

American Political Parties
GUIDE TO SOURCES FOR RESEARCH PAPER

Material for your term paper can be found from a variety of different sources. Many useful sources are listed below, but students are encouraged to search out additional sources as well. Please review the sources available to you before making your final choice regarding which state you will focus on. Lack of information will not be an adequate excuse for poor papers!

In relying on these sources for your paper about the state you have chosen, please be advised that it is necessary for you to cite the sources you have used properly, to place in quotations wording drawn verbatim from any sources (including published materials and web sites) and to put everything in your own words that you are not quoting directly or paraphrasing (and citing). In short, the paper should be your own work and should not be plagiarized from your sources.

Some of the material needed for the term paper can be found in the assigned texts. For additional material on your state, consult the relevant sources listed below.

1. **Basic State Information.** *The Book of the States* (JK2403 B72) is published annually by the Council of State Governments. It contains such items as the different rules regulating the parties, ballot laws and electoral regulations. The most recent edition is located in the desk reference section (the two low shelves adjacent to the reference desk) of the main library. Everyone should consult this source for information on their state. You might find additional information about your state based on the U.S. Census at www.census.gov.

2. **State Summaries.** Brief summaries of recent politics in each of the 50 states appear in Barone and Cohen's *The Almanac of American Politics*, which has been placed on closed reserve for this course in the main library. . A second valuable source, this time for information on the party organizations in each state, is *State Party Profiles* by Andrew Appleton and Daniel S. Ward (JK2261.S83). Both books have been placed on reserve for this course in the main library. The state summaries in these two books are especially well done, and you are strongly encouraged to make use of both, and you **must** consult *The Almanac*.

3. **State Handbooks.** Each state publishes an annual manual or handbook that covers basic aspects of its politics, often including party organizations, the party in government, and recent changes in party regulation. The most recent manuals for a variety of states are housed in the reference section of the main library.

4. **State Studies.** The recent party politics of many states are treated in books on particular regions of the nation or a specific state, although only some of them are up to date. Attached is a list of a number of such books that have been placed on reserve at the main library under this course number.

5. **Politics Weeklies.** Especially valuable are two Washington weeklies that specialize in detailed coverage of national and state politics. Recent editions of the *National Journal* (JK1N2652) are kept in the reference section of the main library; back issues are in the stacks. Editions (through 2000) of *Congressional Quarterly's Weekly Report* (JK1 C744) are kept in the reference section of the library. The most recent issues of this weekly can be located at the Microform/Periodicals desk. You can also access *Congressional Quarterly* via the web, at www.cq.com. Much of this site is subscription only; however, you may be able to access some of this site once on a free trial basis. Also available via the web is access to a newer CQ publication, *Governing*, which is focused on state and local politics. Its site is located at www.governing.com. Lastly, you should consult the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* for stories on your state.

6. **National Newspapers.** The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* are the principal American newspapers that contain substantial coverage of politics across the nation, although *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Los Angeles Times* contain good national coverage as well. Particularly useful are stories on particular states, which occasionally appear in these dailies. Recent issues of all these papers are available from the newspaper desk in the Main Literary. Back copies are available on microfilm. The *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post* all also have websites, which may prove useful for your research if you can assess them. These sites are located at www.nytimes.com, www.usatoday.com, www.latimes.com and www.washingtonpost.com. (Note that in order to access material from www.nytimes.com, you must first set up a free user account). Lastly, you may wish to conduct more general searches of newspaper and other printed sources using LEXIS/NEXIS. You can access this index through the library at:

http://web.lexis-nexis.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/universe/form/academic/s_guidednews.html.

7. **Local Newspapers.** You can access the leading local newspapers in your state, either using the web or university or public library facilities. These papers are excellent sources for up-to-date information regarding the political context and activities of political parties.

8. **Other Media.** Many local radio and television stations have a website dedicated to enhancing their local news coverage. For example, National Public Radio (NPR) has a listing of all their local affiliates at <http://www.npr.org/stations/>. Like local newspapers, these sites may provide invaluable information about the politics of your state. You also might check CNN's website (www.cnn.com) and the other networks' news sites for election coverage in your state.

9. **State Electoral Results.** Recent state election results are found on the following websites: www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2000 and www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004. For older election results, see *Congressional Quarterly's Guide to U.S. Elections* (JK1967 C662 1994) and *America Votes* (JK 1967 A5), which are located in the Reference section of the Main Library. More extensive results can be obtained various state handbooks and manuals or the Secretary of State's web site for your state.

10. **Exit Poll Results.** Surveys of voters as they exited their polling places on election day are an especially valuable source of recent information on the nature of the voter coalitions. These polls were conducted in all fifty states and the District of Columbia for a consortium of

television networks. **Results from the exit poll for your state must be contained in your paper.** You can access these results on the web on the cnn.com websites listed in 9 above by clicking on the results or results, then exit polls headings.

11. **Internet Resources.** There is an ever growing number of political and party websites. Some are listed on p. 329-334 in *Party Politics in America*, the course textbook, including sites for each of the political parties. Several other web sites are especially useful. www.fec.gov is the Federal Election Commission's site; press the Elections and Voting button for recent election results, national and state. <http://www.csg.org/CSG/default.htm> is the Council of State Government's website, which contains information on your specific state. www.nass.org is the website of the National Association of Secretaries of State, who handle elections for the 50 states. Exploring this website for your state (by adding /sos/sos.html and selecting your state) will yield valuable information. You also may want to spend some time using your favorite Internet search engine to search out useful sites, including those on the state party organizations. We encourage you to share the ones you find with us and your classmates. But be warned that these listings are often far from comprehensive, and the unofficial sites may vary greatly in quality and accuracy. You may also find it useful to utilize some of the following websites:

<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet> (Contains selected census data on each of the states).

<http://www.c-span.org> (A rich source of videos and information on a variety of topics, including: 2002 campaign cycle, campaign finance data, videos of debates and political ads in 2002, requirements for voter registration in each state, current leaders in the US Congress and in each of the states, results of redistricting after the 2000 census, and links to state political information).

<http://www.fec.gov> (Campaign contributions and spending by candidates and parties in federal elections).

<http://www.fairvote.org/turnout> (Center for Voting and Democracy reports on turnout in recent elections, including breakdowns by individual states for 2000 and 2002).

<http://www.opensecrets.org> (Data on campaign contributions from the Center for Responsive Politics).

<http://www.politics1.com> (This website contains a wide variety of information on politics, including state politics. It provides links to websites of state parties, **state elections offices with reports on state results and turnout**, state candidates, etc.).

<http://www.pollingreport.com> (Contains results of public opinion polls on a variety of political topics, including for subscribers @ \$95 a year state polling results).

<http://www.vote-smart.org> (Project Vote Smart website containing a variety of information on politics, including state politics. Provides information on state officeholders, etc.).

<http://www.stateline.org> (A Website loaded with information on politics and public policy in the 50 states, run by the Pew Center on the States at the University of Richmond).

<http://www.csg.org/CSG/default.htm> (Council of State Governments website, containing up-to-date information on politics and public policy in each of the states).

<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/research/intro.html> (You must open this link from a university computer. This is a treasure trove of polling data from the Roper polling firm, and many of these data sets give state by state breakdowns)