#Competitiveness

## by Number of Candidates

### Overall

In the 1,153 election races in Louisiana, in 2014 and 2016, there was little competition. The typical race saw just 2 candidates vying for each seat, and 90% of races had 3 or fewer candidates:

(The 1+ and 2+ indicate races with multiple seats open; e.g. 3 candidates competing for 2 seats results in 3/2 = 1.5 candidates per seat.)

### Most Competitive

The federal-level races were generally more competitive than the local races, with roughly 5 times as many candidates per seat as the state- and local-level races:

The federal-level races were 8 of the top 11 races with the most candidates:

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| **Level** | **Position** | **Number of Candidates** |
| Federal | U. S. Senator (2016) | 24 |
| Federal | Presidential Electors (2016) | 13 |
| Federal | U. S. Representative-6th Congressional District (2014) | 12 |
| Local | Mayor-President-Metro Council, City of Baton Rouge (2016) | 12 |
| Federal | U. S. Representative-3rd Congressional District (2016) | 12 |
| Federal | U. S. Representative-5th Congressional District (2014) | 9 |
| Federal | U. S. Representative-4th Congressional District (2016) | 8 |
| Federal | U. S. Senator (2014) | 8 |
| Federal | U. S. Representative-1st Congressional District (2016) | 7 |
| Local | Mayor-City of Shreveport (2014) | 7 |
| Local | City Marshal-City Court, City of Hammond-Tangipahoa (2014) | 7 |

### Least Competitive

There were only 8 state-level races (less than 1% of the 1153 total races), making it difficult to draw any generalizations. Of the 1130 local-level races, the least competitive were the races for aldermen and council members, where an average of 2.26 candidates ran per seat – compared to an average of 2.58 candidates per seat, across all races:

This lack of competitiveness in the local government races was especially visible in those races where multiple seats were available:

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| **Position** | **Number of Candidates** |
| Aldermen-Town of Lecompte (5 to be elected)-Rapides (2014) | 1.2 |
| Councilmen-Town of Berwick (5 to be elected)-St. Mary (2014) | 1.2 |
| Aldermen-Town of Port Barre (5 to be elected)-St. Landry (2014) | 1.2 |
| Aldermen-Town of Clarks (5 to be elected)-Caldwell (2014) | 1.2 |
| Aldermen-Town of Tullos (5 to be elected)-Lasalle (2014) | 1.2 |
| Aldermen-Town of Abita Springs (5 to be elected)-St. Tammany (2014) | 1.2 |
| Aldermen-Town of Urania (5 to be elected)-Lasalle (2014) | 1.2 |
| Aldermen-Town of Cullen (5 to be elected)-Webster (2016) | 1.2 |
| Council Members-Town of Leonville (5 to be elected)-St. Landry (2014) | 1.2 |

(The full list includes a total of 98 elections, where the average number of candidates per seat is only 1.8.)

There were a few noticeable exceptions to this rule, where the alderman/council member race was hotly contested, particularly in East Baton Rouge and Opelousas-St. Landry:

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| **Position** | **Number of Candidates** |
| Councilman-Metro District 12-East Baton Rouge (2016) | 6 |
| Councilman-Metro District 5-East Baton Rouge (2016) | 5 |
| Councilman-Metro District 7-East Baton Rouge (2016) | 5 |
| Councilman-Metro District 9-East Baton Rouge (2016) | 5 |
| Councilman-Metro District 10-East Baton Rouge (2016) | 5 |
| Councilman-District E, City of Bogalusa-Washington (2014) | 5 |
| Council Member-Division B, City of Westlake-Calcasieu (2014) | 5 |
| Alderman-District B, Town of Farmerville-Union (2016) | 5 |
| Alderman-District E, City of Opelousas-St. Landry (2014) | 5 |
| Alderman at Large-City of Opelousas-St. Landry (2014) | 5 |

## Competitiveness in Urban vs. Rural Areas  
*(The short answer here is “No, no difference”, but I’m showing the work in case it’s worth discussing.)*

Continuing the categorization of municipalities and parishes with a population less than 47,000 as “rural” and those with a greater population as “urban”, we can compare whether the amount of competitiveness differed.

The number of election races, by type, was nearly identical between the rural and urban areas:

### Judicial Exception

The one exception is the number of Judicial races. The voting areas for some of these races – 22 races, in cities and districts that spanned multiple parishes – was unclear and so was not quantified. However, 22 races represent only 5% of the total judicial races (148 in rural areas and 289 in urban areas) and are not enough to make a difference.

### Competiveness between Types of Positions

Just as the number of races was nearly the same in rural and urban areas, the number of candidates per seat was nearly the same as well:

The biggest differences were for Local Government positions, where the rural areas averaged 0.58 more of a candidate, and Law Enforcement positions, where the urban areas averaged 0.64 more of a candidate.

### Competitiveness for Specific Positions

Specifically, in those Local Government and Law Enforcement types of positions, there were two positions that showed the biggest differences:

The Council Member position had an average of 1.26 more candidates per seat in the rural areas, and the Marshal position averaged 1.09 more candidates per seat in the urban areas.

## Margin of Victory

Defining the margin of victory as the winner's percentage of all votes cast minus the percentage of votes cast for the second-place candidate *[Source:* [*http://archive.fairvote.org/?page=551*](http://archive.fairvote.org/?page=551)*]*, elections averaged a 17% margin of victory.

### Breakdown by Level of Government

Elections at the federal level had a slightly bigger margin, while elections at the state level had a slightly smaller margin:

### Breakdown by Type of Position

Breaking down the local elections by type, the local government elections had a significantly narrower margin (9%), with the other types averaging 21%:

These margins were practically the same in rural and urban jurisdictions, showing 3% difference or less.

Certain positions within these types show considerable variance from the average, but this is always in cases where there are far fewer elections in the data set, meaning no conclusions can be drawn.

### Least Competitive Races

The races with the biggest margins of victory were all at the local level, and six of those ten were for Chief of Police:

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| **Position** | **Margin of Victory** | **Number of Candidates** |
| Mayor-Village of Pine Prairie-Evangeline (2016) | 88% | 2 |
| Chief of Police-Town of Marion-Union (2014) | 81% | 2 |
| Chief of Police-Town of Chatham-Jackson (2016) | 78% | 4 |
| Constable(s)-Justice of the Peace Ward 7-Vermilion (2014) | 76% | 2 |
| Chief of Police-Town of Gramercy-St. James (2014) | 75% | 2 |
| Chief of Police-Village of Converse-Sabine (2016) | 74% | 2 |
| Chief of Police-Village of Pine Prairie-Evangeline (2016) | 74% | 2 |
| Selectman-District IV, City of Plaquemine-Iberville (2016) | 73% | 2 |
| Chief of Police-Village of Epps-West Carroll (2014) | 73% | 2 |
| Councilman-District 1, Town of Ringgold-Bienville (2014) | 70% | 2 |

### Most Competitive Races

The races with the smallest margins of victory were also at the local level, with six of those races being for a position on the council:

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| **Position** | **Margin of Victory** | **Number of Candidates** |
| Council Member-District A, Town of Dubach-Lincoln (2014) | 0% | 2 |
| Councilmen-Town of Keachi (5 to be elected)-De Soto (2014) | 0% | 7 |
| Constable-Justice of the Peace District 4-West Carroll (2014) | 0% | 2 |
| Justice of the Peace-Justice of the Peace Ward 7-St. Mary (2014) | 0% | 9 |
| Member of School Board-District 12-St. Landry (2014) | 0% | 6 |
| Councilmen-Town of Berwick (5 to be elected)-St. Mary (2014) | 0% | 6 |
| Councilmen-Town of Coushatta (5 to be elected)-Red River (2016) | 0% | 11 |
| Councilman-District A, City of Shreveport (2014) | 0% | 4 |
| Alderman-Seat E, Town of Ball-Rapides (2014) | 0% | 2 |
| Member(s) of School Board-District 1 (5 to be elected)-Vernon (2014) | 0% | 8 |

Note: One council position and one selectman position appears on the list of least-competitive races, and constable positions appear on both lists as well, meaning all of these races are outliers.

/\*-- show margin by parish/district

-- show margin by number\_can\_per\_seat \*/

## Remaining Questions

Margin of victory aspect: What are the races that have the largest margin of victory?

What are the ones that have the smallest? What can we see in the constituents - any outliers?