

Name: _____

Period: _____

DUE: 10/5/15

25% off if turned in late by 10/12/15

50% off if turned in late by 10/19/15

75% off after that

My Political Profile Essay

The Basic Directions:

- In class and on-line you will take political quizzes to examine what you believe. You also have done activities to examine your own political roots.
- You will now use your quiz results and activities to begin this essay. You will compare yourself to the “norm” by drawing on information from your textbook, class activities, and polling data. This essay should not exceed four typed pages and should be written in the first person.

What to Write: You should address who you are politically in this essay. It is your manifesto, your declaration of values and beliefs. This is not a time to repeat your parents’, your friends’, or even your teachers’ political beliefs—this is about you. To fully address your political profile, you should cover the following subjects/topics in the course of your narrative.

HOWEVER, your paper should NOT simply be seven paragraphs addressing these seven topics once at a time. The questions provided are there to get you thinking. You should not just answer each question.

1. **Political Socialization:** Describe your political socialization and how it is similar and/or different from the norm (most people follow what they get from their parents and in school). Evaluate the different agents of socialization and their impact on you. You should explain how political events of the time or how your gender, class, race, religion, region, or unique personal circumstances differentiate your experiences from others. Essentially: how did you become the way you are politically?
2. **Political Tolerance:** The fundamental question in U.S. government is that of freedom versus order. Think about to what extent you would allow others to exercise their first amendment rights if those beliefs were directly opposed to your own. No society is completely free but how free should be people be to express their views? Thinking about your own American dreams, how much freedom or order, freedom or equality is proper in your United States of America. Would you sacrifice freedoms for order? Why or why not? Think about terrorism, discrimination, gun control and other issues as you examine this topic.
3. **Political Efficacy and Trust in Government:** Political efficacy is citizens' trust and faith in government and their own belief that they can understand and influence political affairs. Internal efficacy is the belief that people can understand politics and therefore participate, while external efficacy is the belief that one can effectively participate in politics. Feelings of efficacy increase with age and education. How bitter and cynical are you? Assess your level of political trust in institutions, political actors, and policies; discuss the implications and sources of these attitudes; and compare these to the American public at large.
4. **Political Participation:** In which ways do you or your family already participate in politics? Why? In the future, how do you hope to participate? Why? What do you think are the most and least effective forms of political participation and why? (Using the forms mentioned in the textbook and in class)
5. **Ideology:** Identify yourself on the political spectrum (strong liberal, liberal, leaning liberal, moderate, leaning conservative, conservative, or strong conservative). Look for evidence of ideological thinking in your responses to questions about likes and dislikes about the parties and candidates. Finally, assess your constraints to see if there is consistency in your positions (meaning are you consistently liberal or conservative on all issues, if not which issues—such as economics or social matters). What guides your issue preferences? Conclude by discussing who you would have or wish you could have voted for President last year.

6. **Party Identification:** Identify your best political party match, and explain why. This requires you to demonstrate that you understand the concept of party identification and how its strength is measured. You need to compare yourselves to the American public by looking at recent trends in polling data. Address the likelihood that you would vote or ticket split based on your partisanship and strength. Use class discussion, textbooks, and the quizzes to help you. The party may or may not neatly fit your ideology but most voters do identify with a major party despite not having an exact fit.

7. **Election 2016:** How do you expect to participate in the upcoming Presidential election? Do you plan on paying attention, why or why not? Is there an issue that you are particularly interested in hearing about in this race? Which candidates are you most interested in learning more about? If you are unable to vote, how might you also influence the outcome of the election?

The Technical Requirements and Suggestions:

- Grammar, spelling, complete sentences, etc. are all very important for this essay.
- Type it. Double-space it. Spell-check it. Proof-read it.
- Write in the first person.