



**HOLCOMBE INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING & LEARNING EXCELLENCE
CLASSROOM RESEARCH AWARD EVALUATION**

Human Resources – Holcombe Institute • 225 East Las Olas Boulevard • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-201-7339

Please complete this form for the research project that you conducted for the Classroom Research Award. This information will be reviewed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of your research. Your evaluation and supporting documentation will be posted on the HI Website. Use additional paper where necessary.

Note: Please submit this form and supporting documentation within 30 days of the completion of your project to Office of Professional Development & Training, B31 - R605, WHC. In addition, you will need to attach an electronic copy of the application to an email and forward to ProfDevTrng@broward.edu.

MUST BE WORDPROCESSED

Name:	Helena Yeaman	Date:	4/14/08
Signature:			
Title of Research Project:	Understanding Presidential Campaigns through Campaign Simulation		
Project Completion Date:	4/1/08		

1. State the problem to be researched.

After participating in an election simulation project, students will be more likely to participate in real political campaigns as indicated by a significant change in attitudes toward participation on objective, pre and post-tests.

2. Summarize the research findings/results. If applicable, attach copies of evaluation forms and a summary of those forms.

On a 10-item pre- and post-test, students demonstrated a significant increase in political efficacy: overall, they were more interested in politics and government, and believed more strongly that political events were important to their lives. They also were more aware of their own beliefs, and better understood the elections process as well as the importance of voting. Students state that they were also more likely to run for political office in the future.

Only one item on the test, item 3 (“I am likely to participate in a future political campaign”), showed a marked decrease in value.

3. Describe the methods you used to evaluate the effectiveness of your project. Include quantitative and/or qualitative evidence.

I used a T-test to measure the change in responses to the 10-item survey from pre-to-post test. The test value was significant (see attached data and table), indicating students were both more interested and more likely to become involved in political events after participating in the project.

POS 2041 students fundraised money for their campaigns by using creative methods, such as offering an incentive like food to other students in order to have the opportunity to share their candidates' views. POS 2041 students produced lively and entertaining political advertisements based on the amount of

Revised 08/2007

money they collected which demonstrated a high level of awareness of their candidates' views, as well as the views of the candidates' opponents. The project culminated in a debate between the two candidates in which both the students from the mock FEC and classmates asked questions. The qualitative evidence indicates that students were both highly involved and interested in the project, and that the students had learned critical parameters of the elections project, such as campaign finance rules limiting contributions, and the difference between open and closed primaries. Students seemed more excited about the project and political events in general than in classes in which the instructor has used more traditional methods of instruction.

5. If applicable, identify what prevented you from achieving your original, expected findings.

The one item that declined as a result of the project was the future likelihood of participating in political campaigns. Perhaps the process of fundraising and producing an original video may have been more work that some would have liked. Also, the pecuniary aspect of the campaign may have made many students realize the connection between money and the elections process. Nevertheless, overall, I believe the project was a success as students are more interested in political events, and even indicate a higher interest in running for office than they were before participating in the project. Voting is more important to them personally, and the students showed higher levels of awareness and a stronger belief that they could make a difference in how government makes decisions.

6. Explain in detail how you intend to share the results of this research with the BCC community.

I would like to share the results of my research at the next Honors College forum by describing the project's implementation and its outcome. I will distribute photocopies of the written results, which I will attempt to publish in PS, which is the American Political Science Association's teaching publication. I will also share one of the original, student-produced videos. Finally, offer observations on how best to implement future, similar projects, in my discipline and in other disciplines.

7. Describe ways in which faculty from other disciplines could apply your research and its results in classroom practices, in future studies, and/or for student success.

The results show that the active learning and role-playing of this project made students reflect on their own beliefs as well as their capacity to effectuate change in the political system. The process of first assessing one's beliefs through a survey, then participating in a group effort to "market" one's candidate connected students to the political process in a way that simple lecture or discussion cannot.

I challenge my colleagues to find ways in which students can both learn about their discipline, or significant aspects of their discipline, while producing some kind of creative work—for example, video production. History and economics classes could use simulations in which students role play events or policy-makers' positions and produce a video to present these in an original way.

Submit this application via EMAIL to ProfDevTrng@broward.edu

AND

Send the ORIGINAL (HARD COPY with signatures) to

Office of Professional Development & Training

Human Resources - Holcombe Institute - Bldg. 31/605 WHC - Phone 954-201-7339