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SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY

For Immediate Release:
Friday, August 23, 2002

Clinton Ranks 18th Among Presidents

Ranks 2nd Only to FDR in Handling the Economy

41st for Integrity; Only Nixon's Lower

LOUDONVILLE, NY – In the fourth* tracking study [1982-2002] of the Siena Research Institute (SRI) Expert Survey of U.S. Presidents, Clinton is rated 18th overall, down from 16th in 1994, while his predecessor and successor, George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush rank 22nd and 23rd respectively.

The more than 200 professors of history and political science in colleges and universities around the United States who provided their expert opinion for the survey gave Clinton a ranking of 2nd for Handling of the U.S. Economy -- second only to Franklin Roosevelt, who also ranked 1st overall in each of the four surveys. They also ranked Clinton in the top ten of Presidents for Ability to Compromise (5th), Communication Ability (8th) and Intelligence (9th).

Clinton was placed among the lower ranks of American Presidents in Avoid Crucial Mistakes, (38th) and Integrity (41st), where only Richard Nixon at 42nd exceeded his ranking.

In the remaining 14 categories, his rankings ranged from 11th for Imagination to 31st for Background. A complete list of categories and the rankings accorded President Clinton in 1994 and 2002 follows.

The SRI Survey of U.S. Presidents is conducted during the second year of the first term of a new president. SRI began surveying expert opinion on the presidency in 1982 during the first term of Ronald Reagan, and continued during the terms of George H. Bush, Bill Clinton and now George W. Bush. Siena College professors Tom Kelly (history and American studies emeritus) and Dr. Douglas Lonnstrom (statistics) are the survey co-directors.

Clinton's overall rank, based on the average score in all twenty categories, remained stable, moving from 16th in 1994 to 18th in 2002. Using a change of five places as a standard, professors Kelly and Lonnstrom found major differences in the Clinton rankings between 1994 and 2002 in the following categories:

The survey found that Clinton rose significantly in three categories:

Handling of the U.S. Economy:	rose 7 places from 9th place to 2nd
Executive Appointments:	rose 13 places from 32nd to 19th
Executive Ability:	rose 21 places from 39th to 18th

Regarding the rise in rankings, Professor Kelly comments: "It is reasonable to assume that the confusion of the early administration with the active role taken by Mrs. Clinton in policy making, the health care issue in general and the loss of the House of Representatives to the GOP are contrasted with President Clinton's ability to outlast impeachment and to manage with a Republican majority in both houses."

The survey also found Clinton fell sharply in four categories:

Background:	dropped 13 places from 18th to 31st
Relations with Congress:	dropped 14 places from 15th to 29th
Court Appointments:	dropped 7 places from 8th to 15th
Avoid Crucial Mistakes:	dropped 6 places from 32nd to 38th

Commenting on the decline in rankings, Professor Kelly points out that "(Clinton's) impeachment, and its underlying causes, would seem to more than account for the decline in categories such as Relations with Congress and Avoid Crucial Mistakes. One would assume the decline in the category of Court Appointments reflects the general liberal attitude of the professoriate - seeing any conservative or moderate appointments as 'caving in to the interests.'"

For additional information about the survey, including background, variations and interpretations of the rankings, contact Professor Emeritus Tom Kelly at 518-372-7890 or Dr. Douglas Lonnstrom at 518-783-2362 (office) or 518-456-6073 (home).

*** Please note: This release is the *second* in a series detailing the results of the 2002 Siena Survey of U.S. Presidents. For a look at the *first* release providing overall findings, see our website at www.siena.edu/sri/results/02AugPresidentsSurvey.htm or contact Joe Caruso at 518-783-2901.**

Attachments (2):

- Clinton: 2002 rankings by category
- Clinton: Rankings by Survey Year

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Ranking of President Clinton among U.S. Presidents		
Categories	1994 after 1 year in office	2002 after 1 year out of office
1) Background (family, education, experience)	18	31
2) Party Leadership (political)	17	13
3) Communication Ability (speak, write)	09	08
4) Relationship with Congress	15	29
5) Court Appointments	08	15
6) Handling of U.S. Economy	09	02
7) Luck	13	12
8) Ability to Compromise	03	05
9) Willing to take Risks	13	17
10) Executive Appointments	32	19
11) Overall Ability	16	14
12) Imagination	07	11
13) Domestic Accomplishments	14	12
14) Integrity	38	41
15) Executive Ability	39	18
16) Foreign Policy Accomplishments	21	22
17) Leadership Ability	17	15
18) Intelligence	08	09
19) Avoid Crucial Mistakes	32	38
20) Your Present Overall View	17	20
Overall Rating	16	18

**President Clinton ranks in the top 20 in 15 categories,
and in the top 10 in 4 categories.**

Categories Provided in Rank Order

President Clinton: 2002 Rankings by Category	
Handling of the U.S. Economy	2
Ability to Compromise	5
Communication Ability	8
Intelligence	9
Imagination	11
Luck	12
Domestic Accomplishments	12
Party Leadership	13
Overall Ability	14
Court Appointments	15
Leadership Ability	15
Willing to take risks	17
Executive Ability	18
Executive Appointments	19
Present Overall View	20
Foreign Policy Accomplishments	22
Relationship with Congress	29
Background	31
Avoid Crucial Mistakes	38
Integrity	41