

POSC 143
ELECTIONS & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION
 Summer 2007

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Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1-2 p.m. and by appointment

On-line web course materials through <http://ilearn.ucr.edu/>

Required Reading

Wattenberg, Martin P. 2007. *Is Voting for Young People?* New York: Pearson Longman.

There are many other readings for the class. Several readings will come from other sources, listed below. These will be available as weblinks on the class website on iLearn.

Course Requirements

California Registrars of Voters website content analysis, due July 9	15%
Mid-term examination, July 12	15%
Reform proposal prospectus memorandum, due July 16	5 %
Reform proposal, due July 26	20%
Final examination, July 27	25%
Class participation and reading quizzes	20%

Course Description

This course will focus on two important contemporary topics in electoral politics: For the first part of the class, we will discuss the administration and technology of elections in the U.S. and California. Following the 2000 presidential election, the federal, state, and local governments, voters, news media, and scholars became concerned about elections, how they are administered and the technology used to cast, count, and report votes. We will spend a few weeks of this short session investigating these issues, with an eye on the confidence of voters in the electoral system. During the second part of the class, we will investigate why people vote in the first place, with a particular interest in the youth vote. Young people, in their teens and twenties vote at lower rates than most other age groups in the U.S. So we'll read this Wattenberg book, and some other research to think through how this could change and whether it should.

Class time will be allocated to lecture material, however I'd like to spend time during the session discussing the readings and thinking through the issues raised by these topics, with a seminar environment. Your informed participation will be critical to these conversations and I will be paying attention to your participation in these discussions. I expect you to keep up with the readings and keep up with them. My office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. Please do not hesitate to come by during these scheduled times or contact me to schedule an appointment.

Content Analysis Project

The class will develop a group research project. We will work together to evaluate the websites of Registrars of Voters in California to assess their accessibility and outreach to voters on-line. We will discuss a coding template and each of you will be assigned several websites to examine and code. We will discuss the coding template on or before July 2. Your work on this will be due in class July 9 to give me time to tabulate the data and report to the class what we find.

Reform Proposal and Prospectus Memorandum

I would like to see you produce a 6-10 page paper proposing a way to reform elections to promote more confidence in the electoral system or encourage young people to participate in politics. We will talk more about this project during the course of the quarter. However, start working on this early. I want you not just to propose an idea, but provide some evidence that your idea will work and that it is preferable to other alternatives. The paper will be due by the end of class, in class, July 26.

In order to help you take full advantage of this opportunity to explore your interests in elections, I have a prospectus for your reform proposal due about two weeks before the final paper is due, on July 16, in class. This will be a brief, 1-2 page memorandum. This memorandum will identify the strategy you want to propose and list several sources you intend to incorporate. Based on your prospectus, I can make suggestions aimed at helping you with the project.

Late papers will be graded, but with a 1/3 letter-grade reduction with each day it is late. However, any paper that is turned in will receive partial credit.

Examinations

You will also complete two examinations. The mid-term exam is scheduled for July 12, in class. If you are unable to take the mid-term exam at the scheduled time, you may schedule an alternate time by contacting me prior to the scheduled exam time and providing appropriate original-copies documentation (medical, military, etc.) for your inability to take the exam at the scheduled time. Scheduling a makeup exam is your responsibility. I will consider extreme medical emergencies, again with complete original documentation. The final exam will have a similar but longer format. It is scheduled for July 27, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Plagiarism and cheating will result in a loss of credit on the spoiled assignment and all cases will be referred to the Student Judicial Affairs Office.

Course Schedule

June 25 Film: *Unprecedented: The 2000 Presidential Election* <http://www.unprecedented.org/>

1. The U.S. Electoral System: Federal and State Responsibilities

June 26 National Research Council of the National Academies. 2006. "The Electoral System." In Richard Celeste, Dick Thornburgh, and Herbert Lin, eds. *Asking the Right Questions about Electronic Voting*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. pp. 17-28.

National Commission on Federal Election Reform. 2002. "The Federal Government and the Federal Election System." In *National Commission on Federal Election Reform. To Assure Pride and Confidence in the Electoral Process: Report of the National Commission on Federal Election Reform*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press. pp. 21-24.

Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project. 2001. *Voting: What Is, What Could Be*. Pasadena and Cambridge: Caltech and MIT. Excerpts: pp. 12-16, 26-31, 36-41.

2. Voting Technology

June 27 Fischer, Eric A. 2001. "Voting Technology in the United States." CRS Report for Congress RL30773.

Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project. 2001. *Voting: What Is, What Could Be*. Pasadena and Cambridge: Caltech and MIT. Excerpts: pp.17-25, 42-47.

- June 28 Alvarez, R. Michael, D.E. "Betsy" Sinclair, and Catherine H. Wilson. 2004. "Counting Ballots and the 2000 Election: What Went Wrong? In Ann N. Crigler, Marion R. Just, and Edward J. McCaffery, eds. *Rethinking the Vote: The Politics and Prospects of American Election Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tomz, Michael, and Robert P. Van Howeling. 2003. "How Does Voting Equipment Affect the Racial Gap in Voided Ballots." *American Journal of Political Science* 44:347-361.
- July 2 **Electronic Voting**
 Herrnson, Paul S. et al. 2005. "Early Appraisals of Electronic Voting" *Social Science Computer Review* 23:274-292.
- Fischer, Eric, and Kevin J. Coleman. 2005. "The Direct Recording Voting Machine (DRE) Controversy: FAQs and Misperceptions. CRS Report for Congress RL33190.
- Saltman, Roy. 2006. Think Paper Trails will Make Elections More Secure? It's Not that Simple. *Neiman Watchdog Ask This*. Cambridge, MA: Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University. http://www.niemanwatchdog.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=ask_this.view&askthisid=00166
- Film: *Hacking Democracy* <http://www.hackingdemocracy.com/>
- July 3 Byrd, Dave. 2006. *Point by Point Factual Response to HBO Documentary*. Diebold Election Systems. <http://www.diebold.com/dieboldes/pdf/hbopointbypoint.pdf>
- Wagner, David, et al. 2006. "Security Analysis of the Diebold AccuBasic Interpreter." Typescript. UC-Berkeley. http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/voting_systems/security_analysis_of_the_diebold_accubasic_interpreter.pdf
- July 5 **Help Americans Vote Act**
 Montjoy, Robert S. 2005. "HAVA and the States." In Daniel J. Palazzolo and James W. Ceasar, eds. *Election Reform: Politics and Policy*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. pp. 16-34.
- MacDonald, Karin, and Bruce Cain. 2005. "California: Low-Tech Solutions Meet High-Tech Possibilities." In Daniel J. Palazzolo and James W. Ceasar, eds. *Election Reform: Politics and Policy*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. pp. 123-140.

3. Confidence in Elections

- July 9 **Trust in Government**
 Hetherington, Marc. *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 2. Political Trust and Its Evolution. pp. 8-35.

CONTENT ANALYSIS DUE

- July 10 **Elections, Attitudes, and Behavior**
 National Research Council of the National Academies. 2006. "Public Confidence in Elections." In Richard Celeste, Dick Thornburgh, and Herbert Lin, eds. *Asking the Right Questions about Electronic Voting*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. pp. 29-33.
- Hall, Thad E., and R. Michael Alvarez. 2004. *American Attitudes about Electronic Voting, Results of a National Survey*. Policy Brief. University of Utah.
- Oostveen, Anne-Marie, and Peter van den Besselaar. 2005. "Trust, Identity, and the Effects of Voting Technologies on Voting Behavior." *Social Science Computer Review* 23(3):304-311.

- July 11 **Confidence and Election Administration**
 Atkeson, Lonna Rae, and Kyle L. Saunders. 2007. "The Effect of Election Administration on Voter Confidence: A Local Matter?" Paper presented at the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL. April, 2007.

July 12 MIDTERM EXAM

4. Why Do People Vote?

- July 16 **Calculus of Voting**
 Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Chicago, IL: Harper and Row. Chapter 3. The Basic Logic of Voting. pp. 36-50.

REFORM PROSPECTUS DUE

- June 17 **Costs/Institutions**
 Mitchell, Glenn E. and Christopher Wlezien. 1995. "The Impact of Legal Constraints on Voter Registration, Turnout, and the Composition of the American Electorate." *Political Behavior*. 17:2
- Jackson, Robert A., Robert D. Brown, and Gerald C. Wright. 1998. "Registration, Turnout, and the Electoral Representativeness of U.S. State Electorates." *American Politics Quarterly* 26:259-82.

- June 18 **Institutions/Comparative Perspective**
 Powell, G. Bingham, Jr. 1986. "American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective." *American Political Science Review*. 80(1):17-43.

- July 19 **Resources**
 Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89(2):271-294.

Plutzer, Eric. 2002. "Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources and Growth in Young Adulthood." *American Political Science Review* 96(1):41-56

BEGIN READING WATTENBERG OVER THE WEEKEND OF July 20-22

July 23

Mobilization

Green, Donald P. 2004. The Effects of an Election Day Voter Mobilization Campaign Targeting Young Voters. CIRCLE WORKING PAPER 21.

<http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/WorkingPapers/WP21Green.pdf>

Wong, Jannelle F. 2004. Getting Out the Vote among Asian American Young People and Adults in Los Angeles County: A Field Experiment. CIRCLE WORKING PAPER 19.

<http://www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/WorkingPapers/WP19Wong.pdf>

5. Is Voting for Young People?

July 24

Wattenberg, Martin. 2007. *Is Voting for Young People?* Introduction, Chapters 1-3

July 25

Wattenberg, Martin. 2007. *Is Voting for Young People?* Chapters 4 & 5

Film: TBA

July 26

Wattenberg, Martin. 2007. *Is Voting for Young People?* Chapters 6 & 7

REFORM PROPOSAL DUE

July 27

FINAL EXAMINATION