GVPT 423

E. Uslaner
x54151 Tydings 2126E
euslaner@gvpt.umd.edu

Congressional Elections

Spring 2007
Tu Th 12:30-1:45p.m.

NOTE: NO CLASS ON JANUARY 25, 2007. PLEASE DO NOT E-MAIL OR CALL TO VERIFY.

In order to understand the literature on Congressional elections, it will be important to have some background in understanding statistics. I do not presume that you have any, so have appended to this syllabus a glossary of terms that you will come across in your readings.

Each student will also pick a Congressional campaign ***(either House or Senate)*** from the 2006 elections. Using the background gained in the course, students will write a paper of approximately 10 pages examining why your candidate won or lost. Your choice of a candidate must receive my approval--or your paper will not be accepted. You must select a race and hand in a short paper (one page will do) describing the race. You must hand in the short paper by March 8. You may hand it in any time before that date. The paper itself is due on May 3. Each student will make a brief (no more than 10 minutes) presentation about his/her paper beginning onApril 26. Following each presentation, there will be about five minutes for other students to ask questions. The presentations are not meant to be summaries of final products. They are designed to give others an idea of the race you picked, the key issues, and to give you feedback about issues that others in the class believe to be interesting or important. ***Students who are working on the same race will make joint presentations.***

Your paper should include the following:

(1) a brief description of the candidates; describe the incumbent's record and the challenger's qualifications. Is the challenger a "quality challenger"? Has the challenger run for the seat before? Did either candidate face a primary challenge? How might this affect the November race?

(2) a description of the district, including its demographics and electoral history. How long has the incumbent served? Has (s)he faced strong challengers in the past? Has the incumbent generally won by big or small margins? How did the Presidential candidates do in the district in 2006? Describe the two candidates' campaigns. Which candidate ran the stronger campaign? Did both candidates conduct negative campaigns--or did either?

(3) an analysis of campaign spending. How much did the incumbent and challenger spend? Was the challenger competitive in spending? Why or why not?

(4) an analysis of the issues in the race. What were the key issues? Did they benefit the incumbent or the challenger?

(5) an analysis of the incumbent's record. Was the incumbent a strong supporter or opponent of the President? On what committees did the incumbent sit? How might the incumbent's record affect the primary and general election voting?

As with the final examination, you must integrate course readings into your paper. ***A paper that does not have substantial references to the course reading will receive a grade no higher than a C.*** *To receive a C, your answer must have at least 3 citations from the reading. To receive a grade higher than a C, your answer must have substantially more citations from the reading.* Three references do not guarantee a C.

You should use the descriptions of the campaigns in the Herrnson text as models for your paper. You can find information on the candidates and the campaigns from the following sources:

A comprehensive list of sources is at the UM Library's Guide to Voting and Elections at:

http://www.lib.umd.edu/MCK/GUIDES/elections.html

Among the best are:

Congressional Quarterly Weekly: THE place for coverage of Congress and of specific races; CQ rates each race by how competitive it is for each party. From on campus only: http://library2.cqpress.com/cqweekly/

Congressional Quarterly Voting and Elections: Almost a one-stop shop for information about elections. From on campus only: http://library2.cqpress.com/elections/

Local newspapers: All you ever wanted at http://dir.yahoo.com/News_and_Media/Newspapers/

Almanac of American Politics: biographies of incumbents, their electoral and political histories, demographics of districts–focusing more on districts than on members. Available in hard copy at McKeldin Reference Room or at http://nationaljournal.com/pubs/almanac/ (on campus only) Published by National Journal.

Politics in America: Similar to the Almanac, but more of a focus on the member than on the district; in McKeldin Reference Room.

Lexis-Nexis: tons of information (on campus only) maybe more than you need.

or by "googling" the names of the candidates.

An excellent site for all sorts of information on the election is:

http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/elec2006.html

You can get complete data on campaign finance for any race at the Federal Election Commis-

sion's web site, http://www.fec.gov. Even easier is http://www.opensecrets.org. Candidate issue positions are available at http://www.vote-smart.org (for those candidates who have filled out the surveys from this organization).

You will also find that the national press often covers Congressional races. Check the New York Times and the Washington Post in our libraries. You might also want to check the local press in your district, although this will require a visit to the Library of Congress if Nexis doesn't cover them or if the local paper doesn't have an on-line source with a search engine. You should check to see if there is a web site for newspapers in the district. A convenient way to find this is to use Yahoo (http://www.yahoo.com) and then to go to "News and Media," then click on "Newspapers" and then on "Browse by Regions." Next go to "States" and choose your state and browse.

The course requirements include: (1) a mid-term examination, to be held in-class on March 13, covering material through Topic 6 (20 percent of your grade); (2) the ten page paper on a Congressional race (30 percent of your grade); (3) a take-home final examination of approximately 10 pages (35 percent of your grade); and class participation (15 percent of your grade). The one page paper required by March 8 will not receive a grade. It is required. If you do not hand in this one-page paper on March 8, I shall deduct a full grade from your final paper.

The term paper will be due IN CLASS (not later) on May 3, 2007. The final examination will be due in my office (Tydings 2126E) by 1:00 p.m. on May 17. Papers that are late without a verified emergency will be downgraded one full grade for each day late starting at the time the papers are due (the start of class on May 3 for the term paper and 1:00 p.m. on May 17 for the exam). There are no exceptions to this policy.

IF FOR ANY REASON YOU CANNOT TAKE AN EXAMINATION OR HAND IN AN ASSIGNMENT ON TIME, YOU NEED TO CONTACT ME *BEFORE* THE ASSIGNMENT IS TO BE HANDED IN. IF I DON'T HEAR FROM YOU BEFORE THE DEADLINE, THERE WILL BE NO POSSIBILITY OF A MAKE-UP FOR EXAMS AND YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY LOSE A FULL GRADE FOR EACH DAY LATE FOR PAPERS/TAKE-HOME EXAMS. I SHALL MAKE EXCEPTIONS FOR TRULY EXCEPTIONAL

CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT YOU MUST BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE TO ME THAT YOU WERE UNABLE TO CONTACT ME. IF YOU DO MISS AN EXAMINATION, YOU NEED A STATEMENT FROM YOUR DOCTOR VERIFYING YOUR ILLNESS.

RECENTLY I HAVE BEEN DELUGED WITH CALLS AND E-MAILS ON THE DAY BEFORE OR THE DATE FOR PAPERS OR EXAMS. IF YOU CONTACT ME, MAKE SURE THAT YOU ALREADY HAVE A LETTER FROM A DOCTOR SAYING THAT YOU ARE TOO ILL TO TAKE THE EXAM (NOT THAT YOU ARE ILL, BUT THAT YOU CANNOT MAKE IT TO CAMPUS TO TAKE THE EXAM). IF YOU DON'T HAVE THIS LETTER IN HAND, I WILL NOT ENTERTAIN ANY POSSIBILITY OF GRANTING YOU AN EXEMPTION. THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY, SO PLEASE DO NOT ASK.

PLEASE ALSO NOTE: THE COURSE PAPER IS DUE *IN CLASS* ON MAY 3, 2007 AND THE TAKE HOME FINAL IS DUE IN MY OFFICE AT 1:00 P.M. ON MAY 17, 2007. THE DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS DOES NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAPERS. YOU MUST BE SURE TO GET IT TO ME PERSONALLY. I CANNOT ASSUME THAT YOU LEFT IT IN THE MAIN OFFICE AT A PARTICULAR TIME OR UNDER MY DOOR. I ASSUME THAT ALL LATE PAPERS WERE PLACED UNDER MY DOOR AT THE TIME I RETRIEVE THEM.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

* MARCH 8: ONE-PAGE STATEMENT OF YOUR PAPER TOPIC
* MARCH 13: MID-TERM EXAMINATION
* MAY 3: COURSE PAPER DUE (IN CLASS)
* MAY 17: TAKE-HOME FINAL DUE (1:30 P.M. IN MY OFFICE).

ALL PAPERS MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME AND WITH HARD COPIES. I CANNOT DOWNLOAD YOUR PAPERS. AND, SORRY, I DO NOT DISCUSS GRADES OVER E-MAIL. E-MAILS REQUESTING YOUR GRADES OR TO DISCUSS YOUR GRADES WILL NOT BE

ANSWERED. YOU CAN MAKE AN APPOINTMENT BY E-MAIL, BUT I SHALL NOT ANSWER ANY OTHER GRADE-RELATED QUESTIONS BY E-MAIL. IF YOU WANT TO SEE THE COMMENTS ON ANY ASSIGNMENT, YOU MUST EITHER PICK UP THE ASSIGNMENT DIRECTLY FROM US OR YOU MUST GIVE ME A STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ME A PAPER OR FINAL BY E-MAIL –EVEN "JUST IN CASE" I DIDN'T RECEIVE IT. I AUTOMATICALLY DELETE ANY E-MAILS WITH ATTACH-MENTS WITHOUT READING THEM. IF YOU WANT TO SEND ME SOMETHING OTHER THAN AN ASSIGNMENT WITH AN ATTACHMENT, PLEASE CONTACT ME FIRST. THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS NO E-MAIL POLICY, REGARDLESS OF YOUR REASON.

I TAKE CARE IN GRADING, SO CHANGES ARE EXTREMELY UNLIKELY. IF I DO REREAD YOUR PAPER, YOUR GRADE IS AS LIKELY TO GO DOWN AS IT IS TO GO UP.

The mid-term examination will consist of essay questions drawn from the assigned reading and the class lectures and discussions. All assigned reading is required and may be the subject of examination questions. The take-home final is attached to the end of the syllabus. It will not be due until the day of the regularly scheduled examination, but you may, of course, begin thinking about it at any time. All assignments are to be typed, double-spaced and with reasonable margins.

All written work must be your own. Copying the work of others, whether that of fellow students or anyone else, constitutes plagiarism. You need not copy a work in its entirety to plagiarize. Should you plagiarize, you will be reported to the appropriate authorities at the university and the case will be prosecuted. The penalties for plagiarism range from failure in the course to expulsion from the university. Since there has been a large number of plagiarisms, I

must insist that everyone state the following on the term paper and the take-home final examination:

> I have read the statement on plagiarism, understand it, and state on my honor that this paper is my own work.
>
> Signed, (your name)

Copies of the university policy on plagiarism will be distributed in class. Should anyone have any questions, please feel free to consult me. **If your paper or your take-home final examination does not contain the statement, you will automatically receive an F for the paper unless I determine that you have plagiarized. In that case, I shall refer the case to the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences for adjudication. Don't ask for an exception: There won't be any.**

I expect you to take care with your writing. An excessive number of spelling and/or grammatical errors will lead to a reduction in your grade on both the simulation paper and essay questions on examinations. I also expect you to come to class--and to arrive on time. If you miss more than a few classes or come into class late, it will adversely affect your participation grade.

Incompletes will not be granted unless: (1) you die; (2) you have a baby; or (3) you can convince me that something terrible will happen to you if an incomplete is not granted. Failure to request an incomplete prior to April 19 will, except under the most unusual circumstances, eliminate the possibility of receiving an incomplete. Also, I try to be accessible to answer questions that you might have.

In the list of readings below, the following abbreviations will be used for journal citations:

APSR	American Political Science Review
AJPS	American Journal of Political Science
LSQ	Legislative Studies Quarterly
JOP	Journal of Politics

The topics below are listed roughly by week. The following books should be purchased at any of the local bookstores:

> Gary C. Jacobson, The Politics of Congressional Elections, sixth edition
> Richard F. Fenno, Jr., Home Style
> Kim Fridkin Kahn and Patrick Kenny, No Holds Barred
> Richard F. Fenno, Jr., Congress at the Grassroots
> David Magleby, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly Patterson, eds., Electing Congress

And there is a packet at the College Copy Center, which is at 7319 Baltimore Avenue, #B. Articles marked with an asterisk (*) below are in this packet.

Topic/Date

1 (1/30) Introduction

Introduction to course; read Glossary of statistical terms in this syllabus.

2 (2/1-2/6) House Members in Their Constituencies

Fenno, Home Style, entire

3 (2/8-2/13) Why Incumbents Run So Well in House Elections

Jacobson, chs. 2, 3, 5.
*George Serra and David Moon, "Casework, Issue Positions, and Voting in Congressional Elections," JOP, v. 56 (February 1994), pp. 200-213.
*Diana Evans, "Johnson vs. Koskoff: The 1998 Campaign for the Connecticut 6th District"

4 (2/15-2/20) The Role of Money in Congressional Elections

Jacobson, ch. 4.
*James Campbell et al., "Television Markets and Congressional Elections," LSQ, v. 9 (November 1984), pp. 665-678.

NO CLASS FEBRUARY 24

5 (2/27-3/1) Incumbent Vulnerability in Senate Elections

*Alan I. Abramowitz, "Explaining Senate Election Outcomes," APSR, v. 82 (June 1988), pp. 385-404.
*Gerald Wright and Michael Berkman, "Candidates and Policy in U.S. Senate Elections," APSR, v. 80 (June 1986), pp. 567-587.
*Gary C. Jacobson, "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-86," APSR, v. 83 (September 1989), pp. 773-794.
*L. Sandy Maisel, Kara E. Falkenstein, and Alexander M. Quigley, "Senate Retirements and Progressive Ambition among House Members in 1996," Congress and the Presidency, v. 24 (Autumn, 1997), pp. 131-148.
*Fenno, The United States Senate (in packet and on reserve), entire

6 (3/6-3/ 8) Congressional Elections and Negative Advertizing

Fridkin and Kahn, No Holds Barred, entire

March 13:Midterm Examination

7 (3/27-29) The Nationalization of Congressional Elections: Retrospective Voting and Issues in Congressional Elections

Jacobson, chs. 6, 8.
*Uslaner and M. Margaret Conway, "The Responsible Congressional Electorate," APSR, v. 79 (September 1985), pp. 788-803.
*Donald Kinder and D.R. Kiewiet, "Economic Discontent and Political BCehavi-or in the 1980 and 1982 Congressional Elections," AJPS, v. 23 (August 1979), pp. 495-527.
*John C. Green et al., "Faith and Election: The Christian Right in Congressional Campaigns, 1978-1988," JOP, v. 55 (February 1993), pp. 80-91.

8 (4/3-4/5) Changes in Congressional Representation

Fenno, Congress at the Grassroots, entire

9 (4/19-23) Campaign Video and Discussion

*Matt Bai, "Running from Office: Why Max Kennedy's Congressional Run Never Took Off"
*Alexander Bolton, "Endangered Rep. Kennedy Gets $90 million in pork," The Hill (December 12, 2001)

April 12, 17, May 8, May 10: No class

4/10, 4/25, 5/2, 5/4 Student Reports

GLOSSARY OF STATISTICAL TERMS

This brief glossary is arranged alphabetically! Within each entry, terms that are referenced elsewhere are underlined.

Before the glossary begins, here is an extraordinarily brief review of some issues in the analysis of electoral data.

Suppose you want to determine what leads some people to vote Democratic and other people to vote Republican. This is what you want to explain. It is called the dependent variable. The factors that explain the dependent variable are called independent variables. A likely factor in leading people to vote the way they do is ideology. People who are liberal are more likely to vote Democratic and people who are conservative are more likely to vote Republican. You then offer the following hypothesis:

The more liberal someone is, the more likely he/she is to vote Democratic.

For a sample survey of voters, you have measurements on how people voted (Democratic or Republican, excluding those who did not vote at all) and also how liberal your respondents are. So you want to know whether your hypothesis is supported by your data. To do this, you conduct a regression analysis. Here you predict the level of voting Democratic from the measure of liberalism. From your hypothesis, you expect that the two will be positively correlated. Higher levels of liberalism will lead to a greater probability of voting Democratic. On the other hand, liberalism will be negatively correlated with voting Republican. In a regression analysis, the regression coefficient or b tells you how much great the impact of voting Democratic each increase in liberalism is (see the discussion of b below). In other words, how big a push does liberalism give vote choice?

Even if one has a big impact on the other, this does not mean that your results are reliable. You need to consider two other measures to determine that. The first is the correlation, or r. The correlation tells you how well your prediction from the regression analysis fits the actual data. A correlation of either +1.00 or -1.00 is a perfect fit (see correlation or r below). The sign of the correlation depends upon whether the relationship is expected to be positive (liberalism and a Democratic vote) or negative (liberalism and a Republican vote). A zero correlation indicates that you have no predictive power at all. The second measure is the t-test. This test is based upon the assumption that your independent variable really has no impact on the dependent variable--that the regression coefficient you obtain really should be zero if you had data on all voters, not just your sample. You use the t-test to see if this assumption is realistic or if your results really are strong enough so that they cannot be attributed to "chance." In other words, if you conducted many, many surveys, you would still get strong results.

Finally, you surely realize that there is more to voting decisions than whether voters are liberal or conservative. If we include other possible factors that might influence vote choice (e.g., party identification, the state of the economy, etc.), then we have many predictors and a situation of multiple regression. The measure of correlation now becomes not r, but R (see below).

Why do we use regression analysis and how do we interpret it? Let's look at an example. What determines campaign spending by challengers? I estimated a simple model using data from Senators serving in 1977-78 who ran for reelection in either 1978, 1980, or 1982. There is no particular reason for choosing these Senators (or even the Senate rather than the House). I happened to have the data on hand for my own research. Three factors that could affect how much money challengers spend are: (1) how much incumbents spend, (2) whether the challenger has previously held prominent elective office (either a statewide office or as a member of the House of Representatives), and (3) whether the incumbent faced a divisive primary. We would hypothesize that:

(1) Challengers will spend more money when they face incumbents who also spend a lot of money. The more money incumbents raise, the greater the pressure on challengers to raise money. So high incumbent expenditures lead to high challenger spending. We thus expect a positive (+) relationship and a positive coefficient for the regression analysis.

(2) Challengers who have more experience--and more name recognition--will find it easier to raise (and thus spend) more money. So a higher quality challenger will lead to greater challenger expenditures. We thus expect a positive (+) relationship and a positive coefficient for the regression analysis.

(3) Challengers will raise (and spend) more money when the incumbents they face have had difficult primary races. A close primary will send a message to campaign contributors that the incumbent is vulnerable. So contributors might act strategically and be more willing to give money to the challenger. Here's the logic of what we expect: *The lower the incumbent's primary vote percentage, the more money challengers should raise (and spend). The higher the incumbent's primary vote percentage, the less money a challenger should raise (and spend).* We thus expect a negative (-) relationship between incumbent primary vote share and challenger spending and a negative coefficient for the regression analysis.

Note: We measure both challenger and incumbent expenditures in thousands of dollars. We measure challenger quality by what we call a "dummy" variable. It's a "dummy" because it can take only two values: 1 for quality challengers and 0 for non-quality challengers. And we measure incumbent primary vote share by the percentage of the vote the sitting Senator received in the last primary. Also, every regression analysis includes a "constant" term. You don't need to worry about it, but everyone reports them. (If you have a good memory from your high school algebra--you did take it, didn't you--you might recall that the formula for the equation for a straight line is $Y = a + bX$, where b is the "slope" and a is the "intercept," the point where the line crosses the Y axis. Regression analysis is exactly the same--for just one independent variable, you get a straight line.)

So what do we have? Let's see.

Dependent Variable: Challenger Expenditures

Independent Variable	Estimated Coefficient	Standard Error	t-Statistic
Constant	.023	.040	.567
Incumbent Expenditures	.295	.060	4.934
Challenger Quality	620.800	.015	4.046
Incumbent Primary Votes	-.268	4.501	-.059

Number of Observations	74
R-squared	.396

What does this mean? The interpretation of a regression coefficient is the change in the value of the dependent variable (challenger expenditures) for every unit change in each independent variable. OK, so what does *this* mean?

Let's start one variable at a time. For every $1 an incumbent spends, the challenger spends .295 (the regression coefficient for incumbent expenditures). If the incumbent spent $1000, the challenger would spend $295. If the incumbent spent $1 million, the challenger would spend $295,000. If the incumbent spent nothing, the challenger would spend *nothing*. Note that the regression coefficient, as expected, is positive. What else can we say?

The second column gives us the "standard error," which in essence tells us how reliable our measurement is. Suppose we had data on elections for other Senators at other (maybe more recent) time periods. Would we get the same results or is this sample a bit odd in some way? A high standard error tells us that our results are suspect--and may not be statistically significant. We take our regression coefficient, divide it by the standard error, and get the t-statistic (or t-ratio) in the third column? So what do we do with a t ratio? We look up a table for t to get *the probability that our regression coefficient really is zero, not the .295 that we estimated*. We find that the probability is less than .0001 ($p < .0001$), so we conclude that *the effect of incumbent spending is real and did not occur by chance.*

When we go to our next independent variable, challenger quality, we find that a quality challenger will spend $620,800 more than a candidate who has not held elective office before. The coefficient of .062 tells you that the challenger will spend $621 for every $1000 the incumbent spends. If an incumbent spends $1 million, a quality challenger will spend $620,800. But this only holds for quality challengers. The "unit change" in the independent variable means going from zero (not quality) to one (quality). Poor quality challengers spend nothing additional, so good quality challengers get quite a financial boost. The relationship is real. The t ratio tells us that the probability that real coefficient is zero is also less than .0001. And, as expected, the relationship is positive (better challengers spend more money, not less).

Finally, what about the effect of a divisive primary for the incumbent? As expected, the

relationship is negative: The greater the percentage an incumbent receives in the primary, the *less* money a challenger spends. But the impact is very small: Each percentage point the incumbent receives in the primary costs a challenger just $268.00. Even if an incumbent gets 100 percent of the primary votes, say by running unopposed, the challenger can spend just $26,800 more than if the incumbent got no votes at all (and, of course, was defeated). So even though the coefficient is negative, that doesn't mean that the challenger gets much of an advantage from a tight incumbent primary. In fact, the very small t ratio (-.059, negative because the regression coefficient is negative), suggests that the regression coefficient isn't at all different from zero (no effect at all). The coefficient is not significantly different from zero. How can we tell? Social scientists traditionally use a "rule of thumb" that the significance level has to be less than .05. This means that we need (in most cases) a t ratio that is either greater than 1.645 or less than -1.645 (if we expect a negative coefficient). Clearly, .059 is much less than 1.645. So we can say that incumbent's primary vote shares have no real effect on challenger spending.

Overall, how much does our regression tell us. For this we use the R^2 statistic. R^2 varies between zero and one. A value of zero means that we could do as well by guessing that all challengers spend $830,500, the mean amount that challengers raised in these three years. A value of one means that we can predict challenger expenditures *perfectly* from our set of independent variables. (We rarely get a value of zero and never get perfect predictions). The R^2 we get is .396, which means that we do reasonably well, accounting for about 40% of the spread between the low figure of zero and the high figure of $4,113,000. We still have 60% of the spread that we haven't accounted for, but we are doing far better than chance.

One additional note: Sometimes you will see references to probit or logit analyses. Researchers use probit or logit when the dependent variable is a dummy variable, such as voting Democratic or Republican or voting for the incumbent or the challenger. You almost certainly don't care about why you can't (or shouldn't) use regression analysis in this case, but note two things. Probit or logit (which are almost identical to each other) are like regession. But (second) you can't interpret their coefficients in the same way. In fact, you can't interpret them at all. Sometimes researchers will give you something useful such as the "effect," which is the difference in the probability (say, of voting for the Democrat or the Republican) based upon the values of each independent variable. So, if the Democrat spends $1 million rather than nothing, does this increase--and by how much--the probability that a vote will cast a Democratic ballot.

The glossary contains terms relating to regression and correlation, but also some other terms as well (mean, median, standard deviation, variance, probit) that you will confront in the readings.

a — The intercept in a regression equation, $Y = a + bX + e$. The intercept tells you the mean of the dependent vari-able when all of the other variables equal zero.

b — The regression coefficient in a regression equation, $Y = a + bX + e$. b tells you the impact of each independent variable upon the dependent variable. For example, suppose the dependent variable is vote choice (0 = Republican, 1 = Democrat) and the independent variables are: (1) whether you have met the Democratic candidate

(0 = no, 1 = yes); (2) whether you have met the Republican candidate (0 = no, 1 = yes); and (3) whether the Democratic candidate is the incumbent (0 = no, 1 = yes). If the regression equation is:

$Y = .45 + .10b_1 - .15b_2 + .32b_3 + e,$

where b_1 = meet Democratic candidate
b_2 = meet Republican candidate
b_3 = party of incumbent,

then: .45 (the intercept, or a) is the probability that a voter will cast a Democratic ballot if he/she has met neither the Democratic nor the Republican candidate and the Democratic candidate is not the incumbent. If the voter has met the Democratic candidate, he/she is--other things being equal--10 percent more likely to vote Democratic. If the voter has met the Republican candidate, he/she is 15 percent less likely to vote Democratic (15 percent more likely to vote Republican), other things being equal. And if the Democratic candidate is the incumbent, the voter is 32 percent more likely to vote Democratic, other things being equal.

beta — What is called the "standardized" regression coefficient. In the example of b above, we compared the interpretations of these coefficients for three independent variables. All three variables had the same possible values (0 or 1). But suppose we added campaign expenditures for the Democratic candidate to the equation. This variable will range from some small positive value (generally no less than a few thousand dollars) to some very large value (in the millions of dollars). The resulting b_4 coefficient cannot be directly compared to the other coefficients because the variables are measured on different scales. In particular, the coefficient for expenditures cannot be interpreted as a probability (since the independent variable does not range from zero to one). In order to compare coefficients, we divide each coefficient by the standard deviation for the respective independent variable. Thus, we divide the coefficient for meeting the Democratic candidate by the standard deviation of meeting the Democratic candidate, etc. This allows us to compare the magnitude of each coefficient, so that we can state that the impact of one variable is greater than that of another.

correlation — see r

dependent variable — What we seek to explain or predict. For example, we want to predict whether someone will vote Democratic or Republican for Congress; this variable depends upon the values of other variables--campaign spending, who is the incumbent, etc., the independent variables. We denote the dependent variable by Y.

e — The error term in a regression equation. What is left to predict in the dependent variable that the independent variables don't account for. Also called residuals.

independent variable — The variables we use to explain or predict the dependent variable. We denote them by X's. They do not variables depend upon other variables.

mean — The average value, as, for example, in a ballplayer's batting average.

median — A measure that complements the mean. half the cases in a sample lie above the median, half below. For example, for the numbers [0, 1, 2, 88, 99], the median is 2, while the mean is 38. The mean, the median, and the mode are identical if the data correspond to a normal distribution.

mode — A measure that complements the mean. for a sample of data cases, the mode is the category with the largest number of entries. For example, for the numbers [0, 0, 0, 1, 1, 1, 1] for seven voters (where 0 indicates voting for the Republican and 1 indicates voting for the Democrats), the mode is 1. For data that are normally distributed, the mean, median, and mode are identical.

normal distribution — A concept that relates to the shape of the data. A normal distribution is the familiar bell-shaped curve, bution with the most extreme values having the fewest cases. Some instructors (not this one) use this distribution to determine course grades, with a lot of C's, fewer B's and D's (in the same amount), and even fewer A's and F's (also in the same amount). For a normal distribution, the mean, median, and mode are identical.

probability — The likelihood that something occurs. Must be between zero (no chance at all that something happens) and one (something occurs with certainty). The probability that you obtain a head when you flip a fair coin is .5.

probit — A variation on regression analysis. You don't need to know more about this for this course. The only thing that is important is that probit coefficients have no ready interpretation. That is why we generally derive estimates of the probability a particular result occurs.

r, R, R^2 — r is the correlation coefficient. It ranges between +1 and -1. A positive value of r indicates that as the values of the dependent variable increases, so do those for the independent variables. A negative value indicates that as the dependent variable increases, the independent variable's values decrease. For example, if the dependent variable is voting turnout (0 = abstain, 1 = vote) and the independent variable is interest in politics (0 = not interested, higher values show increasing levels of interest), we would expect people with greater interest would vote more often. Thus we expect a positive value of r. On the other hand, with the same dependent variable (turnout), our independent variable were now a measure of distrust in government (0 = feel government can be trusted, 1 = government can not be

trusted), we would expect higher turnout among citizens who feel that government can be trusted. Thus, we would expect a negative correlation between turnout and distrust. If a correlation equals +1, this means that we can predict the dependent variable perfectly from the independent variable. If a correlation equals -1, this means that we can also predict the dependent variable perfectly from the independent variable, but that the relationship is negative. A correlation of zero indicates that there is no relationship between the two variables, as we might expect, for example between shoe size and voting turnout. The correlation coefficient indicates whether there is a strong relationship between the dependent and independent variables in a regression analysis. The higher the value of r (either positive or negative), the better the regression analysis does in predicting Y.

R is the multiple correlation coefficient used in regression analysis when there is more than one independent variable. R only varies between zero and one; it cannot take on negative values.

R^2 is the usual measure for determining how well a regression analysis performs. It is the square of R. Any dependent variable, Y, can be expressed in terms of the range of values it can take on (turnout, for example, is zero for abstain and 1 for vote in our example). We can "normalize" the total range--or variance--of the dependent variable to 1. Then, the value of R square is the proportion of that range that the independent variables predict. This measure ranges from zero (we have failed to predict anything) to one (perfect prediction).

regression — See b above. What regression does is to explain or predict a dependent variable, Y, from independent variables, or X's through an equation such as:

$$Y = a + bX + e,$$

where a is the intercept and the b's are regression coefficients and e is the error terms or residuals. We judge how well the equation predicts Y by the correlation or R.

X — Used to signify the independent variable(s) in a regression analysis.

Y — Used to signify the dependent variable in a regression analysis.

TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMINATION

The consulting firm of Victory, Inc. has learned that you have taken a course in Congressional Elections at the University of Maryland and has engaged you to write a report in which you recommend a strategy for the ten-term Representative Harvey Cliffhanger, a Republican from the Fourth Congressional District of the state of Transylvania. Cliffhanger has to make a decision whether to run for a tenth in the House of Representatives or to run against the three-term Democratic incumbent Frank N. Stein. You are to prepare this memorandum, of approximately 10 pages (typewritten and double-spaced), based upon the knowledge you have gained in this course. Victory, Inc. does not want a "game plan" gas to how to run a campaign. As a six-term veteran, Cliffhanger has plenty of knowledge on that score. Rather, the firm wants you to relate what broader knowledge you have gained in this course, drawing on the lectures and in particular on the reading. Indeed, your compensation for this assignment (reflected in your grade for the final examination) will bear a direct relationship to the way in which you integrate the course readings.

There is no such thing as a satisfactory answer that does not dwell heavily on course readings. ***An essay that does not have substantial references to the course reading will receive a grade no higher than a C.*** *To receive a C, your answer must have at least 3 citations from the reading. To receive a grade higher than a C, your answer must have substantially more citations from the reading.* Three references do not guarantee a C.

You must also make a concrete recommendation for Cliffhanger: Either he runs for the Senate or for reelection to the House. He will respect your decision but you must tell him what you think he should do.

The report will be delivered to my office (Tydings 2126E) no later than 1:00 p.m., Thursday, May 17, 2007. Absolutely no papers will be accepted after 1:00 p.m. on the dot without a certified illness or family emergency. **DON'T EVEN THINK OF ASKING FOR AN EXTENSION--EVEN OF FIVE MINUTES FOR ANY OTHER REASON.** I leave for home to grade the exams at precisely 1:00. The Government and Politics department does not accept papers from students. So you must hand in your paper on time. If you leave your paper under my office door, realize that: ***the cleaning crew may pick up papers from the floor and treat them as trash–and if the paper is still there, I will consider it handed it when I next come to the office–and this may result in a failing grade.***

Every student must include the following statement on a separate page:

I have read and understand the University's policy on plagiarism and realize that the minimum penalty for submitting work that is not entirely my own is failure in the course. I certify that I have not committed plagiarism on this assignment.

Signed and dated,

(your signature) _____

REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST SIGN THE PLAGIARISM STATEMENT AND YOU MUST INCLUDE IT WHEN YOU SUBMIT THE EXAMINATION. ALSO, REMEMBER THAT YOUR SPELLING AND GRAMMAR WILL AFFECT YOUR GRADE. IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE PLAGIARISM STATEMENT, YOU WILL RECEIVE AN F FOR THE ASSIGNMENT. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.

The strategic situation is as follows: Cliffhanger has won victories against Democratic opponents by modest margins in most of his nine election campaigns since he won a traditionally Republican seat in 1990. His average margin of victory has been 51.7 percent, but this masks considerable variations in his contests. His electoral history is as follows:

1990	53.0
1992	59.3
1994	68.4
1996	52.3
1998	58.3
2000	63.9
2002	53.6
2004	57.9
2006	50.1

Cliffhanger's biggest victories came in 1994 and 2000 when there were strong national tides favoring the Republicans. However, he also fared well in 1992 when Bill Clinton and the entire state Democratic party scored impressive victories in Transylvania. Cliffhanger also weathered the strong Democratic tide in 1998 when he defeated Democratic activist Lois Blood by a wide margin.

Cliffhanger has been a moderate Republican who has held on to his seat in a district and state that have become increasingly Democratic. Clinton, Gore, and Kerry each carried the district by 55% or more. Amityville Mayor Michael Horror ran against Cliffhanger in 2004 and fared badly but came within a whisker of defeating him in the 2006 election. Horror vows to run again in 2008 and he has the strong backing of the state Democratic party and the junior Senator Martin Safe, who won reelection in 2004 with 65% of the vote. Horror beat Blood by 55% to 45% in the Democratic primary, but spent $750,000 to score this victory and was badly outspent by Cliffhanger, even as two other Transylvania Republican House members went down to defeat in 2006. The Democrats took control of both houses of the state legislature for the first time since 1974–but the incumbent Democratic Governor, Roger Wilco, surprisingly was defeated by a Republican newcomer, Franklin Bite. Bite is a protégé of Cliffhanger–he had worked as a volunteer in Cliffhanger's Washington office in 1994-1995.

Both Bite and Cliffhanger are Republican moderates. They are pro-choice, take nuanced positions on gay marriage, support stem cell research, and have successfully fought back an

attempt by strong conservatives to take over the state party. Cliffhanger tried to distance himself from President Bush in 2006, but he refused to side with Democrats who called for a "date certain" for withdrawing troops from Iraq. However, he has said that the United States cannot maintain such a high troop level without public support and has criticized the administration for not acting quickly enough to draw down the number of combat troops in Iraq. Cliffhanger has also called for a bipartisan committee to propose a plan for refinancing Social Security.

Senator Stein has been a Washington fixture since 1990. He has won handily in two of his three races. In his first contest, he replaced a retiring Republican in a Democratic year and carried 56 percent of the vote. Six years later, even as Bill Clinton carried the state, his margin fell to 51 percent of the vote, losing all but five of the state's 25 counties. In 2002, Stein captured 57 percent of the vote to win a third term in another good year for Democrats in Transylvania. Stein appears to be well entrenched, but some people in the state do not think him to be invincible.

Stein is more popular among many Republicans than among Democrats. He began his career as a fairly conventional Democrat. However, over time he has become more "moderate" and was rumored to be a possible Secretary of the Treasury in the Bush administration. He supported Bush's tax cuts, arguing that they are good for business, and has been a consistent supporter of a strong military, including the war in Iraq. Many Democrats have strongly criticized Stein for his support of the war and vowed not to vote for him again. However, other Democrats point to his overall record of strong support for most of the Democratic agenda and his close personal ties to both Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid and his junior colleague, Martin Safe. Stein has been the Democrats' floor leader in the Senate on the battle for stem cell research and six times has won "Legislator of the Year" from the League of Conservation Voters. His daughter, Esmerelda, is a lesbian activist and he has worked with her to gain greater support for AIDS treatment.

Stein and Cliffhanger both take pride in working across party lines and this gains them both friends and enemies. Stein lunches weekly with moderate Republicans such as Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins of Maine and was part of the "Gang of 14" that worked to forestall a change in Senate filibuster rules in 2005. Cliffhanger has worked with Democratic Representatives Henry Waxman (CA) and Ben Cardin (MD) on health care policy and in 2006 he voted against the Bush administration 85 percent of the time, and Republican loyalists called him "our Zell Miller" (after the Georgia Democratic Senator who voted 90% of the time with Republicans and campaigned for President Bush). In 1998 he was one of a handful of Republican Representatives who voted against the impeachment of President Clinton, saying that the "rush to impeachment is an incredible waste of time when we have important legislative business to do." He once called former House Majority Leader Speaker Tom DeLay a "legislative terrorist who is destroying cordial relations between the parties" and he called for DeLay's resignation even before the former leader was indicted on charges of corruption. He has been equally critical of the Democratic House leadership, but Republicans have accused him of mixed loyalties. Some worry that he might even change parties if he were elected to the Senate.

Stein has been the ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee throughout his

third term. Some Democrats tried to punish him for supporting Bush's tax cuts, but his close ties to the leadership kept him in power. Cliffhanger has not been able to get a choice committee assignment because the House Republican leadership considered him to be unreliable. He serves on the Committee on the Judiciary, where he faces the most conservative Republicans and the most liberal Democrats and is constantly confronted with issues such as abortion, school prayer, gay rights, and the like and on Veterans' Affairs, where he can help many of his constituents.

Cliffhanger's district is suburban and above average in income and education. It voted reliably Republican until 1992 and since then Democrats have carried it in every Presidential election. Yet moderate Republicans such as Cliffhanger have fared well and until the Democratic surge in 2006, the state senator and the state representative were both moderate Republicans. The state is still divided between the parties despite a similar tilt to the Democrats since the1990s.

Liberal Democrats have threatened a primary challenge to Stein by National Football League Hall of Famer Fred Ghoul, who starred at quarterback for the Amityville Ghosts before attending medical school and serving as an emergency room doctor in a poor Mississippi town before returning to Transylvania, marrying a local Presbyterian minister, and opening a clinic for poor people. Their son became a famous disk jockey on local radio, the Cool Ghoul, before volunteering for service in Iraq and, after his discharge, starting "Transylvania Veterans for an Immediate Withdrawal from Iraq." Ghoul was named honorary chair of the campaign and has threatened to run against Stein for the Democratic nomination.

Cliffhanger believes that 2008 will be a better year for Republicans than was 2006 and that Stein is weak. The President's popularity will be on the rise, the economy will be strong and Republicans will be more united in their Presidential contest than will be Democrats. Republican leaders agree with him but also worry that if he runs for the Senate his House seat would likely fall to Horror, whom Democratic leaders see as a likely future Governor or possibly Senator after Stein retires. They are unsure of Cliffhanger's statewide appeal since Republican voters in the western part of the state would likely find him far too liberal for their tastes–and might be more likely to vote for the more moderate Stein or simply sit out the election.

In analyzing Cliffhanger's options, consider the various aspects of the course relating to both House and Senate elections. You MAY NOT assume that anything of a scandalous nature (or the like, such as a candidate dying or getting a divorce in the middle of the campaign). Good luck (to both you and Cliffhanger).