Trump Campaign Payments

Worksheet

**What are you looking at?** [A dataset of disbursements](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/112dL7dr046t1yVpUi1O8sUrbtxs3fEj0b7I1MvSQCYQ/edit?usp=sharing) (payments and purchases) by the Donald J. Trump for President campaign committee from January 2017 through December 2018.

**NOTE: We have altered many of these datasets for instructional purposes, so please download the data from the original source if you want to use it in your reporting.**

**Where we got this data:** [fec.gov](https://www.fec.gov/data/disbursements/?two_year_transaction_period=2018&cycle=2018&data_type=processed&committee_id=C00580100&min_date=01%2F01%2F2017&max_date=12%2F31%2F2018&line_number=F3P-23), the Federal Election Commission

***Before you begin*:**

Take a moment to look at the various categories included for each disbursement.

* Notice that there are several date fields:
* report year - FEC election year
* election type - disbursement date
* There are a few fields about the recipient. Along with city and state, you have:
* the recipient name
* the payee’s first and last name (an individual who was paid for the “recipient”) and
* the entity type (individual v. organization)

Without doing any analysis yet, what are three questions you might try to answer using this dataset?

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Some questions to answer:**

1. Each payment is tied to a particular election, as shown in columns J, K and L. What was the most recent 2016 related payment? Who was the recipient, what was it for, and when?
2. How much was spent for 2016 elections (primary and general combined) versus 2020?
3. Tally the spending for each month (distinguishing between say, Oct. 2017 v. Oct. 2018) and then make a chart. In which month was spending the highest?
4. Who’s been paid the most? Which election year was it for?

Remember when you want various categories that are grouped together (ex. 2016 and 2020 under “fec\_election\_year”) in your main spreadsheet to be broken out into separate columns in your pivot table, you should add that field, “fec\_election\_year”, *as a column* to your pivot table.

* 1. Look at what this recipient was paid for. What service or good (see the “disbursement\_description”) were they paid the most for?
  2. And around what time were payments for this service or good (from a.) made?

Hint: you can double click on any number in a pivot table to get a break-down of the entries that led to that calculation.

1. How much in total did the Trump campaign *earn* over this whole period?

Because this is a list of payments, positive numbers are expenses and *negative* numbers are earnings.

* 1. What’s the most common reason (see “disbursement\_description”) for why the campaign got paid?
  2. Who were the 3 biggest payors (in this weird case, “recipients” of overpayments) to the campaign?
  3. Which two universities are on this list?

1. Now let’s look at all payments (for all elections) grouped by what they were for.
2. The campaign spent the most for which type of service or good (“disbursement\_description”)? Order the list so it’s in descending order by size of payment.
3. For that type of service or good you identified, which 2 entities received the bulk of the payments?
4. Who are the top 5 individuals (vs. organization) paid by the committee?