Ipsos is a multinational polling and market research firm that facilitates clients’ needs to predict the outcome of elections. While this is frequently accomplished in developed countries with polling firms, most countries lack such robust data and sophisticated models necessary to predict electoral outcomes. In low-information countries like these, structural models that estimate election outcomes based on political and economic factors are required. Ipsos engaged the SIPA Capstone Group to create a dataset and model based on these types of data, as well as a detailed analysis of the model’s false positives. Ipsos has provided an initial dataset that the Capstone Group will build out with additional variables, countries, and years. Additional variables will include GDP growth, inflation, employment growth, challenger and incumbency of candidates, and whether the country is in a military conflict. Next, the group will run diagnostics around the robustness of the current model. Finally, the model will be augmented with different estimation techniques. Upon completion of the model and dataset, a supporting report will describe the model’s construction, how the data was collected, what methodology was used, and a detailed examination of the model’s false positives.

Two questions for the committee:

1. Are there any other models or variables you believe we should be looking at to include in the dataset and model?
2. Do you think the format we are doing this in is the most value we can provide for our client? What else can we do to provide value to the client?