GU POLITICS FELLOW KATIE WALSH SHIELDS

DISCUSSION GROUP OUTLINE

PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS
HOW DOES A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN REALLY WORK?

Discussion Group Synopsis
Beyond the hype you see on TV and in the media. What really goes into running and winning a national campaign? There’s a lot more than meets the eye.

Week 1 – Overview of Trump Campaign/RNC vs. Clinton campaign/DNC in 2016
The 2016 presidential campaign was one for the books. What was different? What did we learn and how will it affect how Presidential campaigns are run in the future both from the campaign perspective and the perspective of the national party committees.

Week 2 – Role of Party Committees and the Presidential Nominating Process
What is the role of the modern party committee in a post McCain Feingold world? What should a party committee do? Does it have a role? Also a look at the presidential nominating process in both parties. How does a candidate become the party’s nominee? What should the nominating process look like?

Week 3 – Role of Digital and Data in modern campaigns
How can campaigns and party committees use data to help drive decisions? Does TV matter anymore? How did the Trump campaign use digital differently? What is the role of digital moving forward? In the age social media does ground game still matter?

Week 4 - Role of outside groups/money in campaigns
The role of soft dollar outside groups and “dark money” has been debated in politics for the last 10 years. How do these groups and campaign finance rules effect our political process? Did McCain Feingold have unintended consequences on how money can be used in politics?
Week 5 – What the media got wrong about the 2016 electorate and what they still don’t understand
How did the media get this so wrong? Why does so much of the electorate not trust the press?

Week 6 – Midterm cycles vs. Presidential Cycles
How are they different? Historically the Party in power loses seats. What is the 2018 mid-term shaping up to look like? Can candidates buck the national trend? How would you run a re-election campaign in this environment?

Week 7 – National Campaign Committees
What are the roles of the National Republican Senatorial Committee and the National Republican Congressional Committee? How are they different from the RNC and how do they work with the RNC to elect candidates?

Week 8 – Wrap up. So how does a campaign really work?