

Civic Education Workshop



Sponsored by the
University of Florida and the Reubin O'D. Askew Institute

Reubin O'D.
Askew
INSTITUTE
at the University of Florida



Introduction

On June 10-13, 2002, the University of Florida and the Reubin O'D. Askew Institute sponsored a Civic Education Workshop in Gainesville, Florida. The topic has relevance throughout the country and particular significance in Florida where the constant flood of newcomers into the state has made civic education essential. Those who arrive from other areas of the country and from other parts of the world have a limited understanding of Florida's history and its government. This lack of knowledge weakens the state's democratic institutions and its ability to address Florida's immediate and long-term needs.



The purpose of this workshop was to assist area high school government teachers and, through them, to help students understand the political heritage of this state and the nation and the critical issues facing the future of both. Specifically, the workshop provided teachers with information about the federal system of government in the United States, public policy development, Florida's political heritage, voter behavior, campaigns and political communication, and new ways of teaching these subjects in the classroom. Teachers received information on civic education resources from a variety of sources including the Internet and were provided a forum to discuss common issues and concerns related to civic education instruction.

David Colburn

Provost and Senior Vice President, University of Florida
Executive Director of the Reubin O'D. Askew Institute

2002 CIVIC EDUCATION WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Anthony Alred
Palatka High School
Putnam County

Joyce Baron
North Marion High School
Marion County

Linda Bennett
Orange Park High School
Clay County

Dorothy Blackwell
Interlachen High School
Putnam County

Jerald Cumbus
Palatka High School
Putnam County

Sylvia Edmundson
Williston High School
Levy County

Rodney Estes
Gainesville High School
Alachua County

Mary Fillion
West Port High School
Marion County

Darlene Fritch
Lake Weir High School
Marion County

Victoria Goodowns
Santa Fe High School
Alachua County

Phyllis Gray
Dunnellon High School
Marion County

Terry Heninger
Chiefland High School
Levy County

Jack Jinkins
Dunnellon High School
Marion County

Michael Little
Vanguard High School
Marion County

John Lott, Jr.
Bronson High School
Levy County

Kristin Mayfield
Orange Park High School
Clay County

Janice O'Neill
Chiefland High School
Levy County

George Palmer
Gainesville High School
Alachua County

Kevin Purvis
Newberry High School
Alachua County

Deloris Rentz
Buchholz High School
Alachua County

Bryan Roundtree
Newberry High School
Alachua County

Greg Sales
North Marion High School
Marion County

Penny Secord
Williston High School
Levy County

Paul Spradling
Gainesville High School
Alachua County

John Stump
North Marion High School
Marion County

Tara Trace-Richardson
Middleburg High School
Clay County

Paul Turney
Santa Fe High School
Alachua County

Joseph Waldorf
Buchholz High School
Alachua County

Michele Winningham
Williston High School
Levy County

WORKSHOP GOALS

1. To provide to high school government teachers in Alachua, Marion, Putnam, Clay and Levy counties information about the federal system of government in the United States, public policy development, voter behavior, campaigns and political communication;
2. To provide new ways of teaching these subjects in the high school classroom;
3. To provide information on civic education resources available to teachers from a variety of sources including the Internet; and
4. To provide a forum for teachers from different schools and counties to discuss common issues and concerns concerning civic education instruction.

CIVIC EDUCATION WORKSHOP AGENDA

June 10-13, 2002
200 Stuzin Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida

Monday, June 10, 2002

Overview of American Federalism

Dr. Richard Scher, Department of Political Science,
University of Florida

Political Campaigns in America

Dr. Richard Scher

How Policies are Shaped and Shape Institutions:

Congress and Environmental Policy

Dr. Tony Rosenbaum, Department of Political Science,
University of Florida

How Policies are Shaped and Shape Institutions:

Executive Branch and Environmental Policy

Dr. Tony Rosenbaum

Tuesday, June 11, 2002

Political Parties, Issues and Candidates – Effects on Voter Behavior

Dr. Michael Martinez, Department of Political Science, University
of Florida

The Ethics of Negative Campaigning

Dr. Steve Craig, Department of Political Science, University of
Florida

Florida's Changing Demographic Profile – Implications for State Politics and Policy

Dr. David Colburn, Provost and Professor of History, University
of Florida

Redistricting Florida

Dr. Richard Scher

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Voting and Messages Shaped for Ethnic Groups in the 2000 Elections

Dr. Marilyn Roberts, Department of Advertising,
University of Florida

Changing Political Outcome Using Daily Newspaper Opinion Pages

Ms. Maureen Tartaglione, College of Journalism,
University of Florida

Voter Turnout and Information

Dr. Larry Kenny, Department of Economics,
University of Florida

The Process of Voter Registration and Holding Elections

Ms. Beverly Hill, Supervisor of Elections, Alachua County

National and Florida Political Parties

Dr. Terri Fine, Department of Political Science,
University of Central Florida

Thursday, June 13, 2002

Simulation Exercise – Presidential Election

Ms. Mary Anderson, Graduate Student of Political Science,
Florida State University

Using Technology for Civic Education

Mr. George Lipscomb, Graduate Student in School of Teaching
and Learning, University of Florida

Optional Session: Exploration of Relevant Web Sites

Mr. George Lipscomb

Round Table Discussion: Ideas from Previous Presentations – Applications for the Classroom and Discussion of Future Projects

Facilitators:

Dr. Lynn Leverty - Askew Institute

Dr. Lynne Holt - Askew Institute

Ms. Debbie Gallagher - Curriculum Teacher Specialist and Social
Studies K-12, Alachua County



RESOURCES

Internet Sites:

Florida Center for Voting, Elections and Civic Education @Florida State University

<http://www.fsu.edu/~CivicEd/>

This site provides links to sites that may be useful in the social studies classroom.

MarcoPolo: Internet Content for the Classroom

<http://www.marcopolo-education.org>

The MarcoPolo program provides professional development opportunities and classroom content and activities on a wide range of subjects including history and government. Florida is a member of the MarcoPolo network.

American Political Science Association, Civic Education Network

<http://apsanet.org/CENnet/>

This site has scholarly essays, links to civic education organizations and teaching resources including a special section for high school teachers.

The Dirksen Congressional Center - Congress in the Classroom

<http://www.congresslink.org/classroomresources.htm>

The Center provides on-line lesson plans, student activities, historical materials and links to other sites.

New York Times Learning Network

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/>

The Times provides news, articles in depth, and lesson plans for students in grades 6-8 and 9-12.

PBS Online

http://www.pbs.org/teacherssource/social_studies/high_civic_campaign.shtm

PBS focuses on social studies including articles and classroom activities on Civics.

C-Span in the Classroom

<http://www.c-span.org/classroom>

This site includes articles, documents and teacher resources for current events and civic education.

Center for Civic Education

<http://www.civiced.org/>

This well-known site has basic information on civic education and curricular materials.

University of North Carolina School of Government, Institute of Government

<http://ncinfo.iog.unc.edu/programs/>

There is some focus on North Carolina on this site (see civic education), but it also includes curriculum resources, links to websites, training and development opportunities and community resources of interest to Florida teachers.

CIVNET

http://www.civnet.org/resources/res_teach_frameset.htm

This site includes resources for teachers and students including curricular materials, documents, a directory of teachers interested in communicating with other teachers, links to other domestic and international web sites and grant information.

Kids Voting USA

<http://kidsvotingusa.org>

This is a grassroots organization dedicated to involving youth in the election process. The site includes resources for teachers and students; Broward and Orange Counties have Kids Voting contacts.

Civic Practice Network: A Learning Collaboration for Civic Renewal, Brandeis University

<http://www.cpn.org/index.html>

Brandeis has developed a nonpartisan effort for civic revitalization that includes case studies, essays and course syllabi for older students.

US National Archives, Washington, D.C.

http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/index.html

The National Archives site has a digital classroom section that includes sections on teaching with documents, classroom activities and professional development opportunities.

Youth Leadership Initiative, University of Virginia Center for Governmental Studies

<http://www.youthleadership.net>

This site provides access to a free CD Rom which is designed to simulate a campaign for the US Senate in a fictitious state, on-line resources on elections and an Internet e-Congress for students.

Center for the American Woman and Politics, Rutgers University

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp/>

This site is dedicated to providing information about women in politics both past and present. It includes information about women elected to state and federal government, federal appointees and issue papers on policy development and the election process.

US Federalism Site

<http://www.min.net/~kala/fed/>

This site explores various aspects of federalism that can be used in curriculum development. It also provides links to original documents, commentaries, overviews and essays.

Books:

Colburn, David and DeHaven-Smith, Lance. *Florida's Megatrends: Current Issues in Florida*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2002.

Colburn, David and DeHaven-Smith, Lance. *Government in the Sunshine State: Florida Since Statehood*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999.

Francis, Wayne and Kenny, Lawrence. *Up the Political Ladder: Career Paths in United States Politics*. California: Sage Publications, 2000.

Gannon, Michael. *A Short History of Florida*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993.

Rosenbaum, Walter A. *Politics of Environmental Concern, 2 ed.* New York: Praeger, 1977.

Scher, Richard. *The Modern Political Campaign: Mudslinging, Bombast, and the Vitality of American Politics*. New York: ME Sharpe, 1997.

Professional Development

Many of the sites listed above include professional development opportunities both on site and online. In addition, the Florida Council for the Social Studies has resources specific to high school teachers in Florida. You may reach that site at <http://www.fcss.org>.

Classroom Materials To Purchase

Campaigns and Elections Magazine
<http://www.campaignline.com>

Videos and other materials useful for discussion of the election process in the classroom may be accessed.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND INSTITUTIONS

The basic structure of government in the United States has not changed since the writing of the Constitution. However, since the institutions created under the Constitution are dynamic, it is important to understand how power relationships among them work. Each of the presenters agreed that focusing on power relationships among and within the branches of government (executive, legislative, judicial) and levels of government (federal, state, local) provides a way to engage students more fully. Among the points made in the workshop:

- Federalism is not depicted best by a layer cake that portrays a static relationship among the levels of government and their institutions. Instead, federalism is a shared power relationship in which federal, state and local government institutions constantly try to assert power and influence over each other. As the needs of our nation change, so do the power relationships. For example, after September 11, Attorney General Ashcroft has implemented various measures to expand the federal government's power and jurisdiction.
- Two goals of the Constitution included creating a national government that could give a central purpose to the new United States and offering protection for citizens. Neither goal is included in the Articles of Confederation. Indeed, the word "government" is not mentioned in the Articles of Confederation and the Articles arguably failed to promote a sense of common purpose for the new states.
- Local governments are not mentioned in the Constitution. They are creations of the states and their role in the power relationship is fairly new. Recent changes in federal law have placed more responsibility, if not more funding, on state and local governments to carry out federal mandates.
- The United States Congress was designed to act slowly and carefully within a system of checks and balances. The executive

"Unfunded mandates and the growth of federal rules and regulations pose increasing burdens on the states."

Richard Scher

"Although we get frustrated with slow governmental decision making, that is the way our government is designed. It was not created to act quickly."

Tony Rosenbaum

veto and judicial review have the effect of keeping Congress moderate and deliberate. In addition, most Congressional work is done in committees; this process of policy development is both time consuming and cumbersome. The committee process is based on deliberations of lawmakers affiliated with different political parties, although political party membership is not always a good predictor of voting.

- Political parties are not mentioned in the Constitution, but parties were a part of the political process by 1800 when presidential candidate Thomas Jefferson ran on the Democratic-Republican party platform against the Federalists. Parties have evolved into an important part of the government process; they are responsible for recruiting people to run for office, supporting candidates during the election, providing an identity during the committee selection process as well as providing general support for elected officials.
- Interest groups were not anticipated in the Constitution, but they too play an important part of the government process. Interest groups support candidates and policy positions, provide information to elected officials and try to defeat those officials who vote against issues espoused by them. Although there is little general support for public interest groups, they are now an integral part of the government process.
- The President is not the only figure in the executive branch. His staff, members of the executive office of the president (e.g. the Office of Management and Budget), the Cabinet, agency bureaucracies and independent agencies and boards comprise the executive branch. Power struggles within the executive branch serve to moderate the actions of the President.

"We need to remember that the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were political documents written to address issues of the new nation. They have served us well, but interpretation of these documents continues to change over the years as new issues evolve."

Richard Scher

"Chance, luck and crises all play important roles in governmental decision making."

Tony Rosenbaum

- Conflict between the White House staff and federal agency staff is inevitable. The White House staff are transient, committed to the President and his agenda, partisan, selected because of their political qualifications, interested in short-term results, suspicious of the bureaucracy and often in conflict with Congress. Agency staff are long-term employees who are committed more to their respective agencies and less to the President, nonpartisan, hired because of their professional qualifications, interested in meeting program goals, and suspicious of the White House staff. Agency staff also have divided loyalties toward meeting the mandates of the executive branch and those of Congress.

“There are two causes of factions in politics. People want different things from government or people express their desires differently. The only cure is to provide the opportunity for everyone to form factions.”

Terry Fine

- Congress often creates problems for the President and the federal bureaucracy by giving authority for a program to multiple agencies, writing unclear legislation, and limiting the funding that the President can actually control. Suggested useful reforms to make presidential management more effective include authorization of the line item veto and greater authority for the President to reorganize agencies (less civil service job security). At present, executive power is severely curtailed.

“The elections process is left up to the states, and each state (with the exception of Louisiana) allows the political parties to determine who the candidates in the general elections will be.”

Terry Fine

- Most of these same checks and balances exercised in the federal government also take place at the state level. In Florida, which has a relatively weak executive branch, the governor must share power with the Cabinet; more power has traditionally resided in the legislature. Even when the governor and the leadership of the legislature are of the same political party, power struggles take place.

Presenters:

Richard Scher, Professor of Political Science, UF
[kingsch@polisci.ufl.edu]

Tony Rosenbaum, Professor of Political Science, UF
[tonyros@polisci.ufl.edu]

Terry Fine, Associate Professor of Political Science, UCF
[tfine@mail.ucf.edu]



SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP TOPIC

ELECTIONS AND VOTERS

Most of the popular literature in recent years has focused on the fact that voter turnout is low in the United States, especially when compared to other nations. Yet, as several presenters noted, campaigns are based on the political culture of a nation and the wishes of the people. Since many Americans are generally disinterested in politics, we use campaigns to get people involved in elections at every level of government.

Voter Behavior and Turnout

- Research indicates that most people recognize that our political parties support different issues. It is important to find ways to discuss policy differences in the classroom while still allowing students the right to privacy concerning political preferences (see section on teaching techniques).
- Research shows that when the differences between candidates are clear, people have more incentive to vote. There is also more incentive to vote when people believe that they can affect the outcome. People vote less often if the candidates are too similar or if the race is one-sided.
- Economists use two models to study voting. The first is that as the benefits of voting increase, more people will vote and try to stay informed about campaign issues. The second is that as the cost of voting rises, fewer people vote or try to stay informed.
- Research indicates that these models are correct. For example, in smaller cities, counties and states voter turnout is higher because voters feel they have more chance to affect the outcome of the race. Voter turnout also increases when there is more at stake (i.e. a prominent position such as Governor or Senator is being decided or high-cost issues are on the ballot).
- Higher population density can lead to high voter turnout because people do not have to travel far to vote. Longer voting hours also increase voter turnout because people do not have to wait in lines.
- Interestingly, radio ownership is a better predictor of voter turnout than television ownership. Many radio owners use their listening time to stay informed on issues, while television news tends to be sound bites.
- More educated and older voters vote more often. They also tend to be more informed about the issues and the candidates. Rapid population growth tends to lead to lower voter turnout since voters are less informed about the issues and the candidates and feel weaker ties to the community and state.
- Motor voter laws have increased voter registration, but not

“For us to be effective teachers, we need to help students understand policy issues and how these issues are reflected in campaigns. We cannot shy away from discussing policy issues.”

Michael Martinez

“The secret ballot actually reduced voter turnout. Secret ballots required literacy and it was harder to buy votes.”

Larry Kenny

voter turnout. To increase voter turnout effectively, educational opportunities need to be included.

Campaign Conduct

- Campaigns can be critical of candidates without being negative. If only the truth is stated, this is not negative campaigning. Instead, campaigns that disclose a candidate's background without distorting or misrepresenting it can increase accountability. Secrecy is incompatible with democracy.
- Research suggests that negative campaigning (that which is misleading or distorted) may contribute to dissatisfaction with the political process and reduce voter turnout. Although voters are comfortable with campaigns in which the opponent is attacked on professional-political issues, they are not comfortable with attacks on personal issues.
- Push polls are an increasing problem in campaigns. These are not true polls; their purpose is to sell a candidate or turn someone off to the other candidate. They are usually conducted at the end of the campaign when there is no time for the opponent to respond.
- Crazy campaigns are part of our history. By the mid-19th century, campaign gimmicks and negative campaigning were part of the election process.

“There has always been negative campaigning. What makes it a more important issue today is that the amount of money available to campaigns makes it more pervasive.”

Steve Craig

Campaign Finance

- Campaign finance has always been difficult to control. Funding is regulated at both the state and federal levels. The recently-enacted McCain-Feingold legislation limits soft money contributions (money given to the party for a campaign) and when funds may be spent. However, Political Action Committees (PACs) still do not have to report the source of the funds they give to campaigns, thus limiting PAC accountability. Political parties may still give as much as they wish to particular campaigns.

Redistricting

- New state and federal districts are drawn every ten years after the national census. If a state does not gain or lose seats due to population growth or loss, redistricting occurs to redraw lines according to population changes. If a state increases or loses seats, reapportionment takes place to accommodate these changes as well as population changes. State legislatures redraw the lines. If they are unable to do so, the courts finalize the plans. For example, after the 1990 census the Florida legislature was unable to develop new plans, so a three-judge federal panel drew the lines.
- For many years, state and federal seats represented land rather than people on the assumption that the population was

immobile. The concept of “one man one vote” was not clear until 1964 in Florida. It was not until the 1982 amendments to the Voting Rights Act that Congress declared that it was also the duty of government to enhance the minority vote. Over the years, a series of Supreme Court cases have shaped acceptable criteria governing use of race in redistricting.

- Today, legal standards for districts in Florida include, among others, contiguity, compactness, protection of communities of interest (population groups, neighborhoods, etc.) and respect for political boundaries. Districts must be equal in population size.

State Election Law

- Running for office in Florida is controlled by state law. This year, as a one year trial, the second statewide primary will not be held. The person who wins the most votes in the party primaries, even if not the majority of votes, will be the party’s nominee in the general election. Florida’s Election Commission and the Supervisors of Elections have supported making this change because of the cost and difficulty of holding three elections in three months (first primary in September, second in October and the general election in November).
- Voting lists are not public in Florida. A viewer must have a reason to look at the lists. Elected officials, candidates, PACs and some government agencies may view the lists.

“Foreign money is forbidden in US campaigns. However, foreign governments and individuals can get around that by donating to PACs. We really do not know how or if foreign money has affected our elections process.”

Richard Scher

Profile of Florida Voters

- The profile of voters in Florida is expected to change significantly over the next 23 years with significant implications for public policy. For example, 16.6% of the state’s residents are Hispanics and 14.4% are African-American. Those percentages are expected to rise to 23.5% and 17% respectively by 2025. Our Hispanic and African-American citizens tend to be younger than the average residents in Florida. Moreover, 18.5% of Florida’s population is 65 or older which will rise to 26.5% in 2025. Elders over age 85 are the fastest growing group in our state. Older voters comprise 33% of general election voters and 40% of voters in local elections. Many elders are not content with just voting; 29% of local office holders are over 65 and the number is growing.
- The concerns of young minority voters and older voters are often in conflict and will continue to be in conflict as available resources shrink. In addition, newcomers often know little about our state and its history, thus making them less informed voters.

Presenters:

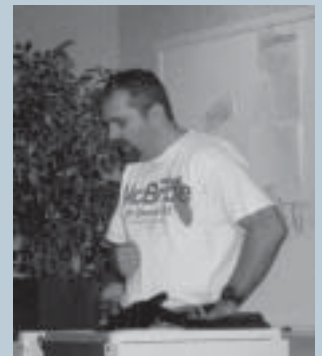
Michael Martinez, Associate Professor of Political Science, UF
[martinez@polisci.ufl.edu]

Steve Craig, Professor of Political Science, UF
[scraig@polisci.ufl.edu]

David Colburn, Provost, UF [askew@clas.ufl.edu]

Richard Scher, Professor of Political Science
[kingsch@polisci.ufl.edu]

Larry Kenny, Professor of Economics, UF
[larry.kenny@cba.ufl.edu]



SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP TOPIC

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

How people learn about their government and elections is an important part of our democracy. If people understand how government works and know the candidates and their positions, they become more effective citizens and voters. Traditionally, political advertising in the United States focused on white, middle class, male heads of households. Candidates wanted to entice them to the polls because their votes were considered important. Candidates also believed that this category of voters would influence other voters, especially women. Most state and federal campaigns now include advertising and information specifically for women. However, this is a relatively recent phenomenon. In the last few years, more emphasis also has been placed on campaigns targeting the minority community. Both of these communication strategies need more research and investigation since the initial advertising assumed that all women, all Hispanics and all African-Americans were alike.

- We used to expect ethnic and racial minorities to assimilate into the larger culture; once that assimilation occurred, there was no need for specialized information on candidates and issues. Today most minorities acculturate and still retain some cultural distance from the larger society. Therefore, mass marketing no longer works.
- The opportunities for placing ads have grown exponentially. Candidates used to buy time or space in three or four media outlets to reach their target audiences. Now, in most areas of the nation, there may be a hundred different ways to reach potential voters through the media.
- Political communication experts are just learning what works with different subcultures. For example, many Asian voters do not like the combative style of many campaigns and actually use the media the least to derive their voting preferences.

“California, Texas, Florida, New York and New Jersey have significant groups of Hispanic and Asian voters. Any candidate who does not take this into account will not be successful.”

Marilyn Roberts

“The field of political communication and advertising is way behind the curve. Our society has changed and we’re still trying to use one-size-fits-all.”

Marilyn Roberts

- Simply campaigning in Spanish and using Spanish language advertising will not attract Hispanic voters. Hispanic voters are not alike; there are significant differences among voters from Cuba, Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. In addition, many Hispanic voters have policy concerns that may not mirror the larger population.

“Voting is not a complete indication of civic participation. All the current research into civic participation is a growing indication that other types of activities are important.”

Maureen Tartaglione

- Candidates must learn different campaign styles to reach different groups of voters. One communication style will not reach all potential voters.
- Fewer than 60% of Americans today read the newspaper, but newspaper readers tend to be active voters. Newspapers report what government does, provide information on how citizens can interact with government, carry state and local news and provide a forum for public debate and alternative viewpoints.
- Both newspaper readership and voter turnout have decreased over the last three years. Researchers are still trying to determine if there is a correlation between these two trends.

Presenters:

Marilyn Roberts, Associate Professor, Department of Advertising, School of Journalism, University of Florida
Maureen Tartaglione, College of Journalism, UF



SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP TOPIC

TEACHING IDEAS

Many students do not think that politics matter or that their votes really matter. Despite several American History classes in elementary and middle school, few understand how government works or why how it works is important. Presenters agreed that teachers should use a variety of teaching techniques to keep the material stimulating and students engaged in the learning process.

- It is important to discuss public policy issues. At the same time, students often feel that their views are private or are embarrassed to share them with the class. Dr. Martinez demonstrated a technique that he uses in his courses to engage students in policy discussions while not highlighting any student's views. He distributes surveys to the class on a variety of topics including partisanship and candidates' positions on "hot" policy issues. Students are asked to select from a set of options on such issues that include their views about the candidates' positions and behavior, as well as their own positions. No name is attached to the survey. The surveys are then collected and redistributed, and each student uses his or her "new" survey to discuss the issues before the class. In that way, answers remain anonymous, but it is possible to get a sense of the class' views and positions.
- Mary Anderson discussed a campaign simulation that can be used over a semester and may be modified to fit the size of the class and the time period available. The purpose of the simulation is to get students involved in different campaign roles such as the candidate, pollster, campaign manager and media specialist. This exercise also provides opportunities to cooperate with journalism classes, technology labs, art classes and other entities within the school. After participating in an abbreviated simulation exercise during the workshop, several teachers recommended that all materials to be used in the simulation (e.g. posters, speeches, scripts, etc.) be previewed before being made public. Before including the simulation in their classes, teachers should be clear about the budget and discuss all ideas for raising money for supplies.
- One of the best reasons for using simulations in the classroom is that they capitalize on students' differing learning styles and skills. In campaign simulations, artistically-inclined students can make the posters and buttons and students with quantitative skills can handle the fundraising and budget. Students with verbal skills can deliver the speeches and those with written skills can draft the campaign literature. Simulations of this type allow students to "think outside the box" which can provoke additional interest in the subject.



- George Lipscomb discussed using technology to teach social studies. New computer programs and the Internet provide a wealth of opportunities to stimulate students and provide opportunities for learning. Mr. Lipscomb recommended that teachers work together to integrate technology into the classroom and to revise materials each year. There are three basic questions to ask when evaluating whether or not a particular program should be included in the curriculum: what will use of this technology enable me to do what I could not do before, will use of this technology allow me to do something better than before, and will it be cost effective?
- New technologies capitalize on students' infatuation with the Internet, fast-paced graphics and role-playing. However, the selected technology should be the most appropriate means of instruction to retain students' attention. For example, a Power Point presentation that uses a variety of media may be outstanding but, in many cases, Power Point may not be necessary. The best computer simulations require students to interact with each other. Students also have to be trained to use the Internet effectively. Many know how to reach their favorite sites, but not how to evaluate sites or conduct research. Finally, if computers are used extensively in class, the disparity among students who have home computers and are comfortable with a wide range of uses and students who do not have home computers must be taken into account.

Presenters:

Michael Martinez, Associate Professor of Political Science, UF
[martinez@polisci.ufl.edu]

Mary Anderson, graduate student and former teacher, Florida State University [mcanderson@yahoo.com]

George Lipscomb, graduate student and former teacher, University of Florida

Co-Sponsoring Organizations

University of Florida
226 Tigert Hall
P.O. Box 113150
Gainesville, Florida 32611
(352) 392-1311
Charles E. Young, President

The Reubin O'D. Askew Institute
University of Florida
P.O. Box 113175
Gainesville, Florida 32611
(352) 846-1998
David R. Colburn, Executive Director

Other Sponsoring Organizations:

Florida Institute of Government
Florida State University
325 John Knox Road, Bldg. 300, Ste 301EC
Tallahassee, Florida 32303
(850) 487-1870
John Scott Dailey, Executive Director

The LeRoy Collins Center for Public Policy
Cawthon House
Florida State University
Martin Luther King Boulevard
P.O. Box 1658
Tallahassee, Florida 32302-1658
(850) 644-1441
Roderick N. Petrey, President and Executive Director

Florida Department of Education
Turlington Building
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.
(850) 487-1785
Charlie Crist, Commissioner

2003

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE 2003 ASKEW MEETING

We hope you will join us beginning the evening of February 13th and ending on the morning of February 15th, 2003. The conference will take place in Gainesville at the University of Florida Hotel and Conference Center on SW 34th Street across from the Harn Art Museum and Florida Museum of Natural History.

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The Reubin O'D. Askew Institute
University of Florida
P.O. Box 113175
Gainesville, Florida 32611

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Florida
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