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## **Dole Institute to offer 2 study groups on political communications, campaigns**

NOTE: Jacques is pronounced "Jakes."

LAWRENCE -- The Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas has announced two spring semester study groups for students and the general public that will focus on communication strategies in presidential campaigns and in presidential administrations and the behind-the-scenes realities of running a major congressional campaign.

The two seven-week study groups, which will begin in March, will be led by Steven Jacques and Adam Taff, Dole Institute senior fellows.

"The study group concept is a no-grade, no-roll-call and no-reading weekly educational opportunity for students and adults to learn more about focused topics," said Bill Lacy, director of the Dole Institute. "They are open to all and free of charge."

Both sessions will meet from 4 to 5:30 p.m. weekly starting in March, except for spring break March 21 through 25, in the Simons Media Room at the Dole Institute. Jacques' group will meet Thursdays beginning March 3. Taff's will meet Wednesdays beginning March 9. For more information e-mail the fellows at [sjacques@ku.edu](mailto:sjacques@ku.edu) or [amtaff@ku.edu](mailto:amtaff@ku.edu) or call the Dole Institute at (785) 864-4900.

Jacques' session, "The Public Opinion War: Political Communications in an Over-Communicated Society," will focus on communications in presidential campaigns -- from John F. Kennedy in 1960 to John Kerry in 2004 -- in the White House and in international diplomacy.

"Steven is a nationally recognized Democratic political operative, having served in both the Clinton and Carter administrations and on national staffs in the past eight presidential campaign cycles, and he is highly qualified in each of these areas," Lacy said.

In Taff's session, "In the Crosshairs: Realities of Running a High-Profile U.S. Congressional Race," Taff will discuss what it's like for someone who has never sought public office to run in two highly competitive and visible campaigns.

"Adam's mission is to show people the enormous commitment that running for office entails," Lacy said. "Just getting in a race takes a lot of courage, and Adam will be able to show people what decisions and issues a congressional candidate faces."

Jacques will examine real-life lessons about how candidates and presidents market their messages to the American people and internationally.

"Members of the study group will gain practical knowledge that is applicable to politics at all levels, and they will see how they can use this knowledge to become involved nationally or locally," Jacques said. "Many members of national presidential campaign staffs are either recent college graduates or still in college, and many have very little political experience before joining the staff."

" The fun part will be interacting with people who have worked with Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Carter and Clinton, and with at least one well-known member of the national news media who was a member of the traveling press following John Kerry in this past presidential campaign."

Taff will engage his study group participants and take them inside an intense, nationally scrutinized congressional race. Together they will analyze their relative strengths and weaknesses and make critical decisions as an election day nears. Staffing, fund-raising, political action committees, issue preparation, polling, voter identification, media expenditures, engaging the opponent -- one misstep can spell disaster. The group will debate the correct course for success.

Guest speakers will include several of the nation's top political strategists, media consultants, pollsters and managers. "This is a unique opportunity to gain an insider's look at the finesse and organization required of modern campaigns," Taff explains.

" I am extremely excited about the study group and the chance for attendees to interact with some of our nation's top political strategists," Taff said. "This will be a lot of fun, informative and should lend itself to interesting and lively debate."

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