Internships and Academic Seminars

Campaign 2008: The Faculty Speak

After the Campaign 2008 Academic Seminar Series, we received some illuminating, anonymous feedback from faculty leaders who wrote the following in their evaluation of the programs:

“It is hard to name just one element of the program as its strongest; it was all great; the speakers were high-end, credible politicos or scholars, the fieldwork was beyond price. This was simply the best educational experience I've had with students in my 20 years of collegiate teaching.”

“The entire program in Denver was outstanding. I thought it was well organized and well presented.”

“The morning sessions were great, but I think the field experiences really stole the show. Having to get out and work with professionals in real-life settings really helped the students put everything into perspective. The memories they'll have from these experiences will be long remembered.”

“The speakers were amazing! Great programming! The work experiences the students received opened many doors for them…The Washington Center staff were well-prepared.”

“The program was a great way for students and faculty to see politics as it actually happens. This will change the way you see politics for the rest of your life.”

“For students interested in politics, The Washington Center convention program offers the ultimate experiential learning experience.”

“Attending a Washington Center convention program is an exercise in learning and doing at the same time. Learning about the process of a convention and actually working with a convention is all at once a great way to learn.”

“A firsthand look at American electoral politics up close. A unique experience…informative, exhilarating, inspirational.”

“The Washington Center is able to create a subspace of academic thought and freedom within a highly charged political environment (a national convention). The ability for faculty and students to exist in both spaces is challenging and difficult at times; this environment ultimately pushes faculty like me to be more reflective about my ideas and interpretation of the political world and forces students to make connections between the seemingly disparate genres of politics and political science.”

“Anyone connected to political science should at least once in their career sign up and participate in the DNC/RNC program. It will give you a whole new insight into the political process and a greater appreciation of the country we live.”

“The students who truly succeed in this program find a way to get everything done. They never say no, they never turn down an opportunity; but they also understand that the academic component of the seminar cannot be ignored.”

“You can read books and listen to presentations, but until you have experienced the Convention Hall you cannot possibly understand a Convention.”
“This was an experience that every academic and student of American politics, as well as citizen of the United States would be fortunate to have. This program provided a sound theoretical foundation for events as they were playing out as well as direct exposure to these events.”

“I, along with the students, experienced one of the world’s most treasured political moments in U.S. history at the 2008 DNC convention. It will be months before I really can fully process these once in a lifetime experiences.”

“At the beginning of the seminar, my students stated that the main reason they wanted to participate was to be part of a once-in-a-lifetime experience. By the end of the program, the students realized they received much more than they ever could have imagined from their two weeks in Denver. It turned out to be so much more than they ever could have hoped for.”

“For students interested in American politics, there is no better program. It is total immersion in the field.”

“An amazing chance to explore how political conventions work from an academic and hands-on perspective.”

When asked what they thought the students gained most from the experience, faculty said the following:

“Confidence. Quick-on-their-feet thinking and adult responses. A far broader and deeper idea of what goes into presidential politics than they could get in a classroom or from watching media coverage.”

“Students gained real life understanding of the political process. Additionally, the fieldwork experiences of students were life changing. Students emerged from the program more responsive and confident in their abilities.”

“They gained more knowledge about the evolving purposes of conventions as party building events. I have a hunch that the students are also able to better comport themselves in discussions with a wide range of individuals based on their experiences these two weeks.”

“Experience from networking and working their fieldwork placements. I suspect some of them will have doors open that would not otherwise as a result of this opportunity.”

“Maturity—for many of these students, the DNC or RNC was their first real political experience. I sensed that a number of students felt more comfortable about their place in the political process.”

“Priceless exposure to the way practical politics really works and some exposure to top flight scholars and practitioners in their fields. The students will understand how to do things the next time they get into a situation like this, when it is their job to be in it, and that will redound to their credit.”

“An up-close look at the party system in the United States and all that it entails. The party constituencies, the interest groups associated with them, the moneyed interests that support them, etc.”

“They gained a sense of responsibility, in being assigned fieldwork in the “grown-up” world. They recognized the importance of helping each other. They realized that they had a chance to participate in political history.”