**Unit 1 Lab: Analysis of Voter Demographics**

# Use the 2012 Exit Polls published by the *Washington Post* to answer questions 1 -11. Please note the label for each column:

*1st Column – 2012 Obama Voters 2nd Column – 2012 Romney Voters*

*3rd Column – 2008 Obama Voters 4th Column – 2008 McCain Voters*

For questions #1 – 6, consider the following demographic groups.

* *Gender*
* *Age*
* *Race*
* *Education*
* *Income*
* *Marital Status*
* *Religion*

1. Imagine yourself as a Republican political consultant. Which voters would you spend the most money to turnout to vote? (GOTV = Get Out The Vote)
2. Imagine yourself as a Democratic political consultant. Which voters would you spend the most money to turnout to vote? (GOTV = Get Out The Vote)
3. List the groups whose voting behavior is the most difficult to predict.
4. Which demographic groups showed the most significant change in their % of support from 2008 to 2012? Include the data.
5. Select two of the groups you listed in #4. How do you explain the change for each group?
6. Which demographic groups shifted their partisan support from 2008 to 2012? In your opinion, why did that happen?
7. On page 5 of this packet, create a bar graph or pie chart to illustrate the party identification of the 2012 electorate. (Hint – Use the numbers to the left of the party labels.)
8. On page 5 of this packet, create a bar graph or pie chart to illustrate the ideology of the 2012 electorate. (Hint – Use the numbers to the left of the ideological labels.)
9. Describe the change in “Independents” voting behavior from 2008 to 2012. Compare that with the change in “Moderates” voting behavior from 2008 to 2012.
10. Explain the very large swing in voting behavior for those who reported their financial situation was “worse off than four years ago”.
11. From your analysis of the data, what surprised you the most?

**For questions #12 - 16, use the graphs and charts from CIRCLE’s Voter Turnout Young Voters in 2012. Use Figures 12, 13 and 14 on pages 8 & 9.** Remember that Latina = female, and Latino = male.

1. Look at the “Independents” in Figure 12. List the three groups with the strongest “Independent” support. Include the % of support.
2. Which demographic group considers itself the most Democratic? Include the % of support.
3. Which demographic groups have a majority of Republican voters? Include the % of support.
4. What surprises you the most from the data in Figure 14?
5. Complete this chart to show how the majority of each demographic group identifies politically.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Party Identification** | **Candidate** | **Ideology** |
| **Latina** | Democrat (65%) | Obama (66%) | Liberal (45%) |
| **Latino** |  |  |  |
| **Black Females** |  |  |  |
| **Black Males** |  |  |  |
| **White Females** |  |  |  |
| **White Males** |  |  |  |

# For questions #17-27, use the data in the Appendix on pages 10-12 to analyze VOTER TURNOUT for specific demographic groups.

1. Using page 10, complete the following table to show voter turnout of key groups in midterm vs. presidential elections.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Turnout % Midterm Election 2010** | **Turnout % POTUS Election 2012** | **Midterm Year of Highest Turnout (Include %)** | **POTUS Year of Highest Turnout (Include %)** |
| **Women (18-24)** | 22% | 45% | 1982 (26%) | 1972 (53%) |
| **Men (18-24)** |  |  |  |  |
| **Women (30+)** |  |  |  |  |
| **Men (30+)** |  |  |  |  |

1. Using the data, describe the turnout of young voters and older voters. What effect does that disparity have on the American political system?
2. Using the data on pages 10 & 11, complete the chart to show the difference between racial groups of young voters ages 18 to 24. Do NOT include other age groups.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Black Females** | **Black Males** | **Latina** | **Latino** | **White Females** | **White Males** |
| **1974**  **Midterm** | 18% | 17% | 17% | 20% | 27% | 28% |
| **2010**  **Midterm** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1972**  **POTUS** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2012**  **POTUS** |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Compare the typical voting turnout of the different racial groups in presidential elections.
2. What is most significant to you? Why?
3. Using the data from page 12, complete the chart to show the effect of marriage on voting turnout of women. For this chart, “Young “= 18-29 year olds.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Single Women 18-29** | **Married Women 18-29** |  | **Single Women 30+** | **Married Women 30+** |
| **1974**  **Midterm** | 30% | 29% |  | 51% | 56% |
| **2010**  **Midterm** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1972**  **POTUS** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2012**  **POTUS** |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Using the data from page 12, complete the chart to show the effect of marriage on voting turnout of men. For this chart, “Young” = 18-29 year olds?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Single Men 18-29** | **Married Men 18-29** |  | **Single Men 30+** | **Married Men 30+** |
| **1974**  **Midterm** | 29% | 31% |  | 44% | 59% |
| **2010**  **Midterm** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1972**  **POTUS** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2012**  **POTUS** |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Compare the typical voting turnout of single vs. married voters.
2. Compare the typical voting turnout of women vs. men.

PARTY IDENTIFICATION of the 2012 General Election Voters (Bar Graph or Pie Chart)

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY of the 2012 General Election Voters (Bar Graph or Pie Chart)