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**Teaching During a Presidential Election**  
**By Hannah Brady '16, Communications Intern, Fall 2020**

Lexington, KY, October 28, 2020- Woody Snowden has been a teacher at Sayre School for over 18 years and has taught during five presidential elections. Sayre School is a private, independent, college preparatory school located in downtown Lexington serving students age two through the twelfth grade. Woody Snowden shared how he talks to Sayre high schoolers as a teacher of AP US Government and World History during the current presidential election.

“I embrace it. My approach is to never necessarily reveal my personal preferences or political party affiliations. My job is to encourage thought and thinking. My job is to get a sense of the room and pull opinions out from the students I have in class and guide the discussion.” Woody believes it is “never a teacher’s business” to tell students which political party to favor or candidate to vote for.

“When it comes to putting it out there (political views), I tend to think less is more.” He prefers to teach topics that are “issue related not political” in his classrooms especially during AP US Government. Sayre School encourages open discussions where students are able to negotiate, and reason based on factual information. A common activity in Woody’s classes includes sharing an issue or topic with the class, marking each area of the room as a particular side on the issue and then asking students to pick a side and debate their viewpoint with fellow classmates.

Woody has not found this election to be worse to teach during than past elections despite the craziness of this current year. He created a “predictions activity” for his students to complete this coming week to keep them engaged in the election results and current events. Woody said, “my job is to get students to start thinking about it and realize what they believe in now will change as they get older.” One of Sayre’s fundamental goals includes “educating students to be independent thinkers.” Rather than push opinions on Sayre students it is important to Sayre teachers to give students the opportunity to learn facts and build their own opinions.

***Our Mission:***

*Sayre School provides an innovative and inclusive learning environment that empowers students to achieve academic excellence, embrace challenge, and cultivate integrity in order to lead purposeful lives in an ever-changing world.*