

GOVERNMENT 26: ELECTIONS AND REFORM

Fall 2012

11:15am-12:20pm
X-hour: Tuesday 12-1pm
Room: Wilson 219

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Office hours
Monday 2-3pm
Tuesday 11am-noon
or by appointment

Course Abstract

This course examines the problem of how politicians are selected by citizens. Politicians fight tenaciously to shape the rules under which they compete because how elections are conducted affects what sorts of choices voters are offered, which politicians and parties gain power, and whose interests get represented. When you complete this course, you will understand what rules matter, and why, and you will be able to make an informed case for or against specific reform proposals in contexts from Afghanistan to the United Kingdom. We will draw from a broad array of cases to illustrate the most important issues at stake in current electoral reforms around the world, and here in the United States.

Materials

All the reading materials for Gov.20 are available on the course Blackboard site for download. You should familiarize yourself with the BB site right away and check it frequently. Lecture slides will be posted to the site after class, as will any class announcements, as necessary, as well as details on assignments. There are also links to websites with data and information on elections, electoral systems, and reform proposals from around the United States and around the world.

(Fruits &) Votes

One source with which you should familiarize right away, and check throughout the term, is the unusual blog, www.fuitsandvotes.com. F&V is run by my colleague and sometimes co-author from San Diego, Matt Shugart, and includes vast information on (1) the cultivation of fruit trees, and (2) elections and electoral reform, everywhere. For the purposes of Gov.26, you are free to disregard postings on horticulture, but the elections-related stuff should be useful to you. In particular, given that one of your assignments for the term is to create a wiki on elections and/or reforms somewhere, the F&V blog could well be a crucial resource in generating ideas for a topic and leading you to

resources you can use to create an interesting wiki. Inevitably, if you read the blog, you will also end up learning about topics and concepts essential to Gov.20. So bookmark F&V early and visit it often.

Requirements and Grading

4-6 quizzes	15%
Election report	7%
CSES table/graph	3%
Wiki	25%
In-class exam	15%
Final exam	35%

Quizzes

Over the course of the quarter, I will give four to six pop quizzes at the beginning of class. Quizzes should take just a few minutes, and will consist of a few basic questions about the readings on the syllabus for that day or from recent classes. I will ask about stuff that should be evident if you have done the reading for class. Filling in your name will count as one question, which is to say you'll get some credit for showing up. To minimize inequities resulting from students missing a quiz due to sickness, other unavoidable absence, or something that prevents you from doing the reading before a class, each student's lowest quiz grade (e.g. a zero, if you happen to miss a class when we have a quiz) will be dropped before the quiz grade average is calculated.

If you know ahead of time that you will miss a class because of a Dartmouth-sponsored commitment (e.g. traveling with debate team, softball team, orchestra, etc.) **or** for some foreseeable personal commitment *that is not discretionary* (e.g. scheduled medical procedure would count here – you're going out of town to visit your sister and won't be back for Monday's class would not), **and** you let me know at least one class period ahead of time, you may be able to make up a quiz missed due to that absence. In this case, you will need to come to my office a few minutes before the next class and if there was a quiz the prior class, take it. In this circumstance, you are under the honor code not to find out from classmates whether a quiz was given at the class you missed. This is not an option for students who miss class for unanticipated reasons or without prior approval.

Please also note that it would be a breach of academic honor to communicate (e.g. by text message) to alert any student not present in class that a quiz is being given on a particular day.

Exams

There are two exams: one in-class mid-term, October 8, and a final on November 18. Each will draw from all assigned readings up to that point. The final will inevitably focus more heavily on material from the second half of the term, given that you will already have been tested on earlier material, but the whole term is fair game on the final. Exams are generally a mixture of short answer questions (multiple choice, as on the quizzes, or IDs) and an essay or two.

Report

Each student will present an incredibly concise report in class during the week of September 24-28, on elections in some country (or, if you are ambitious, set of countries) besides the United States. Each report will also consist of a PowerPoint presentation of 2 slides, maximum. Students will have 3-5 minutes each to present their reports in class.

CSES table/graph

There is a small assignment associated with class on October XX, which is simply to interact with the data available online from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and produce a table or a graph that shows something of interest from that dataset.

Wikis

Each student will prepare a *wiki* over the course of the term on a topic of his/her own choice. Topics should be approved by Professor Carey by October 12 at the latest, although you are encouraged to float topic ideas, and get going on the project earlier. Email, office hours, or even just a quick conversation after class are all perfectly OK ways to get the green light on a topic.

Your wiki site will be blank to begin with. You will access it at the Student Wikis page on the Gov.26 BB site. **Work on wikis will end at 11:45pm on November 13.** Your wiki grade will be based on the material in your wiki as of that due date. For more details on wiki topics, the size and scope of the wiki project, and how to work with your wiki, look under the Assignments page on the BB site.

Academic integrity

Students are responsible for understanding Dartmouth's academic integrity rules. These rules and principles can be reviewed at <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/regulations/undergrad/acad-honor.html> and <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/>. Ignorance of these principles is not an excuse if a violation occurs.

Note on religious observance

Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Date	Class Topic	Readings
M 9/10	Course Introduction	
How the world votes		
W 9/12	Electoral variety	Hix, Johnston, & McLean 2010
F 9/14	Electoral variety (continued)	FairVote.org case studies: Israel, Palestine, Poland
M 9/17	History of elections	Colomer 2004, pp.13-53; Lepore 2008
W 9/19	Trajectories of reform	Colomer 2004, pp.53-78
F 9/21	Electoral systems and redistribution	Chang, Kayser, & Rogowski 2009, Intro, Chs.2-3.
M 9/24	Student Reports	Colomer 2004 Chs.2&9 (Overviews of Americas and Western Europe), plus students select either Ch.17 (Flores Juberias on Eastern Europe), 23 (Golder & Wantchekon on Africa), or 26 (Hicken on Asia/Pacific)
W 9/26	Student Reports	APSA Task Force Report 2012 (selections)
F 9/28	Student Reports	APSA Task Force Report 2012 (selections)
Social choice theory and elections		
M 10/1	Same preferences, different outcomes	Colomer 2001, Ch.1; Riker Ch.2-3
W 10/3	Indeterminacy with multiple alternatives	Riker Ch.4
F 10/5	What can elections achieve?	Colomer 2001 Ch.5; Riker Ch.10
M 10/8	MTXM	
Imperfections		
<i>T 10/9 X-HOUR</i>	<i>Access to CSES data</i>	<i>Optional class for help on 10/10 data</i>
W 10/10	What citizens think	See instructions below this table
F 10/12	Disadvantaged groups	Htun 2004; Reynolds 2006
M 10/15	Corruption	Chang & Golden 2007
W 10/17	Voter intimidation	Brusco, Stokes, & Nazareno 2004
F 10/19	Going negative	Desposato 2005 & 2009
Elections and democracy promotion in the Arab Spring		
M 10/22	Arab Spring elections	Reynolds & Masoud (chapters)
W 10/24	Jordan	Carey – Jordan report 2011
F 10/26	Afghanistan	Reynolds & Carey 2012
Issues in U.S. electoral reform		
M 10/29	Cumulative voting	Guinier
W 10/31	Racial redistricting	<i>Shaw v. Reno</i>
F 11/2	Minority influence: legal considerations	Grofman 2005; Epstein & O'Halloran 2007

M 11/5	Electoral college	Koza et.al. 2006 Ch.1; Talukdar, Richie, and O'Donnell 2007; Hertzberg 2006
W 11/7	Campaign finance	Citizens United v. FEC 2010 (Read Kennedy majority opinion. Stevens's dissent and Scalia's rebuttal are also available on BB, but optional.)
F 11/9	Polls & forecasting	Harry Enten; TBA
M 11/12	Partisan gerrymanders	Toobin 2003; <i>Vieth v. Jubelirer</i> 2004 (Scalia majority opinion)
F 11/18, 3-6pm	FINAL EXAM	

Assignment for class 10/10

- Go to the website for the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (<http://www.cses.org/>).
- Read the brief description of the project at: 'About the CSES'
- Go to the 'Variable List' link. Download and read through the 'Full Variable List' to get an idea of all the questions the CSES asks to voters, and to political experts, in each country.
- At the 'Bibliography and Results' link, look at the graphs to get an idea what sort of information the surveys produce and how it can be put together to make comparisons across countries.
- Next, click on the 'Data Center' link. Register to use the data.
 - If you can do it, download, unzip, open, and examine the (big) CSES Module 3 dataset.
 - NOTE: If you use Stata to open the dataset, you need to re-set the memory on Stata to accommodate the size of the file. You can do this just by typing the command 'set mem 100000' either in the command window (before trying to open the dataset, or else as a line in a Stata do-file just before the line that tells Stata what file to use.
 - If you cannot download/open the dataset, follow the link to the CSES Module 1 data in the 'Analyze Online' box.
- Whichever data you use, produce one interesting graph or table, and bring it to class to hand in. Be prepared to say something about your table/graph, or about something you saw in the data.

Citations for Assigned Readings

- Hix, Simon, Ron Johnston, and Iain McLean. 2010. *Choosing an electoral system: A research report prepared for the British Academy*. London: British Academy.
- FairVote.org. 2005-2007. "International Snapshots: Israel, Palestine, Poland" (various authors). Washington, DC: www.fairvote.org
- Colomer, Josep M. 2004. "The strategy and history of electoral system choice." Josep M. Colomer, editor. *Handbook of electoral system choice*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp.13-78.
- Lepore, Jill. 2008. "Rock, paper, scissors: How we used to vote." *The New Yorker*, October 13:
- Chang, Eric C.C., Mark A. Kayser, Drew Linzer, and Ronald Rogowski. 2009. *Electoral Systems and the Balance of Consumer-Producer Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Introduction + Chapters 2 + 3.
- Colomer, Josep M. 2004. "The Americas: General overview." Josep M. Colomer, editor. *Handbook of electoral system choice*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp.81-109.
- Colomer, Josep M. 2004. "Western Europe: General overview." Josep M. Colomer, editor. *Handbook of electoral system choice*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 179-208.
- Flores Juberias, Carlos. 2004. "Eastern Europe: General overview." Josep M. Colomer, editor. *Handbook of electoral system choice*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 309-331.
- Golder, Matt and Leonard Wantchekon. 2004. "Africa: Dictatorial and democratic electoral systems since 1946." Josep M. Colomer, editor. *Handbook of electoral system choice*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 401-418.
- Hicken, Allen. 2004. "Asia and the Pacific: General overview." Josep M. Colomer, editor. *Handbook of electoral system choice*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 453-474.
- Colomer, Josep M. 2001. *Political Institutions: Democracy and Social Choice*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp.1-13 & 207-213.
- Riker, William. 1982. *Liberalism Against Populism*. Waveland Press (Chs.2-4, 10).
- Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). <http://www.cses.org/> Various web-based resources.

- Htun, Mala. 2004. "Is Gender Like Ethnicity? The Political Representation of Identity Groups," *Perspectives on Politics* 2(3):.
- Reynolds, Andrew. 2006. "Electoral systems and the protections and participation of minorities." Minority Rights Group International Report.
- Chang, Eric C.C. and Miriam Golden. 2007. "Electoral systems, district magnitude and corruption." *British Journal of Political Science* 37:115-137.
- Brusco, Valeria, Marcelo Nazareno, and Susan C. Stokes. 2004. "Vote buying in Argentina." *Latin American Research Review* 39(2):66-88.
- Desposato, Scott. 2005. "Going negative in comparative perspective: Electoral rules and campaign strategies." Unpublished paper.
- Desposato, Scott. 2009. "The impact of campaign messages in new democracies: Results from an experiment in Brazil." Unpublished paper.
- Guinier, Lani. 1991. "No Two Seats: The Elusive Quest for Political Equality." *Virginia Law Review* 77(8):1413-1514.
- US Supreme Court. 1992. *Official Reports of the Supreme Court* vol.509US part 3. *Shaw v. Reno*:630-658. Selections: Opinion (O'Connor).
- Grofman, Bernard. 2005. "Operationalizing the Section 5 Retrogression Standard of the Voting Rights Act in the Light of *Georgia v. Ashcroft*: Social Science Perspectives on Minority Influence, Opportunity and Control.
- Epstein, David and Sharyn O'Halloran. 2008. "Gerrymanders as trade-offs: The co-evolution of social scientific and legal approaches to racial redistricting." *Mobilizing democracy*. James Johnson, Jack Knight, Margaret Levi, and Susan Stokes, eds. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Toobin, Jeffrey. 2003. "The great election grab: When does gerrymandering become a threat to democracy?" *The New Yorker*. December 8: 63-.
- US Supreme Court. 2004. *Official Reports of the Supreme Court*. *Vieth v. Jubelirer* Selections: Opinion (Scalia).
- Corrado, Anthony. 2004. "A history of federal campaign finance law." Anthony Corrado, Thomas Mann, Daniel Ortiz, and Trevor Potter, eds. *The New Campaign Finance Sourcebook*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Ortiz, Daniel R. 2004. "The First Amendment and the limits of campaign finance reform." Anthony Corrado, Thomas Mann, Daniel Ortiz, and Trevor Potter, eds. *The New Campaign Finance Sourcebook*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

Koza, John R., Barry Fadem, Paul F. Eckstein, Mark Grueskin, Michael S. Mandell, Robert Richie, and Joseph F. Zimmerman. 2006. *Every vote equal: A state-based plan for electing the president by national popular vote*. Washington, DC: National Popular Vote Press.

Talukdar, Monideepa, Robert Richie, and Ryan O'Donnell. 2007. "Fuzzy math: Wrong-way reforms for allocating Electoral College votes." (www.fairvote.org)

Hertzberg, Hendrik. 2006. "Count 'em." *New Yorker*. March 6.

Professor Carey's writing tips – and admonitions

Every term, I read stacks of student papers. Most are very good, but all have some shortcomings. Some of the mistakes are original, but others I see over and over. Here are a few basic writing errors I would like not to see in your papers:

“different than,” “different from”

- Things are different *from* one another, not different *than* one another.

“reason why”

- If you are trying to explain the reason why something happened, try just explaining the reason something happened. Alternatively, you could tell me why something happened. The phrase “reason why” is redundant.

“uninterested” versus “disinterested”

- People constantly use “disinterested” to mean “uninterested.” These words are not interchangeable. “Disinterested” means unbiased, objective. “Uninterested” means, well, not interested. We want judges who are disinterested in the cases that come before them, but not who are uninterested. I’m not sure why so many people use “disinterested” when they mean “uninterested,” but not the other way around. I suspect people who don’t know the difference think that “disinterested” sounds like a ‘smarter’ word. Incorrect usage, however, never makes anyone sound smart.

“which” and “that”

- “Which” leads off a clause that adds information about a thing that has already been identified. “That” leads off a clause that identifies the thing (although it might also provide additional information about it).
- Students tend to overuse “which” when they ought to be using “that.” Much more rarely do I find examples of “that” used when “which” would have been correct. Therefore, I recommend you conduct a “which” hunt through your papers before turning them in.
- An example: “Visitors to the Library Reserve Desk, which is located in the basement of Baker, are often surprised to find a huge mural that depicts Mexican history from the pre-Aztec period through the Revolution.”
- As another example, consider the difference between “The lawnmower, which is in the garage, doesn’t work,” and “The lawnmower that is in the garage doesn’t work, but the one in the shed runs fine.”

Verbs that are not verbs

- “Evidence” is a noun, not a verb. As such, there is no past participle of “evidence” whereby support for a claim is “evidenced by” something. It might be “shown by” or “demonstrated by,” but not “evidenced by.”
- “Incentive” is also a noun. When you feel tempted to say something “incentives” something else, try “motivates,” or “creates incentives for.”

“a whole nother”

- OK, here is one I doubt you will make with the written word (although if you do, you’re in deep trouble), but that has grown to such epidemic proportions in everyday speech that I have to include it. I think the error is pretty self-explanatory. I hear this everywhere lately, including among TV talking heads and on (gasp) NPR. Please avoid.

Columbia/Colombia

Columbia is a university in New York. Colombia is a country in South America.