2016 Election Playbook: *Election Day*

A. Presidential Outlook

1. Overview

With Election Day 2016 here and 46 million[1] votes already cast, Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Clinton appears to hold a narrow advantage over Republican Presidential Nominee Donald Trump. Currently, Real Clear Politics' national average[2] has Clinton ahead by 3.2 percentage points. In their final polls of this election cycle, Bloomberg, CBS, Fox News, NBC, and Reuters all report Clinton ahead 3-5 percentage points nationally. Further, Bloomberg[3] shows independents leaning her direction at a 39 to 35% clip. Lately, Trump has seen his poll numbers improve in many swing states but he still faces an uphill path to 270; the number of electoral votes needed for victory. Polling in several swing states such as Florida, North Carolina, and Ohio had been trending towards Clinton after the widely distributed videos and renouncements of support from Republican office holders. However, Republicans appear to have increased support for Trump. Additional speculation arose against Secretary Clinton after FBI Director James Comey's letter to Congress, further adding concerns about Secretary Clinton's emails. With these scandals sunk into the polls and Election Day upon us, the electorate is poised to vote along highly partisan lines. Like elections past, the electoral map inherently favors the Democratic candidate. Trump must win the traditionally red states, including North Carolina, a state that Mitt Romney won in 2012, and add Florida and Ohio to get to 253. These states plus Pennsylvania would put him at 273. Without Pennsylvania, Trump would have to win a combination of states such as traditionally blue states Michigan, Minnesota or Wisconsin along with states such as Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and Maine's 2nd Congressional District. In short, Trump must break through the blue wall in Michigan, Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin for a path to victory.

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[1] Cheney, Kyle, Glueck, Katie. "Record-breaking early voting fuels Democratic optimism." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/clinton-trump-early-voting-230916.

[2] Real Clear Politics. "General Election: Trump vs. Clinton." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epo.lls/2016/president/us/general_election_trump_vs_clinton-5491.html.

[3] McCormick, John. "Clinton Narrowly Beats Trump With Independents in Bloomberg Poll." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-11-02/independents-poll.

2. States to Watch

a. Florida

Signs are pointing more and more towards a toss-up in crucial battleground state Florida. Democrats have once again registered more new voters than Republicans. In an internal memo[4] circulated by Secretary Clinton's Florida state director Simone Ward, she notes that Democrats registered 259,000 new voters while Republicans registered 206,000; a 5-point gap. Ward goes on to say that the state has become more diversified and Florida's electorate has gone from 67% white in 2012 to 64% this year. However, Republicans are beating Democrats in early voting, after Obama built a lasting early-voter lead during the same period in 2012. Further, the New York Times/Siena Upshot poll[5] performed October 25th through the 27th showed Trump leading by 4 points while polling[6] released Wednesday from CNN and Quinnipiac from October 27th through November 1st show Clinton with slight leads. To illustrate just how close the race in Florida is, the Real Clear Politics average[7] shows Trump with a .2-point advantage.

b. North Carolina

The tide may have turned in favor of Trump after previously trending in Clinton's direction prior to Director Comey's letter in the same state Mitt Romney won in 2012. Polling in North Carolina previously reported Clinton leading anywhere from 1 percentage point to as high as 7 percentage points between October 20th and 23rd. Monmouth Polling[8] had Clinton up 47 to 46 % while the New York Times Upshot/Siena College poll[9] showed Clinton with a 7-point lead. However, WRAL-TV/SurveyUSA[10], which showed Clinton with a 2-point lead a month ago, now shows Trump with a 7-point lead. Further, early voting numbers are down considerably from 2012 among Democrats. Also, the Real Clear Politics' average[11] currently shows Trump with a 1-point lead.

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[4] Caputo, Mark. "Clinton campaign memo details get-out-the-vote plan, election advantages in Fla." Accessed October 24, 2016." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.politico.com/states/ florida/story/ 2016/10/clinton-campaign-memo-details-get-out-the-vote-plan-election-advantages-in-fla-106651.

[5] Cohn, Nate. "Latest Upshot Poll Shows Trump With a Lead in Florida." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/30/upshot/florida-poll.html.

[6] Diaz, Daniella. "Polls: Clinton, Trump neck-and-neck in Florida; new results in NC, PA and Ohio." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/02/politics/presidential-polls-2016-election-hillary-clinton-donald-trump/.
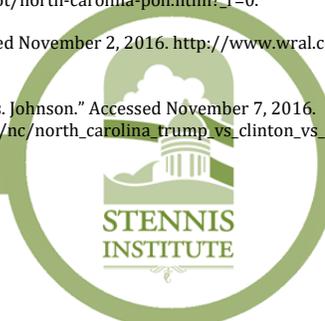
[7] Real Clear Politics. "Florida: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/fl/florida_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-5963.html.

[8] Monmouth University. "Prez, Gov Races Close; GOP Edge for Senate." Accessed November 2, 2016. https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/MonmouthPoll_NC_102416/.

[9] Cohn, Nate. "Clinton Leads by 7 Points in North Carolina Poll." Accessed October 25, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/25/upshot/north-carolina-poll.html?_r=0.

[10] WRAL."WRAL poll: Trump charges ahead in NC." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.wral.com/ wral-poll-trump-charges-ahead-in-nc/16183780/.

[11] Real Clear Politics. "North Carolina: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/nc/north_carolina_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson-5951.html .

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c. Ohio

Ohio may be Trump's best chance at winning a swing-state despite popular Republican Governor John Kasich's refusal to support Trump and the campaign's decision to cut ties with the Ohio GOP Chairman. Currently, Republicans hold a 4.7%[12] edge in early voting and polling has steadily favored Trump. Further, Real Clear Politics' average[13] has Trump up 3.5 points.

d. Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania has not voted Republican since 1988 and that traditions looks to continue. A Bloomberg poll[14] taken in early October of Pennsylvania showed Clinton with a strong lead in the state, up 9%, in part due to the Philadelphia suburbs rejecting Mr. Trump in large numbers; 80% of Philadelphia suburb voters saying the 2005 tape bothered them. Since that time, polling has consistently shown Clinton ahead but her lead has narrowed, evidenced by the Real Clear Politics' average[15] now showing Clinton's lead down to 1.9%.

e. Utah

Recently, Trump has been in a dead heat[16] with 3rd party home-state candidate Evan McMullin in the predominantly Mormon state Utah although most recent polling suggests Trump has a comfortable lead going into Election Day. McMullin is performing well in some Western states, speculatively based on his Mormon background and conservative plank. However, his only path to the Presidency requires the unlikely circumstance of the election being thrown into the House of Representatives due to neither Clinton nor Trump reaching 270.

f. Arizona

Democrats have targeted Arizona, a state that since 1948 has voted Democratic only once, as a priority as evidenced by First Lady Michelle Obama's recent deployment to campaign in Phoenix and a large TV push by the Clinton campaign in the closing days of the election. However, the latest polling out last week shows Trump consistently ahead 4-5 points.
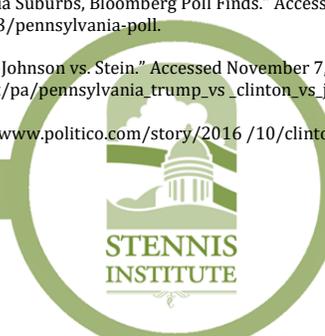
g. Wisconsin

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[12] Bradner, Eric, Cohen, Marhall. "Early voting update: Black vote declining with 24.4 million ballots cast." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/01/politics/early-voting-update-black-vote-decreasing/.

[13] Real Clear Politics. "Ohio: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/oh/ohio_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-5970.html.

[14] McCormick, John. "Clinton Dominates in Key Philadelphia Suburbs, Bloomberg Poll Finds." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-10-13/pennsylvania-poll.

[15] Real Clear Politics. "Pennsylvania: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/pa/pennsylvania_trump_vs _clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-5964.html.

[16] Schreckinger, Ben. "Trump's window is closing." http://www.politico.com/story/2016 /10/clinton-trump-election-countdown-polls-230212. Accessed October 24, 2016.

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If Trump fails to win Pennsylvania, his path to 270 will likely go through Wisconsin. Currently, Clinton enjoys a Real Clear Politics' advantage[17] of over 5 points and has never trailed in surveys of the state. Additionally, polling over the last 2 weeks has shown strong support for Clinton with all polls conducted reporting her up by 6 plus points. However, Clinton has poured money into the state in recent days and the Trump campaign has seen surveys showing him performing very well in rural areas.

h. Michigan

The Trump campaign is making a late play for Michigan although Real Clear Politics' polling average[18] shows a 3.4-point Clinton lead and Trump has never led a survey in the state. However, both campaigns have focused considerable resources there and the polls have narrowed somewhat in the past several weeks.

i. New Hampshire

New Hampshire could become a key state if Trump wins Florida, North Carolina and Ohio but fails to win Pennsylvania. A Trump win in Hampshire could lead to neither candidate making it to 270, resulting in the race being put in front of the House of Representatives. Currently, Real Clear Politics' average[19] shows Clinton with a lead of .6 percentage points and she has not yet trailed in a survey.

3. Looking Ahead

A Clinton victory will almost certainly prompt House Republicans[20] to further investigate Clinton. Also, some Senate Republicans[21] have signaled they would push for a vote on Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland while others[22] have said that in the event of a Clinton victory they may hold the vote up Clinton's entire first term. However, if Democrats win the Senate they have threatened to use the nuclear option[23] and approve Garland or Clinton's nominee by a simple

[17] Hohmann, James. "The Daily 202: Why Trump believes he can win Wisconsin – and why he's probably wrong." Accessed November 2, 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/power post/ paloma/daily-202/2016/11/02/daily-202-why-trump-believes-he-can-win-wisconsin-and-why-he-s-probably-wrong/58193376e9b69b6085905de3/.

[18] Real Clear Politics. "Michigan: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein. Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/mi/michigan_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-6008.html.

[19] Real Clear Politics. "New Hampshire: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 3, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/nh/new_hampshire_t rump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-6022.html

[20] Weigel, David. "House Republicans are already preparing for 'years' of investigations of Clinton." https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/house-republicans-are-already-preparing-for-years-of-investigations-of-clinton/2016/10/26/e153a714-9ac3-11e6-9980-50913d68eacb_story.html.

[21] Everett, Burgess. "Flake says it might be Garland time." Accessed. November 3, 2016. http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/jeff-flake-merrick-garland-vote-supreme-court-230109.

[22] Everett, Burgess. "Cruz: GOP may block Supreme Court nominees indefinitely." Accessed November 3, 2016. http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/cruz-supreme-court-blockade-230363

[23] Lesniewski, Niels. "Tim Kaine Predicts Possible 'Nuclear Option' Over Supreme Court Nomination." http://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/tim-kaine-nuclear-option-merrick-garland.

majority. Clinton has said[24] her first 100 days would include working with Congress on an infrastructure bill and immigration reform. On the other hand, if Trump wins, he will rescind Merrick Garland's nomination in favor of someone with more conservative credentials. Further, in his first 100 days, Trump says[25] he would renegotiate NAFTA, pull out of TPP negotiations, repeal and replace Obamacare, impose tougher requirements on lobbyists and propose a constitutional amendment to impose term limits. Also, Newt Gingrich, Rudy Giuliani, and Reince Preibus are poised to receive senior level appointments[26] in a Trump administration.

B. Race for the Senate

1. Overview

Senate Republicans have been on the defensive since the onset of the 2016 cycle. Mississippi Senator Roger Wicker was chosen to head the powerful National Republican Senatorial Committee that raises money on behalf of Republican US Senate candidates. They have been tasked with defending a map with 24 Republican held seats up for grabs compared to 10 for the Democrats. Currently, Republicans hold a 54-44-seat lead[27] in the Senate with 2 Independents caucusing with the Democrats. Larry Sabato's Crystal ball[28] has moved Pennsylvania into the Democratic column giving Democrats 48 seats to Republicans 47 with 5 toss-ups. Of these 5 toss-ups, Evan Bayh (D-IN) looks poised to win his race while Missouri, New Hampshire, and Nevada seem to be true toss-ups with all 3 within 2 percentage points in the Real Clear Politics' average. Real Clear Politics also has North Carolina within 2 percentage points but Senator Burr seems to have solidified his lead in recent weeks.

2. States to Watch

a. New Hampshire

The race for Senator Kelly Ayotte's (R-NH) seat has been a back and forth affair between her and New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan (D-NH). Senator

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[24] Horsley, Scott. "The First 100 Days: What Clinton And Trump Want To Get Done." Accessed November 2, 2016. http://www.npr.org/2016/10/27/499489585/the-first-100-days-what-clinton-and-trump-want-to-get-done

[25] Deutsche Welle. "Trump lays out plan for first 100 days in 'Gettysburg Address'." Accessed November 3, 2016. http://www.dw.com/en/trump-lays-out-plan-for-first-100-days-in-gettysburg-address/a-36123295.

[26] Tur, Katy, Sarlin, Benjy. "Gingrich, Giuliani, Priebus Eyed for Top Jobs in Trump White House: Sources." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/2016-election-day/gingrich-giuliani-priebus-eyed-top-jobs-trump-white-house-sources-n678881

[27] Senate.gov. "Party Division in the Senate, 1789-Present." Accessed November 3, 2016. http://www.senate.gov/history/partydiv.htm.

[28] "2016 Senate." University of Virginia Center for Politics. http://www.center forpolitics.org /crystalball/2016-senate/Accessed October 25, 2016.

Ayotte is currently leading in the Real Clear Politics' average[29] by 1.5 points after being up 10 points in the summer.

b. Pennsylvania

Katie McGinty (D-PA) is challenging incumbent Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA) for his seat. Toomey consistently led the race up until mid-summer at which point McGinty began to overcome Toomey. The trend towards McGinty has extended into the present with McGinty holding a Real Clear Politics' average[30] advantage of 2 points.

c. Indiana

Former Senator Evan Bayh (D-IN) returned to his home state to run for Senator against Republican Representative Todd Young. As a former Senator, Bayh enjoyed double-digit leads against Young after his late jump into the race. However, the Hoosier state has seen big money buys in negative ads against both candidates and Bayh's lead has been reduced to a virtual tie. In the latest Real Clear Politics' average[31], Young is up .7 points.

d. Nevada

Polling in Nevada between Republican Congressman Joe Heck and Democratic Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto has seen big fluctuations; one reason is possibly due to Nevada being extremely difficult to poll. Currently, Masto holds a 1.8-point lead in the Real Clear Politics' average[32].

e. North Carolina

Incumbent Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) has seen his lead over former North Carolina House of Representative member Deborah Ross (D-NC) stabilize over the past few weeks. Burr is now leading in Real Clear Politics' average[33] by 2.0 percentage points.

f. Missouri

Current Democratic Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander is locked into a tight race with freshman Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO). The race is essentially a toss-up

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[29] Real Clear Politics. "New Hampshire Senate - Ayotte vs. Hassan." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nh/new_hampshire_senate_ayotte_vs_hassan-3862.html.

[30] Real Clear Politics. "Pennsylvania Senate - Toomey vs. McGinty." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/pa/pennsylvania_senate_toomey_vs_mcginty-5074.html.

[31] Real Clear Politics. "Indiana Senate - Young vs. Bayh." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/in/indiana_senate_young_vs_bayh-6003.html.

[32] Real Clear Politics. "Nevada Senate - Heck vs. Cortez Masto." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nv/nevada_senate_heck_vs_cortez_masto-5982.html.

[33] Real Clear Politics. "North Carolina Senate - Burr vs. Ross." Accessed November 7, 2016. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nc/north_carolina_senate_burr_vs_d_ross-5693.html.

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with the Real Clear Politics' average[34] showing Blunt ahead 1.3 percentage points. While relatively little polling has been done in Missouri, the polls made available over the past month are within a couple percentage points either direction.

3. Looking Ahead

2018 is set to be a boon for Republicans with Democrats defending 27 Senate seats while Republicans will defend only 8 seats.

C. Congressional Outlook

Republicans look to easily maintain their majority in the House of Representatives. As recently as a week ago, Democrats were hopeful of big gains in the Republican's House majority but in the wake of FBI Director Comey's letter, those hopes may be a distant reach. The big question is will House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) retain his speakership after the election? The Freedom Caucus has signaled that they may challenge the Speaker, at which point he would need support from Democrats to retain his speakership. On the other hand, the Freedom Caucus could potentially leverage their strength into plum committee positions under Speaker Ryan.
Currently, Heck is ahead by 1.7 points in the Real Clear Politics' average[35] although little more than a week ago, a poll by Gravis had Masto up 6 points.

e. North Carolina
Incumbent Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) has seen his lead over former North Carolina House of Representative member Deborah Ross (D-NC) stabilize over the past few weeks. Burr is now leading in Real Clear Politics' average[36] by 1.6 percentage points.

f. Missouri
Current Democratic Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander is locked into a tight race with freshman Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO). The race is essentially a toss-up with the Real Clear Politics' average[37] showing Blunt ahead .6 percentage points.

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[34] Real Clear Politics. "Missouri Senate - Blunt vs. Kander." Accessed November 7, 2016.
http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/mo/missouri_senate_blunt_vs_kander-5631.html.

[35] Real Clear Politics. "Nevada Senate - Heck vs. Cortez Masto." Accessed November 3, 2016.
http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nv/nevada_senate_heck_vs_cortez_masto-5982.html.

[36] Real Clear Politics. "North Carolina Senate - Burr vs. Ross." Accessed November 3, 2016.
http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nc/north_carolina_senate_burr_vs_d_ross-5693.html.

[37] Real Clear Politics. "Missouri Senate - Blunt vs. Kander." Accessed November 3, 2016.
http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/mo/missouri_senate_blunt_vs_kander-5631.html.

While relatively little polling has been done in Missouri, the polls made available over the past month are within a couple percentage points either direction.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

Based at our state's land grant university, the Institute is often referred to as Mississippi's think tank, but the Institute is much more. We are frequently called upon to provide technical assistance and consultation to state officials, local governments and community leaders regarding political, governmental, and economic and community development matters. Our mission is to enhance the capacities of state and local officials to deal effectively with today's challenges regarding many issues. If the legislature needs a definitive study on the effects of a change in state law, a municipal government desires a compensation study or salary survey, or an association of government officials' requests training on the latest legal or policy issues, the Institute responds with its wide variety of resources and capabilities.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

D. Camp Pittman, Graduate Research Assistant, Stennis Institute

In 2011, Camp worked as North MS field director for Lynn Fitch's successful campaign for Mississippi Treasurer. In the summer of 2013, Camp clerked at BGR Group; a D.C.-based governmental relations firm consistently described as a powerhouse. BGR Group is a global leader in governmental affairs, strategic communications and investment banking. Following his graduation from the University of Mississippi in 2014, Camp took over field operations in North MS for Thad Cochran. After Cochran's successfully bid for reelection, Camp was invited to intern in Senator Cochran's DC office. Following his internship, Camp moved back to BGR Group where he served as a researcher and writer for the firm's clients. Camp is a native of Corinth, MS and currently resides in Starkville, MS where he is pursuing his Master's in Public Policy and Administration.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Interim Executive Director:

Dr. Joseph "Dallas" Breen

John C. Stennis Institute of Government and Community Development
382 Hardy Road
Mississippi State, MS 39762
Ph: 662-325-3328
Fax: 662-325-3772
 Mailing Address:
Stennis Institute
PO Drawer LV
Mississippi State, MS 39762

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