

## Political Science 101

Spring 2009

April 23-28 activity: The Electoral College

**Instructions: Pretend that you are a Republican Party strategist thinking ahead to 2012. (No, this isn't unrealistic at all; rest assured there are hundreds of Republican strategists thinking this far ahead as we speak.) Your task is to design a strategy to win 270 votes in the Electoral College in 2012.**

**Each group should prepare a five-minute presentation, with some type of visual component, i.e. either a Powerpoint presentation or a handout with enough copies for your classmates. Presentations will be given at the start of class on Tuesday, April 28.**

Your devised strategy should include the following:

1. The choice of a presidential candidate and a vice-presidential candidate. Some names that are frequently discussed include Charlie Crist, Mike Huckabee, Bobby Jindal, Sarah Palin, Tim Pawlenty, Mitt Romney, and Mark Sanford, but you may choose individuals from outside this list if you prefer. What strengths do these individuals have to make them competitive in a presidential contest, and why do they make a good ticket?
2. Which specific states you target in order to amass 270 electoral votes? Of course, no real strategy would target only the bare minimum of states, but for the sake of this activity, imagine that your best case scenario is to "scrape out a victory." Why would the candidates you chose help you win those specific states?

Use the website, <http://www.270towin.com>, if you wish, for an easy way to do the math by toggling states from red to blue, or blue to red. However, remember that some states will have more electoral votes or fewer electoral votes in 2012. Your calculations should be based on the 2012 electoral college votes, not the current ones. Although those numbers are not set in stone yet, assume the following changes occur:

Gains:

TX 34 → 36

AZ 10 → 11

FL 27 → 28

GA 15 → 16

NV 5 → 6

UT 5 → 6

Losses:

IA 7 → 6

LA 9 → 8

MA 12 → 11

MI 17 → 16

OH 20 → 19

NJ 15 → 14

NY 31 → 30

PA 21 → 20