

# **POL 168: Chicano/Latino Politics**

**Professor Brad Jones**

**Fall Quarter 2008**

## **Assignment 1: Immigration and the Presidential Candidates**

For this assignment, I want you to content analyze the stated positions of Presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain on an issue viewed as important to Latinos: immigration. First, we will investigate whether the candidates—in their own words—voice ideologically extreme or moderate positions on the immigration issue. How do the candidates present their views? Do their statements converge toward the median voter (i.e. a centrist position) or diverge toward “opposing camps”? Does the rhetoric they use suggest divisive politics? Or given their positions, is it difficult to discern a difference between their positions?

To do so, each of you will examine the state positions on the immigration issue by analyzing statements on the candidates’ official websites. Begin by reading through the entire text devoted to the issue. Return to the top and list the adjectives and phrases used to talk about the issue. Then characterize and summarize them. Are there themes? Are the words clear or “fluffy”? Are certain themes or words repeated? Are adjectives clearly liberal or conservative? What do you notice? Find some way to present your analysis of the language used. Consider tables and graphs for each candidate. Then compare the two. How do they differ? How do they agree? Is one candidate more explicit than the other in how he will address the immigration issue? Finally, based on your analysis and understanding of Latino attitudes (which admittedly, some of you are just now learning about), *on this one issue*, which candidate do you think would have the advantage among Latino voters?

Your analysis should be clear and concise. I expect serious analytical work here. The final assignment, including figures and tables (that, if included, need to be readable, interpretable, and in the document to fulfill a clear purpose) should be between 5-6 double-spaced, 12 point font, word processed pages. This assignment is due October 13. No late assignments or electronically submitted assignments will be accepted.

NOTE: the Obama website asks for your e-mail address to enter; if you look below the dialog box, you can skip over this.