

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Posc 105

**ELECTIONS, CAMPAIGNS AND MONEY
IS CONGRESS FOR SALE?**

Name (printed) _____

Student number _____

It's not possible to answer the question in this assignment, but you can begin to obtain some idea of the role of money in politics by briefly examining your representative's campaign finances. If you want to spend the time, you can even discover the names of groups and individuals who give the most money. It will be difficult, perhaps impossible to know if and how these contributions have affected the person's votes in Congress, but it is a start.

First what is your representative's name. (Use the person who represented your district in 1998.) You should know this by now.

Representative: _____

Now use the Internet to reach "The Non-partisan Federal Candidate Campaign Money" page at: <http://www.tray.com/fecinfo/>.

Make sure the "1998 election cycle" is checked. Then enter the representative's last name and click "Go Search."

Find and click your congressperson to go the "Election Cycle" page where you will find all sorts of data and links.

What were your representative's **receipts**? (In top table): _____

What were the **expenditures**? _____

Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the "Campaign Financial Activity" table and supply these data:

Total contributions from individuals (On the right side of the table): _____

Contributions from PACs: _____

What **percent** of total receipts or contributions came from PACs? You have to use the receipts total above to make the calculation. _____

Contributions from the candidate: _____

Now scroll back to the middle of the page and click on the “List by Standard Industry Code (SIC)” link. This will take you to a table that shows PAC contributions listed by type of group. (You should see a table with entries such as “Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate” “Manufacturing,” Services,” and so forth.

What type of group contributed the most? How much?

How much (if any) did labor groups contribute? _____

What about “Political Organizations?” Which gave the most? How much?

On your own you can explore the list of PAC contributors. Click on “Political Organizations.” Among the political organizations do you see any that might speak for one side or the other of the abortion issue? If so, how much did they contribute? Are you surprised given the vote your representative cast on the abortion issue? (Refer to the “Does Your Representative Represent You” page.) (Use the space below to report your findings.) What about those groups that might take a stand on gay rights? Did any contribute to your representative?

Finally, go back to the main candidate page and click on “Percentage (%) of money from out-of-state: Calculate” button. At the bottom find the percent of individual contributions that came from out-of-state.

What is the percent? _____

Optional. (Not necessarily any extra credit.) Look around the individual contributors to see if you see anything interesting. If so, let us know. A more advanced example. What congressional committees did your representative serve on in the previous congress? Do the PAC contributions make sense in light of these committee assignments?