

# GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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Dear Students,

It is for me a great pleasure to be able to communicate again with you through this introductory note to the Govern  
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related to your major or minor in Government, obtain authorization for courses to be taken abroad, or any other req  
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the Faculty, as you can see in the following pages, has been involved in numerous activities, both academic and  
academic, in the U.S. and abroad.

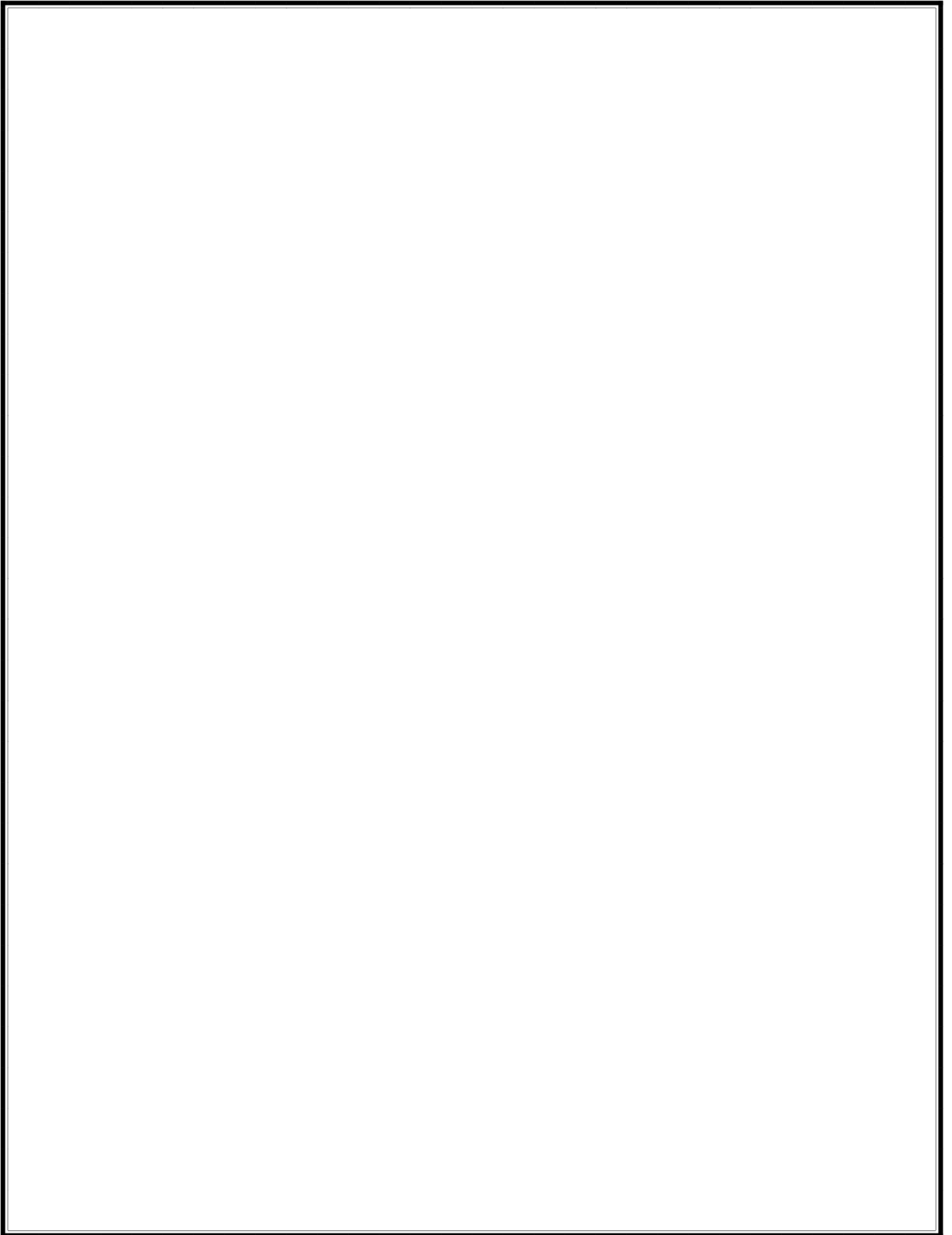
Finally, I would like to thank Barbara McDonough and the Government Department assistants for their efforts in mak  
possible for the Department to work so efficiently and to produce this newsletter. To all the newsletter collaborator  
contributed their time and energy to produce it, many thanks on my part and the rest of the Department

Cordially,

Aldo Vaccs, Professor and Chair

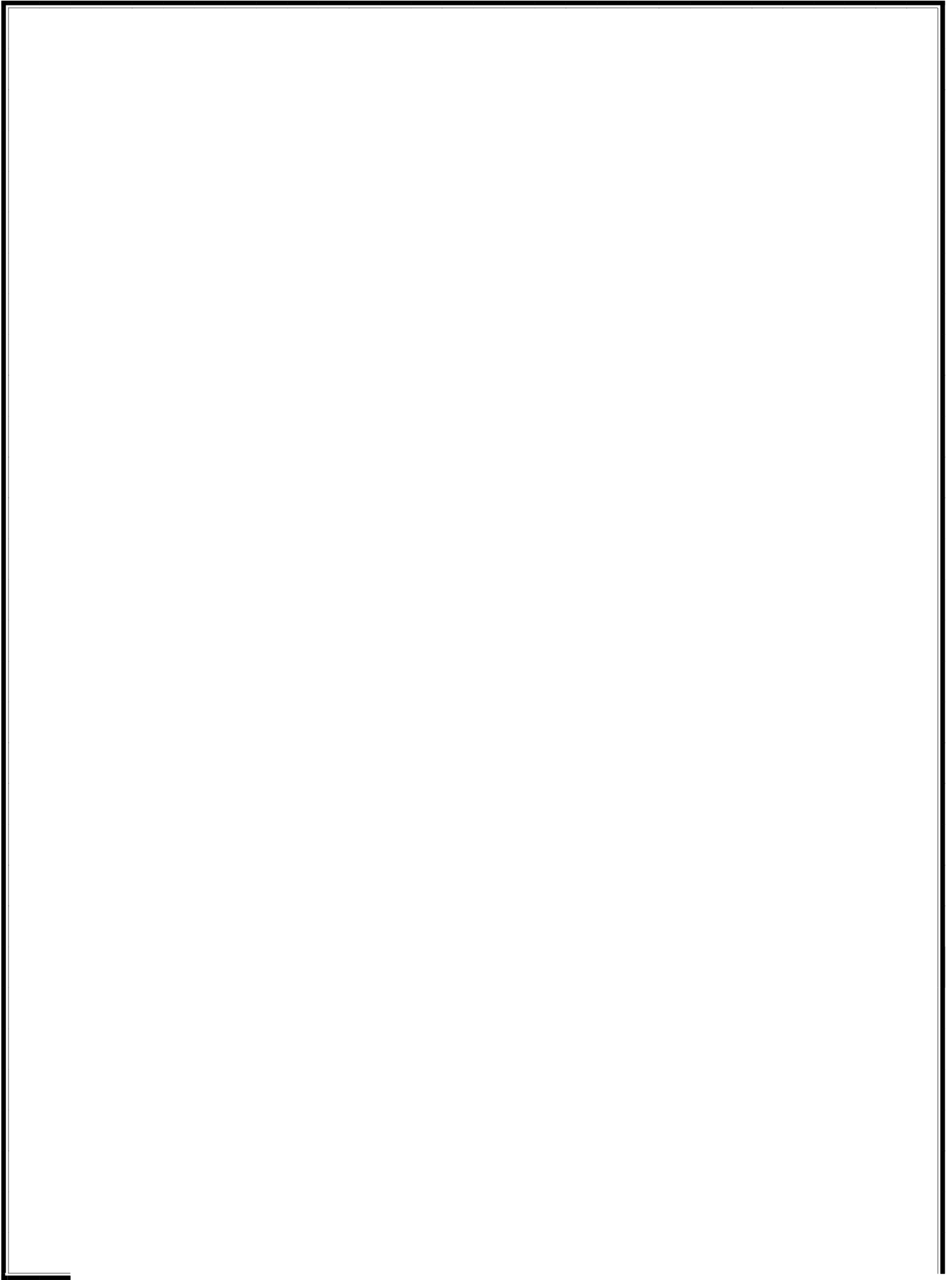
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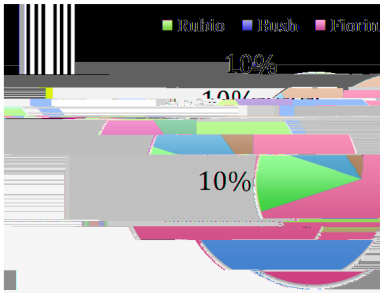
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Government department faculty members were polled with the following question:

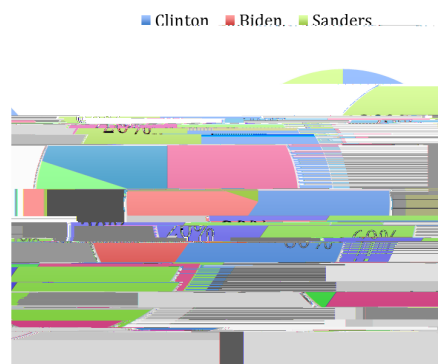
Who do you believe will be the Republican and Democratic nominees for president in 2016?

This has nothing to do with your personal preferences

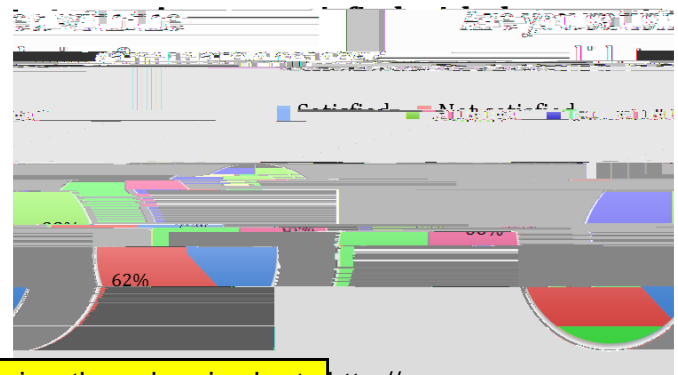
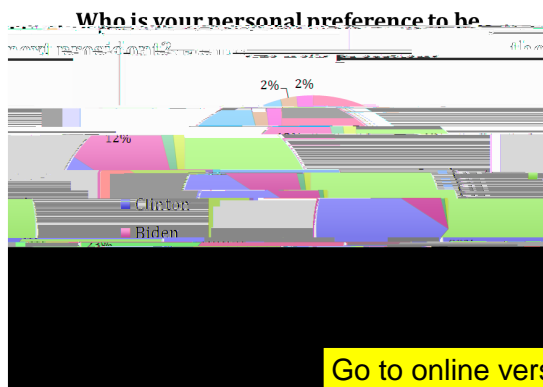
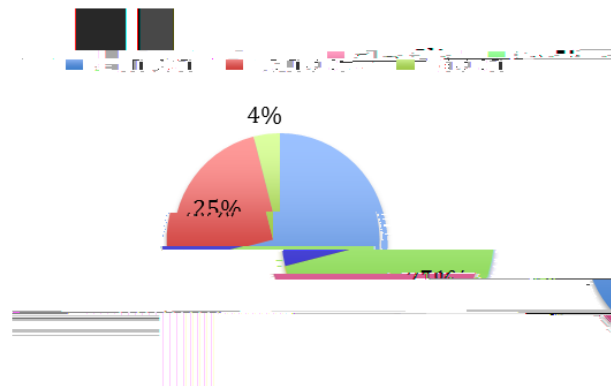
### REPUBLICAN:



### DEMOCRAT:



### Government majors and minors student Poll Results (53 responses)

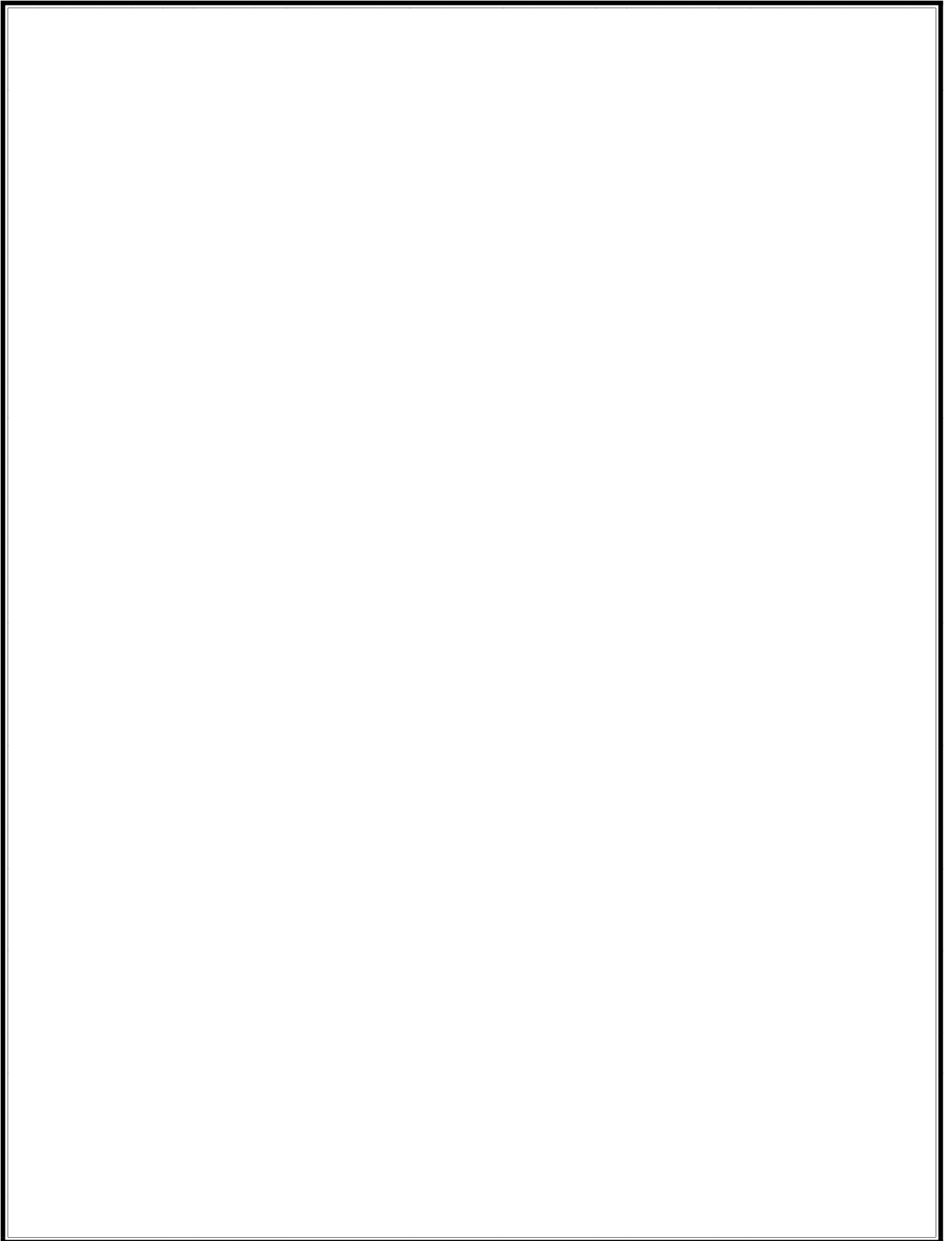


Go to online version to view the color pie charts <http://>











# STUDENT TRAVELS

Last semester (Spring 2015) I studied abroad in Amman, Jordan, through &, ((·V 'LSORPDF\ DQG 3ROLF\ 6WXGLHV SURJUDP \$V WKH QDPH HQWDL focused on Political Science, International Relations, and Middle Eastern Studies. While some of the other American students lived in apartments, I was in a homestay. Of course it took me some time to adjust to the Jordani- DQ FXOWXUH IRU H[DP SOH IDPLO\ LV H[WUHPHO\ LPSRUWDQW VF WKH privacy) but overall my host family was really nice. We took daytrips to the Dead Sea and we often made visits to the extended family.

The classes were all offered through CIEE and both my Modern Standard Arabic and my Colloquial Arabic class took place in the CIEE office. Apart from those courses, I took a class on Development Economics of the Middle East, a case study on Jordan, and I audited a class on the Arab World. I also interned at a Jordanian NGO called the Center for Strategic and Development Studies. The Center for Strategic and Development Studies conducts a variety of programs to foster social and economic development in Jordan. 2QH RI WKH DFDGHPLF KLJKOLJKWV ZDV PHHWLQJ WKH IRUPHU & URZQ









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page that displays particularly poignant messages written to the President by the American people. While most who come across this site may find it interesting, my relationship with the blog posts is far more personal, as I had the honor this past summer of reading these messages all summer as an intern in the White House Office of Presidential Correspondence. As an intern at the White House this summer, I was tremendously fortunate to spend my time not only interacting with citizens on behalf of the President in the Correspondence Office, but also having access to the White House campus and experiencing firsthand what it means to play a small role in the Executive Office of the President.

My daily tasks in my internship included reading messages sent in to the President from the American people, which as one can probably imagine, contain quite a range of emotions, opinions, and comprehensibility. This task, however, was never mundane, as we were always on the lookout for messages that could be used in speeches, displayed online to promote stories or policies, or even sent to the President himself. Each day, President Obama reads ten letters and emails, which are chosen by the interns and staff in the Correspondence Office. It is clear that throughout the whole White House, the administration is committed to transparency and communication with citizens. As the summer progressed, I was fortunate to be assigned more substantive tasks

such as analyzing data on trending topics in letters and emails and assisting in the writing of certain responses from the White House. Seeing for myself the impact that a letter from the President or being mentioned in one of his speeches can have on a struggle makes this kind of work immensely worthwhile.

In addition to my daily tasks, perhaps the best part of my summer was simply having access to the White House and being guided





# ALUMNI

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Since graduating in May, I have been working in various capacities at WKH \$WODQWLF &RXQFLO¶V 6RXWK \$VLD &HQWHU D WKLQN WDQN LQ :DVKLQJW DC. In my short time at the Council, I have had the opportunity to research and write about pressing issues and interact with many of the most powerful people in the world. Before saying anything else though, I want to thank Professor Bibi Craki for recommending me to the Council and for taking an active role in my future during my most frantic search for direction.

As the November 3rd DC BT Skidm

When I tell people I work at a think tank, they usually respond with a KHDG QRG WKDW , KDYH FRPH WR UHDOLJH PHDQV WKH\ GRQ¶W NQRZ ZKD V D think tank does. I have found that the best way to describe what a think tank does is to describe it in relation to its competitors. Most institutions in DC, if they are not part of government, battle to influence what government does. Whether it be a consulting agency, lobbying group or advocacy group, a union association or a think tank, each tries to get its ideas listened to, and its policy preferences implemented. The difference between these governmental institutions lies in the tactics employed and the resources used. A think tank generally uses its network of former government officials and scholars to influence decisions. Just last week, for example, working with the former Ambassador to Afghanistan and other luminaries, we produced a strategy paper that called for the exact approach President Obama announced with regard WR PDLQWDLQLQJ 86 WURRSV LQ \$IJKDQLVWDQ , FDQ¶W VD\ IRU VXUH KRZ PXFK WKH SDSHU LQIOXHQFHG WKH 3UHVLGHQ¶V GHFLVLRQ EXW , FDQ WHOO \RX LW impact (and was cited in the related New York Times article). Success in the industry is usually intangible and unquantifiable, but the work can still be gratifying.

In some ways, working at the Atlantic Council has allowed me to continue living the life of a student. I research and write a fair amount, but on D KRW RI LVVXH V IURP WKH ,UDQ QXFOH DU GHDO WR ,QGLD¶V ERXUJHRQLQJ HF omy to Megacity security concerns. I also am invited to attend lectures, DOWKR XJK WKH\ FDOO WKHP ³EULHILQJV´ RU ³FRQYHUVDWLRQV´ ZLWK WKH ZRUC foremost experts on their given subject. At least part of the Atlantic &RXQFLO RSHUDWHV OLNH 6NLGPRUH¶V 6SHDNHU¶V %XUHDX H[FHSW ZLWK PRUH resources and more conveniently located (no offense to upstate New York).

By far, the coolest part of my job is the people I get to interact with on a semiregular basis. I hate to name drop, but I will anyway. I had the opportunity to discuss the rise of Donald Trump with former Governor of Utah, Presidential candidate and Ambassador to China, Jon Huntsman Jr., and I had an even weirder interaction with former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright that involved my accidentally stealing her food.

\$W WKH ULVN RI VRXQGLQJ FRQGHV FHQGLQJ ,¶G OLNH WR FRQFOXGH ZLWK D EL advice. As an active government major throughout my Skidmore career, I have read my fair share of these grad school checks. More often than not, they left me more anxious about my future career. I sincerely hope my check has the opposite effect. Yes, the job market is flooded with qualified applicants with flawless resumes. But I can tell you from experience that there is a dearth of competent, reliable recent grads, and there is no strong correlation between those qualities and a pristine resume. I guess the positive way to phrase that is there is always a way for a hardworking, competent person to stand out and flourish.

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# Spring 2016 Topics Course Descriptions

GO251C: So You Want to Be a Judge?

James Sieja

This course analyzes the "judicial life cycle." We will examine who goes to law school, who gets picked to be a clerk, what clerks do, running in state judicial elections, the federal nomination process, the life of a judge, workload issues, getting along with judicial colleagues, moving up in the judicial hierarchy, retirement, and

