**Research Paper: Becoming An Informed Voter Assignment Instructions**

Overview

The purpose of this paper is to provide a practical application of material learned by developing concepts learned in the presentations. Using these concepts, you will investigate the recent political history of your congressional district and state, the rise to power and voting record of your Representative to the United States Congress and one of your United State Senators. You will determine if your representatives keep their promises when they go to Washington and determine in their voting record aligns with Biblical principles and your own beliefs.

Instructions

The body of the paper must be at least 6 pages in current APA format and include level 1, 2, and 3 headings. In addition to the body, you must include a separate title page and reference page. Do not submit an abstract with this assignment.

Do not write the paper without carefully studying the related presentations. To achieve more than a passing grade, you must demonstrate a mastery of the presentations factual information and incorporate those ideas into your paper. Your paper must adhere to the current APA formatting guidelines. Doing the minimum amount of work does not guarantee a perfect score. Please consult the rubric for an understanding of what will be graded and the point value for content and style.

Researching your Congressional Delegation will be accomplished in two steps.

First, you will analyze the political background of your congressional district for the last 25 years and your U.S. Representative.

Second, you will analyze the political background of your state for the last 25 years and one of your U.S. Senators.

You are investigating your United States Representative and Senator. **Do not use members of your state assembly.**

Begin by reviewing the presentation on “Becoming an Informed Voter.” If you have a newly elected representative who has not yet received interest group ratings, use the interest group ratings of a representative from a neighboring district. You may choose which senator to study; however, if one senator is newly elected and does not have interest group ratings, study the other one.

After reviewing the presentation, the first part will deal with your congressional district and congressman; the second part will deal with your state and senator. As explained in the presentation, interest group scores may be found at **Explore: Vote Smart** located in the Learn items for Module 5: Week 5.

Scores may also be found in the interest group websites (ACLU, ACU, ADA, CC/FRC) or other sites which compile voting data.

Helpful resources can be found in the Research Guide for GOVT 220, located in the “Explore Tab” in Module 5.

You will use at least six different sources for this paper that are not more than two years old in addition to the Bible and Module 5 presentation. You may include older sources, as appropriate. Wikipedia and other encyclopedias are not acceptable sources for this assignment. If in doubt, contact your instructor.

You will discuss at least three significant pieces of legislation sponsored, co-sponsored, or supported by your Representative and Senator in the last four years (at least six total; naming post offices, roads, holidays, etc. are not significant legislative items).

You will include a biblical reference, with text, related to each legislative item.

Your paper will address the following questions:

• What is the political history of your district and state for the past 25 years?

• How has your congressional district and state voted in congressional and presidential elections for the past 25 years?

• Does your district have a long tradition of supporting one party, or has it been changing in recent years? Why?

• How did your representative and senator come to power? (Briefly describe their education, work experience and political backgrounds.)

• What are examples of legislation your representative and senator have sponsored or co-sponsored in the last four years? Provide the title of the legislation, the year it was introduced, and indicate if it became law. Did your legislators include this legislation in their platform when they ran for office? Does this legislation align with biblical principles? Explain.

• How do the interest groups - ADA, ACLU, ACU, and CC (or FRC) - rate your representative and senator? (Note: If the Christian Coalition score is not available, you may substitute the Family Research Council score. Include the exact scores from each of these groups. The rationale for this is explained in the presentation.)

• Based on these ratings, and the legislative efforts of your Representative and Senator, would you classify your Representative and Senator as conservative or liberal? Justify your answer.

• In your conclusion explain how your congressional delegation does, or does not, reflect your values.

Do not submit your paper in the form of a series of questions and answers. Organize this information into a standard research paper (paragraph form with level headings) utilizing the current APA format. A Sample Undergraduate Paper can be found in the Writing Style Guide which is embedded in the course.

Consult the grading rubric to make sure that all the necessary information has been included.

Note: Your assignment will be checked for originality via the Turn It In plagiarism tool.