## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

# Critical Thinking Resource

Political Science

# About The Wall Street Journal's Critical Thinking Resource

We developed this guide to help you maximize The Wall Street Journal as a resource for your classes. You'll be able to energize discussions and engage students with tangible examples of course concepts that your students can apply in the real world. In addition, with the help of faculty partners, we've curated a special collection of our most popular and thought-provoking articles across business. For each of these readings, we provide a summary, correlation to course topics, classroom applications and questions suitable for launching discussions and conducting assessments.

Here are some of the many ways to incorporate WSJ into your courses:

- **Course Readings:** Assign articles as required reading alongside your textbook sections. For best results, include assessment questions on quizzes and exams.
- **Discussion Launchers:** Use articles to spur classroom and threaded discussions in online and hybrid courses on core concepts and current events.
- Extra Credit: Allow students to read optional articles and answer assessment questions for extra credit.
- **Group Projects:** WSJ is a rich source of real-world topics for group research and presentation projects.
- Research Papers and Case Studies: WSJ features provide timely citations for research projects.

### Subtopic: Elections

### **Table of Contents**

- 1. Biden, Trump Focused on Florida and Arizona in Bids for Latino Votes
- 2. Trump Campaign Wants States to Override Electoral Votes for Biden. Is That Possible?
- 3. Young Voters Helped Biden Beat Trump After Holding Back in Primaries.

# Biden, Trump Focused on Florida and Arizona in Bids for Latino Votes

Reporter: Luis Melgar

Reviewed By: Ed Miller, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Date: November 20, 2020

Topics: Presidential, Election, Latinos, Marginalized Groups, Florida, Arizona

Link to Article: Click Here

**Summary:** Both President Donald Trump and President-elect Joe Biden spent substantial funds aimed at securing the Latino vote in the key states of Florida and Arizona. Television ads appeared on Spanish language channels. In Florida the largest Latino groups are Cubans, who lean Republican, and Puerto Ricans, who are more likely to support Democrats. Though Biden outspent Trump in ads aimed at Spanish speaking voters, Trump was able to win Florida's Latinos by more than 3 percentage points. Nationally, Biden outpaced Trump among Latino voters. Using television [plus radio] and social media, especially Facebook, Trump's ads portrayed Biden as a radical left-wing and socialist candidate, claims that resulted in him winning 45% of Florida's Latino voters, including a majority of Cubans. In Arizona, Biden did better, winning 59% of the Latino vote, helping him to carry the state. Both candidates claimed to be best for the economy and jobs. However, while Biden's ads emphasized health-care and response to the coronavirus, Trump stressed that only he would be able to maintain the safety of the public.

Classroom Application: Especially significant in building and courting a voter base is identifying the groups that would most be relied upon. The class can compare the groups of voters that supported President Donald Trump and President-elect Joe Biden. How did Trump's base differ from the traditional Republican base of voter support? After Senator Mitt Romney's presidential loss, the Republican Party conducted an analysis of the loss, known as the "autopsy." A key finding was that marginalized groups were growing as a portion of the electorate, especially Latinos in southern states, and unless Republican candidates appealed to these groups Republicans would have difficulty winning the presidency. However, Trump did not pursue policies that would be viewed favorably by marginalized groups, especially Latinos with his focus on reducing immigration, building a wall with Mexico, and child separation at the border. Given this, students can suggest why he was able to receive 50% nationally of the Cuban vote, 45% of South American Latinos, and 30% of Puerto Ricans. Issues such as anti-communism/socialism, conservativism, opposition to abortion, and a belief that Trump was better at creating jobs seemed to resonate with these voters. An overarching question is whether "Latino" is a useful category politically or whether it would be more useful to use country specific descriptions in voting analysis.

#### Questions:

- 1. Why did Cuban-Americans support President Trump for reelection more than any other Latino group?
- 2. Do voters whose heritage is South American nations, the second largest Latino group to support President Trump, have a similar concern to that of Cuban-Americans that would make them Trump voters?
- 3. Some suggest a similarity between the Latinos who support President Trump and his core white supporters. What do you believe that similarity to be?
- 4. Why is support of Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. even more important to focus on than Latinos from other nations?
- 5. Contrast the issues that President-elect Joe Biden's campaign used in ads and social media directed at Latinos to those used by President Donald Trump's campaign?
- 6. Which marginalized group is growing fastest in the U.S.?
- 7. Another marginalized group in the U.S. is LGBTQ individuals. President Donald Trump reversed many of President Barack Obama's antidiscrimination policies aimed to protect LGBTQ people. Despite this, Trump, according to the post-election polls, was supported by 28% of LGBTQ voters, up from 14% in 2016. What explanation can be given for this increase?
- 8. What did the Republican analysis of Mitt Romney's defeat, known as the autopsy, say about marginalized groups and the Republican Party's viability?
- 9. Examining the electoral results in key states of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, why could it be said that marginalized groups were key to President-elect Biden's win?
- 10. Why was President-elect Biden able to "flip" Georgia, which had historically voted Republican?

#### **Related Articles:**

Why Democrats Lost So Many South Texas Latinos—the Economy Elizabeth Findell November 9, 2020

## Trump Campaign Wants States to Override Electoral Votes for Biden. Is That Possible?

Reporter: Deanna Paul

Reviewed By: Ed Miller, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Date: November 21, 2020

**Topics:** Presidential, Election, Electoral College, Biden, Trump, State Legislature, Electors

Link to Article: Click Here

**Summary:** After losing the popular and Electoral College vote, President Donald Trump's campaign is seeking a way for Trump to still win. Their plan is to have state legislatures with Republican majorities in swing states override the vote for President-elect Joe Biden by replacing Biden electors with those who would vote for Trump. Electors in each state are individuals from the candidate's party that won the state. They meet in their state capitals on December 14 to cast their vote. The Trump campaign wants to have Republican officials in these states refuse to certify the election results and instead have the state legislature appoint electors supporting Trump. The federal law provision that this strategy is based upon allows a state legislature to intervene if the voting process "fails" on Election Day. If "failure" is declared, a state legislature can enact another method of selecting electors, possibly selecting them itself. Should this occur, the governor could certify electors backing Biden resulting in two sets of electors being sent to Congress, who on January 6 officially counts the electoral vote. Congress is supposed to count electors certified by the "executive," normally meaning governor but could be another state executive official in charge of certifying the vote. The chance that Trump's strategy will work is slim. Historically, no state has done this and to succeed it would require several swing states to substitute Trump electors for Biden electors.

Classroom Application: Deanna Paul's article explores the Electoral College and President Donald Trump's attempt to throw out states' popular vote. The Electoral College system can be discussed, including candidates winning the Electoral College vote but losing the national popular vote. Except for Nebraska and Maine, which split their electoral vote, the candidate who wins a state secures all the state's Electoral College vote. Several states have discussed proportionally allocating electors by the state vote or by congressional districts. You can discuss advantages and drawbacks this would have for a state. The "faithless elector" issue can also be discussed. This has occurred, including in 2016, but has never made a difference in the outcome. Thirty-two states plus the District of Columbia have laws against this, but it was not until this year that the Supreme Court affirmed that states' enforcement. [Chiafalo v. Washington and Colorado Department of State v. Baca (2020)] Students can discuss whether there should be a constitutional amendment to eliminate the Electoral College, replacing it with popular vote. Attention can then be directed at the Trump strategy.

Why would Republican state legislators probably not go along with this? The class can discuss the impacts of a defeated candidate for president charging fraud, filing multiple legal challenges, and attempting to overturn the vote in states on confidence in the political system. For a nation advocating democracy around the world, what impacts could post-election challenges have on other nations? Lastly, students can discuss the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact and why it could change presidential selection without a constitutional amendment.

#### Questions:

- 1. What are "faithless" electors and what did the U.S. Supreme Court say about them in a 2020 decision?
- 2. What was the effort to encourage "faithless" electors in the 2016 election? How successful was the strategy?
- 3. If you were a state legislator in Florida, what arguments can be made for and against voting to split the state's electoral vote by congressional districts similar to Maine and Nebraska?
- 4. Compare the situation after the 2020 presidential election with that which occurred in 2000, Bush v. Gore.
- 5. Explain why large states are disadvantaged in the allocation of electors in the Electoral College. What other national decision making body are they also disadvantaged?
- 6. What was the main reason Justice Kagan, writing for the majority in Chiafalo v. Washington and Colorado Department of State v. Baca (2020), decided that states can enforce their requirement that electors vote for the winner of the popular vote in that state?
- 7. What political pressures are legislators under in deciding to overturn the popular vote for President-elect Joe Biden and replacing Biden pledged electors with President Donald Trump's pledged electors? Is there anything in the Constitution that would allow this to occur?
- 8. Explain the reason for the enactment of the 12th Amendment to the Constitution.

#### **Related Article:**

Trump Broadens His Efforts to Overturn Election Outcome Rebecca Ballhaus and Alex Leary November 19, 2020

## Young Voters Helped Biden Beat Trump After Holding Back in Primaries

Reporter: Sabrina Siddiqui and Madeline Ngo

Reviewed By: Ed Miller, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Date: November 28, 2020

Topics: Election, Presidential, Trump, Biden, Vote, Youth, College, University, Age

Link to Article: Click Here

**Summary:** Sabrina Siddiqui and Madeline Ngo show the importance of voters under 30 years old to President-elect Joe Biden's victory over President Donald Trump. While these voters generally preferred more progressive candidates than Biden in the primaries, they voted for Biden over Trump by 61% to 36%, according to AP VoteCast's survey of 2020 voters. Demonstrating the importance of young voters are that college towns, and the counties in which they are located, contributed to Biden victories in the swing states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. While voters 18 to 29 years old were 13% of the total vote, as they were in 2016, counties where colleges are located voted 8% points more for Biden than Trump in contrast to the 3% points greater support for Hillary Clinton over Trump in 2016. Like all voters, a large percent of young voters thought either the economy or the coronavirus was the most important issue affecting the nation and their vote. Where 18 to 29 years old differed was that a larger percent thought that racism is the nation's top concern. With colleges and universities taking actions to slow the spread of the virus, including limiting on-campus housing, using distance learning, and keeping gatherings small, it was surprising to see the concentrated impact of college student voting in 2020.

Classroom Application: Studies have shown that younger voters, especially college students, tend to be more progressive than older voters. This can be seen in their primary vote, especially illustrated by their support for progressive Senator Bernie Sanders in 2016 and 2020. While there is a significant segment of younger voters who are conservative, as shown by the vitality of college Republican organizations, you can discuss why they tend to be more progressive than older voters. As for citing the most important issue, you can ask students why they think a larger percent of younger voters see racism as the most important issue facing the nation than older voters and if they believe individuals 18 to 29 years old are more likely to participate in Black Lives Matter protests than older voters. An early study of Bennington College followed students throughout their life cycle to assess whether they became more conservative after college as they aged.

cont.

You could have students use the study to research what was found and inquire whether the findings could be applied to today's voters. Beyond ideology, some younger voters, especially college students and college graduates, were repelled from supporting Trump because of what is viewed as his "anti-intellectualism" and failure to follow scientific advice in confronting the pandemic. Prompt students to look into whether Republicans did fare better in down ballot races among younger voters as they did with older voters and explain how they would go about investigating this.

#### **Questions:**

- 1. Why is the turnout of young voters typically less than older voters?
- 2. Compare the characteristics of President-elect Joe Biden and President Trump that were most important to gaining the support of younger voters? Compare the candidates' attractiveness to white voters without college degrees.
- 3. For college students, would you say that professors are important to shaping their political views? Why?
- 4. Do college students' political views differ by their major? Give some examples.
- 5. Earlier political socialization studies showed that young people typically were of the same party affiliation as their parents. More recent studies show more divergence. What do you suggest caused this change?
- 6. Why is it easier to organize and mobilize college students, even in the time of COVID-19, than older voters?
- 7. Explain what life events could result in college students becoming more conservative as they age.
- 8. Many colleges seek diversity through the application of affirmative action programs. Do these affect the attitudes of all students? Compare this to the integration of elementary and secondary schools beginning with Brown v. Board of Education in 1954.

#### **Related Article:**

Joe Biden Gained, Trump Stalled in the Nation's Suburbs Joshua Jamerson, Aaron Zitner and Anthony DeBarros October 9, 2020

Historically Black Colleges Become Focus of Biden, Trump Outreach Joshua Jamerson October 25, 2020