

This essay is due on December 10. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for each class day they are late.

Please put your name only on a separate cover sheet.

In The Internet Election, John Tedesco (in Chapter 12) argues that the interactive nature of the web makes it a particularly important tool for young voters. He concludes by writing: "the increase in interactivity, mostly among media and political organization Web sites, appears very favorable for young voter political engagement." (p. 197)

You should examine websites in the 2004 election campaign as a way to evaluate his argument. You need to examine three websites – the website of the candidate for whom you are working, one website from a campaign of a candidate in the other political party (allowing some comparison of what makes for more or less successful interactivity in campaign websites), and one website from a media or political organization, not a specific campaign. (For those of you who are interning for a political organization, not a campaign, choose one candidate from each party, plus the organization for which you are an intern.) In addition to looking at this issue at a more general or theoretical level, use your understanding of the particular candidate or organization with whom you are involved, to further elaborate on whether or not (or which kinds of) interactivity seem to be the most (or least) successful.

Your essay will be evaluated with the following rubric:

1. Display understanding of the argument made by Tedesco concerning web interactivity and its potential. (20 points):
2. Evaluation of the potential of website interactivity to engage young voters using examples from the 2008 campaign (two candidate and one organization website). (30 points):
3. Coherence of essay (particularly, but not only, the relationship between the evaluation of the potential of the web and the evidence from the chosen websites.) (25 points):
4. Quality of writing (spelling, grammar, clarity, punctuation, proper citation of sources, etc.). (25 points):