Written Work: Teams will turn in a binder that includes all pertinent materials listed above*. Any additional visual aid materials should also be submitted for review. The binder should also include a cover letter than explains each individual team member’s contributions to the project, and a table of contents. Materials must be properly cited, typed, clearly written, and closely proofread. {* The biography will be turned in separately early in the semester to help ensure a timely start to the project.}

Presentations: As designated, certain parts of the project will be presented to the class. Each team member is expected to play some role in these presentations.

Grading: Projects will be graded on the sophistication of the plan and how well the project reflects an understanding of the candidate, the target audiences, and the gender issues of each. The goal is to be original and creative, but also to demonstrate an understanding and application of the course material.

The final campaign plan will be graded as follows:

Criteria/Pts	10	8	6	4	2	Total
<i>Knowledge Application</i>	Solid evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	Occasional evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	Limited evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	Little evidence of relevant application of communication theory and research.	No evidence of relevant application of communication theory & research.	
<i>Written Work</i>	Written work is clear, comprehensive, free of errors, accurate & cohesive.	Written work is mostly comprehensive & contains only minor errors.	Written work is mostly comprehensive but is unclear &/or not cohesive & contains errors.	Written work is missing key elements, contains errors, & is somewhat confusing.	Written work is incomplete, contains numerous inaccuracies & errors, & is unorganized.	
<i>Completion & Timeliness</i>	All materials are complete, well organized, & turned in on time.	All materials are complete & turned in on time.	Some portions of the materials are either incomplete or late.	Much of the project is incomplete or turned in late.	No project materials are handed in complete & on time.	
<i>Total</i>						



Grading

Grades are earned by you, they are not awarded or deducted by me. You start this class and every assignment at “zero;” you should understand each grade as being a level of achievement, rather than a level of loss. (That is to say, don’t ask “What did I lose points on?” instead ask “How could I have earned more points?”) When you get scores on assignments I’m not *giving* you a grade, you’re earning it.

Part of my job, and part of what you’re paying for, is an honest evaluation of what you do. Sometimes you may not like what you hear, and I’ll try to tell you how well you did in the most positive way I can think of, but you can’t improve unless you know what mistakes you’re making or what weaknesses you have as well as what you’re doing well.

I prefer intrinsic motivations, and therefore, am frankly not a fan of giving a lot of graded assignments. I believe this extrinsic reward is too often the only motivation for students to complete assignments, which takes attention away from the ultimate goal of individual and community growth through learning. A college education should be viewed as a privilege and an opportunity to become informed and scholarly. However, for lack of a better system and a larger population recognizing that even non-graded assignments are important, grades will be assigned in this class.

Work that meets the minimum requirements of an assignment, is completed on time and displays average involvement with the course content is deserving of a 2.0

Higher grades are awarded to work that goes above and beyond the minimum standards to produce papers and presentations that reflect superior intellectual effort, excellence in critical analysis and overall creativity in the approach towards any given assignment. A 4.0 is attainable but will require much more than minimal effort.

Wherever appropriate, I use rubrics to grade work in this class. Not only do rubrics make the grading process more efficient by saving time, to help get your work back to you faster, and ensuring consistency from student-to-student and from day-to-day, but they also should help to make my expectations clear to you. Take advantage of the information and insight they provide you by using them to check your own work in advance of submission. They are attached to this syllabus.

If you do not complete all the work for this class, you might not pass the class. Do the work.

Grades are broken down in **this class** as follows:

4.0 (A)	96-100	2.0 (C)	67-70
3.7 (A-)	91-95	1.7 (C-)	61-66
3.3 (B+)	86-90	1.3 (D+)	57-60
3.0 (B)	80-85	1.0 (D)	51-56
2.7 (B-)	76-79	0.0 (F)	0-50
2.3 (C+)	71-75		

Academic Integrity

To plagiarize is to pass off ideas or words of someone else as your own or to use created productions without crediting the source. It is literary and intellectual theft when you present work that someone else did as being new and original. If you use the un-credited words or ideas of another source (including the Internet) you will fail the assignment and possibly the course. *If you aren't concerned by how much you personally lose by plagiarizing, consider how much it sucks when someone else takes credit for your idea or your effort, and remember that if you're tempted to deliberately plagiarize or simply do sloppy work.*

Other forms of dishonesty or cheating are also not tolerated and will result in a failure of the assignment and/or class. These include, but are not limited to: using non-sanctioned notes on an exam, using electronic devices to get answers for an exam, copying others' assignments, using work from "paper mills," turning in work from another class without seeking permission from me and the other instructor.... If you think you are engaging in questionable behavior, you probably are, so either don't do it or seek clarification.

For these reasons, students in this course will be responsible for authenticating any assignment submitted to the instructor. If asked, you must be able to produce proof that the assignment you submitted is in fact your own work. Therefore, I recommend that you keep copies of all drafts of your work, make photocopies and/or careful notes of research materials, save drafts or versions of assignments under individual file names on computer disks, etc. (This is a good practice for any and all classes. Not only will it protect you should you ever be accused of academic dishonesty, but it also protects you in instances of computer malfunctions, stolen bags, spilled coffee, and bad filing systems.) In addition to requiring a student to authenticate his/her work, I may employ other means of ascertaining the authenticity or originality of your assignments – such as engaging in internet searches, requiring students to explain their work and/or process orally, etc.

For additional information on Academic Integrity and Standards at SUNY Potsdam, see page 41 in the Undergraduate Catalog (electronic PDF version available at www.potsdam.edu/catalog).

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory! If you cannot be to every class on time, then you should not take this class.

Regular, timely, attendance is expected. In-class work and assignments that are missed during an absence cannot be made up, except in extreme circumstances with documentation.

I know many students think mandatory attendance in college is a drag or is unfair. After all, you're paying for college so you should have the right to show up or not. That's why I don't have a set grading policy regarding attendance. BUT attendance is mandatory and not showing up to class will impact your grade on multiple levels.

Attendance is mandatory and is graded in many classes for a variety of reasons:

- ! *As instructors we are the sort-of "guardians" of your college education. We have a responsibility to maintain the integrity and reputation of SUNY Potsdam. If you want your diploma to mean anything, we have to set standards - otherwise, you might as well buy a diploma through one of those Internet offers.*
- ! *Showing up is a big part of most things in life - socializing, voting, working... you have to show up. School's no different. You may face employers who have even stricter attendance policies than your teachers have, so think of attendance policies as part of your career preparation while in college.*
- ! *Your attendance impacts more than just you. Class dynamics and activities change drastically depending on the number of students in the room. When you sign up for the class, you are taking on a responsibility - to yourself, to your instructor, and to your classmates.*
- ! *If you don't come to class, you're wasting a lot of money.*

Late arrivals are frowned upon. Frequent tardiness is counterproductive and will be noted. In this case, you will be asked to either adjust your schedule so that you can be on time or to withdraw from the class. *Hey, I know sh*t happens. We all have bad days, and I would rather see you arrive late, with wet hair, mismatched shoes, and only a gum wrapper to write on than have you miss the class completely - just don't make it a habit. I don't like to be so harsh, especially knowing that sometimes jobs or even other classes can create timing issues for some students, but a lot of "housekeeping" is done at the start of each class meeting and regular tardiness, no matter how justifiable, creates many problems.*

And remember... I don't necessarily have to show up for class, let alone be on time, myself -but if I only appeared when I felt like it, you wouldn't appreciate my behavior.

When you arrive late, please enter the classroom quietly at an appropriate moment, and take the first available seat. Do not make a lot of noise, do not interrupt to offer apologies, and do not intrude upon the entire class by searching for a seat you like or cutting across the front of the room. Being late is something that should cause some embarrassment – not be an opportunity for a grand entrance and 15 seconds of attention.

I reserve the right to lower your grade if poor attendance or frequent tardiness have interfered with your performance in the course or have been disruptive to the class.

If you feel that you have an important reason for missing or skipping all or part of class, that is your choice to make. Only you can weigh the costs and benefits of that decision and determine whether or not you are comfortable with the consequences. And only you are responsible for those consequences.

In the case of prolonged absences from class of one week or more, you must notify me immediately in order to make arrangements. **Consecutive absences of one week or more, without notice from you, will result in a failure.**

Additional information regarding Attendance can be found on pages 49-50 in the Undergraduate Catalog (electronic PDF version available at www.potsdam.edu/catalog).

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Please keep a positive attitude. It will make things easier on everyone.

Refrain from cussing in written work or *at* me (I don't mind if you swear in class, as long as it's not directed at another person & you are mindful of your classmates.)

Please minimize class disruptions – this includes leaving the room, eating, doing non-class-related tasks, having inappropriate conversations with others, etc. *I can't eat a Big Mac during class, leave the room repeatedly to use the bathroom or make a phone call, send emails, text my friends, etcetera – and if I can survive class time without those things, so can you.*

Electronic devices are not permitted during regular class time. Text messaging, taking phone calls, playing computer games, listening to music, etcetera during class is inconsiderate to me and to your fellow classmates. Not all of us can even afford the luxury of owning such devices that allow for efficiency and multi-tasking, making their use during class not only rude but also insensitive.

Recommended Readings – stuff that might help you with your project

Burns, L.M. (2008). *First Ladies & the Fourth Estate: Press Framing of Presidential Wives*. Northern Illinois University Press.

Carroll, S.J. (1994). *Women as Candidates in American Politics, 2nd ed.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Conway, M.M., Steuernagel, G.A. & Ahern, D.W. (1997). *Women and Political Participation: Cultural Change in the Political Arena*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Freeman, J. (2000). *A Room at a Time: How Women Entered Party Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Kaptur, M. (1996). *Women of Congress: A Twentieth-Century Odyssey*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Quarterly Inc.

Norris, P. (1997). *Women, Media, and Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Watson & Eksterowicz (2003). *The Presidential Companion: Readings on the First Ladies of the Twentieth Century*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.

Calendar of Due Dates – Readings & Assignments Are Due on the Day Marked
 Number of pages per reading have been indicated for your advance planning.
 Some class time will be devoted to group work – be prepared on days indicated

TOPIC	DATE	DUE
Intro	Tu. 1/20	
	Th. 1/22	syllabus quiz
Overview	Tu. 1/27	<u>Madam President Introduction</u> [17 pages]
	Th. 1/29	<u>Women for President Introduction</u> [15 pages]
Margaret Chase Smith	Tu. 2/3	<u>Madam President chapter 1</u> [25 pages]
	Th. 2/5	<u>Women for President chapter 1</u> [12 pages]
Shirley Chisholm	Tu. 2/10	<u>Madam President chapter 2</u> [23 pages]
	Th. 2/12	
Sarah & Caroline	Tu. 2/17	No classes
	Th. 2/19	<u>Women for President chapter 2</u> [17 pages]
Patricia Scott Schroeder Elizabeth Dole	Tu. 2/24	<u>Madam President chapter 3</u> [21 pages]
	Th. 2/26	<u>Madam President chapter 4</u> [24 pages]
Hillary Clinton	Tu. 3/3	<u>Women for President chapter 3</u> [23 pages]
	Th. 3/5	
	Tu. 3/10	<i>class time to work with groups</i>
	Th. 3/12	Political Candidate Biography due
Carol Moseley Braun	Tu. 3/17	<u>Madam President chapter 5</u> [22 pages]
	Th. 3/19	<u>Women for President chapter 4</u> [13 pages]
	Tu. 3/24	No classes
	Th. 3/26	No classes
	Tu. 3/31	<i>class time to work with groups</i>
	Th. 4/2	
	Tu. 4/7	Campaign Speech Presentations
	Th. 4/9	<u>Women for President chapters 5 & 6</u> [32 pages]
Gendered Voting	Tu. 4/14	<u>Madam President chapter 6</u> [7 pages]
	Th. 4/16	<u>Women for President chapter 7 AND conclusion</u> [19 pages]
	Tu. 4/21	
	Th. 4/23	Class cancelled - <i>class time to work with groups</i>
	Tu. 4/28	Campaign Advertisement Presentations
	Th. 4/30	
	Tu. 5/5	
	Th. 5/7	<i>class time to work with groups</i>

Fr. 5/15, 10:15 AM - 12:15 PM Campaign Plans Due – informal presentations & class vote

FIRST LADY FOR PRESIDENT! CAMPAIGN PLAN

In this project, you will work in groups of 3 to devise a media/campaign plan for a presidential candidate, and her family (where appropriate) – but there's a catch: the candidate will be a former First Lady. The goal of the group is to devise a communication strategy for the candidate to run in 2012. You will need to know the history and background of the candidate and her family, but will also use some latitude and creativity to imagine how she would be today (for example, imagine Abigail Adams as a modern woman or consider how Edith Wilson's involvement would be scrutinized by modern media.) The plan will detail the following things. **Treat each item as a separate mini-paper & label it with the appropriate heading. This way you, and I, can be sure that nothing was overlooked. Double space all pages; put them into a binder/cover to submit. Be sure to base your decisions on what you know from the course; reference the texts or class notes when appropriate.**

Political Biography: includes relevant personal information (family, background, interests, scandals, etcetera – as appropriate) and political/public activities and involvement. You should clean-up the original biography, if there were any errors or problems. You may choose to add some additional information, though it's not required. (About 5 pages.)

Strengths & Weaknesses: List and explain the candidate's strengths in dealing with the media & public, as well as any problems she will need to overcome. (1-2 pages)

Media Events: Create a schedule of rallies, stump speeches, ribbon cutting ceremonies, dedications, award- presentations (whatever is appropriate) for the candidate & her family members (they may do some events separately) for one month. Include locations, target audiences, & expected media coverage (i.e., local or national, print or broadcast). You will need to decide at what point in the campaign this month would be – primaries, following the convention, right before the election...

Speeches: provide basic talking points (not full speeches) that the candidate & her spouse would use at a typical rally. This means you should make two lists, one for the candidate and one for the spouse (Jackie Kennedy people can choose either JFK or Aristotle Onassis), of what issues or ideas their speeches would contain. You are not writing full speeches.

Also include a copy of the candidate speech you wrote earlier. Check it for grammar and spelling.

Media Appearances & Interviews: List talk shows (TV or radio), morning/late night shows, podcasts, and news programs that the candidate & her spouse should be on. Briefly explain what the benefit of these particular appearances would be. As appropriate you may also decide to mention the risks involved (like not having the right sense of humor for Stephen Colbert or Oprah not being a party supporter.)

Advertisements: Write a statement explaining how the candidate would be advertised, identifying the various media outlets/markets (what timeframes, channels, states would be targeted), and the core messages (issues, tone, etc). (About 2-3 pages)

Include the full advertisement you developed for presentation. (PowerPoint presentations can be included in handout formats. Videos can be included as transcripts. Other materials – buttons, dolls, stickers – do not need to be included.)

Guest Appearances / Endorsements: A list of names and/or organizations that would support the candidate and garner media attention for the campaign. (Ex. NOW, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey, Rosie O'Donnell.) Include a 1-sentence statement with each for why you think this person/group would support the candidate, or why they would be beneficial to the campaign. (List at least 3 people or groups.)

Miscellaneous: If there is anything else you think is essential to the successful campaign of the candidate, by all means, include it.

Name _____ mark

Offered ideas, suggestions, & opinions regularly.	
Listened to the ideas, suggestions & opinions of others openly and fairly.	
Was respectful of the group.	
Was punctual for group meetings.	
Was dependable (ie. showed up for meetings, responded to emails/phone messages, met deadlines...)	
Did at least an equitable share of the actual work (ex. writing, designing, editing)	
<i>Individual's Grade</i> (A+/-, B+/-, C+/-, D+/-, F+/-)	

For each group member (including yourself), rate each criterion related to effort, using these:

E = excellent
G = good
S = okay
P = poor
N = not at all

Comments are optional & may be put on the back.

Name _____ mark

Offered ideas, suggestions, & opinions regularly.	
Listened to the ideas, suggestions & opinions of others openly and fairly.	
Was respectful of the group.	
Was punctual for group meetings.	
Was dependable (ie. showed up for meetings, responded to emails/phone messages, met deadlines...)	
Did at least an equitable share of the actual work (ex. writing, designing, editing)	
<i>Individual's Grade</i> (A+/-, B+/-, C+/-, D+/-, F+/-)	

What was the best aspect about working in a group for this project?

What was the most difficult or challenging aspect of working in a group for this project?

What was one thing you learned by doing this project – about gender issues, campaigns, First Ladies, media... or even about group dynamics? (And, do you think it was an appropriate assignment for the course?)