It is not always easy to decipher the political jargon spoken on the news and during campaign debates. Being members of the Rider community, students have the advantage of looking to their own experts, professors from the political science department, to help make sense of the issues and provide an educated point of view.

America is in a state of crisis, according to Dr. Jonathan Mendilow, who said that the current administration's agenda is a threat to the country's democracy.

“The most important thing is to remember that a government is not private property of he who governs. It is the trust of he who governs,” he said. “What I’ve seen here is an economy that is led by private interests.”

The election, Mendilow said, seems to have become a contest of who can have the advantage of looking to their own experts, professors from the political science department, to help make sense of the issues and provide an educated point of view.

A major concern for Dr. Frank Rusciano is whether or not the language used to discuss issues of the election is still effective in this day and age.

“If the way they have been talking about issues for the past 25 years relevant anymore? We are in a new situation in terms of domestic policy and it seems so much of the rhetoric we are hearing is based 20-25 years ago,” he said. “The real question we need to ask is who is going to have the creativity to see that we are in a different age?”

As far as the war in Iraq is concerned, Rusciano said that he views the war against terrorism differently than President George W. Bush does.

“Bush views the war on terrorism as a clash of civilizations. He views it with a Cold War mentality,” he said. “He thinks that by attacking other countries we can avoid terrorism. By doing that you make enemies of a billion people.”

The economy is another major issue that should not be ignored, according to Dr. David Rebovich.

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Having come here from a non-democratic country, Mendilow said he is “deeply alarmed” by the nation’s current state, and though he is generally an optimistic person, he has a pessimistic outlook on the progression of the election and the war in Iraq.

“There’s a reason why I’m here. I’ve seen corruption elsewhere. I’ve seen cheaters. I came here because it is a free country,” he said. “Students should be paying attention.”

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“It pains me to see Rider students who, with their families, have invested so much in education to now be concerned that they might not get jobs in their chosen fields,” he said. “If young people don’t vote, policy makers will never pay attention to them.”

American foreign policy is an important factor for Dr. Barbara Franz, who said that the country’s situation has gotten drastically worse over the past four years. Among other international affairs problems, she said that Bush’s plan for a guest worker policy is doomed.

“The administration has tried to remove anyone who has visa irregularities,” she said. “Those foreigners who will be allowed in will never have the opportunity to be full citizens. So you basically create a category of citizens that are sub-citizens.”

Students should be aware that if Bush is re-elected there is a possibility of a reinstatement of the draft, according to Franz.

“Our military is thinly spread over the world. I know there are people that have returned from Iraq and are going to Canada to avoid being sent back,” she said. “Bush is denying it, but you hear from military sources that the situation on the ground is not going well.”

According to Dr. Barry Seldes, Senator John Kerry has won all three presidential debates and is a much more convincing candidate than Bush.

“I think it’s absolutely necessary that Kerry wins,” he said. “The president has plunged us into an illegal war and has lied truths that should have been revealed to the American people.”

Outside of the political science department, there are some professors who are entirely opposed to the democratic candidate. Dr. Maury Randall, chairperson of the finance department, said that he sides with Bush on certain standpoints.

“I would prefer somebody to have more market-oriented solutions to problems over somebody who has bigger government ideas,” he said. “Bush is more interested in market based solutions.”

Randall said he holds a more moderate position on the war in Iraq.

“I can understand that there is so much opposition with those who are unhappy with the progress of the war in Iraq,” he said. “Bush wanted to create democracies in the Middle East with the idea that that would help prevent terrorism. That was why he went in. The question is whether he can do what he hopes to do.”