

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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NOMINATING CANDIDATES, QUICK HISTORY

NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

- Usually national conventions controlled the nominations
- Neither democratic nor transparent
- Party bosses played a large role
- “Smoke-filled rooms”

- Progressives in the 1920s pushed for more open government (generally)
- Part of this was opening the nomination process
- Some states opted in, but the primary didn't gain much momentum

- Primaries became more important throughout the 1970s - 1980s
 - Especially after disastrous 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago
- Today the primary system is the most important path to the nomination

STRENGTHS OF THE PRIMARY SYSTEM

- More democratic
 - Voter turnout usually around 20% (in earlier states)
- Greater choice of candidates
- Allows outsiders a chance
- Campaign experience

WEAKNESSES OF THE PRIMARY SYSTEM

- Voter apathy
- Weird voters
 - Highly ideological
- Very long
- Very expensive
- Dominated by the media
- Lack of party vetting

THE PATH TO THE NOMINATION - TODAY

- Invisible primary (? - ?, January?)
 - Oftentimes at least a year before official campaigning
- Primaries and caucuses (January - June)
- National conventions (July/August)
 - “Selection” of presidential nominee
 - VP nominee
 - Party platform
- Election campaign (July/August - November)
 - Technically Election Day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November

THE INVISIBLE PRIMARY

- When? - before January
- Purposes
 - Fund raising
 - Alliance building
 - Party support
- Polling to determine popularity
- Press!

PRIMARIES & CAUCUSES

- Iowa and New Hampshire go first (in that order)
- Usually in mid-January
- A few states in February or early March (Nevada, South Carolina)
- Super Tuesday
 - One or more Tuesdays in which many states have a primary/caucus
- Timing is super important

2016 - THE RACE THROUGH MARCH (DEMOCRATS)

	Iowa	NH	Nevada	SC	Total delegates	W/O Super
Clinton	49.9%	38.0%	52.7%	73.5%	543	90
Sanders	49.6%	60.4%	47.3%	26.0%	85	65

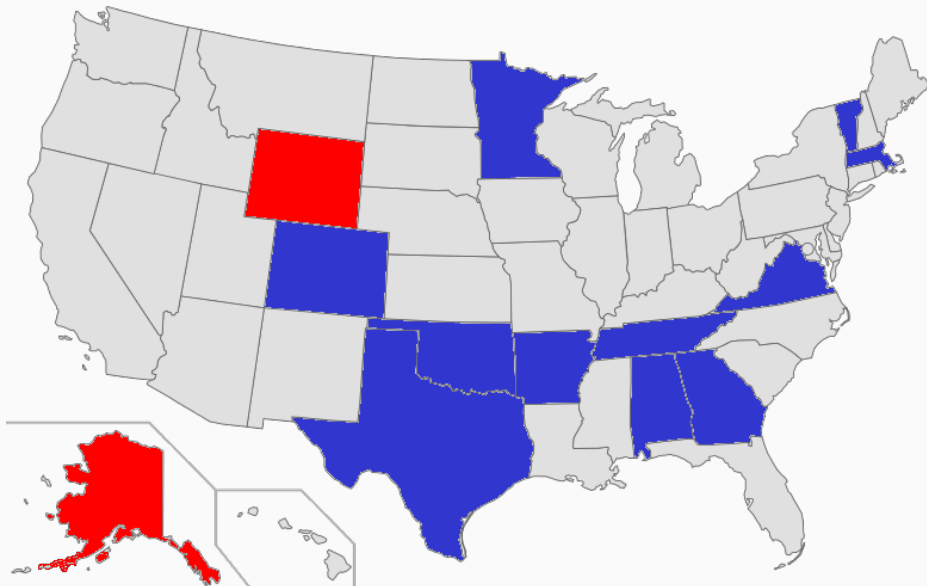
2,382 delegates needed to secure nomination

2016 - THE RACE THOUGH MARCH (REPUBLICANS)

	Iowa	NH	SC	Nevada	Total delegates
Trump	24.3%	35.3%	32.5%	45.9%	81
Cruz	27.6%	11.7%	22.3%	21.4%	17
Rubio	23.1%	10.6%	22.5%	23.9%	17
Kasich	1.9%	15.8%	7.6%	3.6%	6

1,237 delegates needed to secure nomination

SUPER TUESDAY 2016



SUPER TUESDAY 2016 - DEMOCRATS

	Type	Number delegates	Pred - Clinton	Pred - Sanders
Alabama	O	53		
American Samoa (C)	C	6		
Arkansas	O	32	64	32
Colorado (C)	C	66		
Georgia	O	102	70	26
Massachusetts	M	91	51.8	45.2
Minnesota (C)	O	77		
Oklahoma		38	52.1	44.3
Tennessee	O	67	65.1	31.6
Texas	O	222	65.5	31.6
Vermont	O	16	86.6	11.1
Virginia	O	95	62.7	34.3
Total		865		

Predictions from 538, About 20% of the total delegates at stake

SUPER TUESDAY 2016 - REPUBLICANS

	Type	Number delegates	Pred - Trump	Pred - Rubio	Pred - Cruz
Alabama	O	50	36.4	26.3	15.5
Alaska (C)	C	28			
Arkansas	O	40			
Colorado (C)	C	37	(delegates	unbound)	
Georgia	O	76	35.9	26	21.2
Massachusetts	M	42	43.2	23.3	18.5
Minnesota (C)	O	38			
Oklahoma	C	43	31.5	29.1	23.2
Tennessee	O	58	(Win)		
Texas	O	155	24.9	23.3	38.1
Vermont	O	16	24.9	23.3	38.1
Virginia	O	49	37.8	30.4	17.5
Wyoming (Con)	O	29			
Total		661			

About 25% of the total delegates at stake

SUPER TUESDAY 2016 RESULTS

DEMOCRATS - VOTESHARE AND DELEGATES WON

	Number delegates	Clinton	Sanders
Alabama	53	78-37	19-4
American Samoa (C)	6		
Arkansas	32	66-18	30-7
Colorado (C)	66	40-24	59-33
Georgia	102	71-66	28-23
Massachusetts	91	50-45	49-43
Minnesota (C)	77	38-24	62-42
Oklahoma	38	42-16	52-20
Tennessee	67	66-40	32-22
Texas	222	66-122	32-48
Vermont	16	14-0	86-10
Virginia	95	64-61	35-32

	Total delegates	W/O Super	Percentage	Percent of votes
Clinton	1000	543	21% (13.4%)	60.7%
Sanders	371	349	7.8% (8.6%)	39.3%
Total	4763	4051		

Vote total includes only votes cast for either Clinton or Sanders

REPUBLICANS - VOTESHARE AND DELEGATES WON

	# delegates	Trump	Rubio	Cruz
Alabama	50	43-36	19-1	21-13
Alaska (C)	28	34-11	15-5	36-12
Arkansas	40	33-16	25-9	31-14
Georgia	76	39-40	25-14	24-18
Massachusetts	42	49-22	18-8	10-4
Minnesota (C)	38	21-10	37-14	29-13
Oklahoma	43	28-12	26-11	34-14
Tennessee	58	39-31	21-9	25-14
Texas	155	27-33	18-3	44-99
Vermont	16	33-6	19-0	10-0
Virginia	49	35-17	32-16	17-8

	Total delegates	Percentage	Percent of votes
Trump	316	12.8%	40.7%
Rubio	106	4.3%	25.8%
Cruz	226	9.1%	33.5%
Total	2472		

Vote total includes only votes cast for one of those three candidates

- March 5: Kansas, Kentucky (R), Louisiana, Maine (R), Nebraska (D)
- March 6: Maine (D), Puerto Rico (R),
- March 8: Hawaii (R), Idaho (R), Michigan, Mississippi
- March 12: DC (R), North Mariana Islands (D)
- March 15: Florida¹, Illinois, Missouri, North Mariana Islands², North Carolina, Ohio³
- March 19: Virgin Islands (R)

¹Winner take all for Republicans

²Winner take all for Republicans

³Winner take all for Republicans

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIMARIES

PRIMARY VS CAUCUS

- Primary more like an election
- Caucus more “town hall” style
 - Listen to speeches by supporters of each candidate
- Caucus asks more of people (time)
- Some people prefer caucuses because of the deliberative aspect
- Texas uses a primary

WHO CAN VOTE?

- Closed
 - Only registered partisans can vote (and only in their party's primary)
- Open
 - Texas is open
 - All registered voters can vote in either party's primary
- Mixed or Hybrid
 - Varies, but usually lets independents vote in either primary contest
- Blanket
 - Not used for presidential primaries
 - First election all candidates listed together (all parties)
 - If one candidate secures 50% or more of the vote, they're elected
 - Otherwise, have a runoff election between the top two votegetters

HOW ARE DELEGATES AWARDED?

- Winner-take-all
 - Plurality winner takes all of a state's delegates
- Proportional
 - Candidates receive delegates proportional to their share of the vote
 - Can include thresholds (e.g. must get above x% of the vote)
 - Can include winner-take-all triggers (e.g. if a candidate gets more than x% of the statewide vote, they get all the candidates)

- Democrats use proportional system almost exclusively
- Republicans use a more complicated system
 - Proportional before March 15th (mostly...), allows winner take all after that

- Democrats - Basically proportional. [Here's](#) a 39 page document that describes the full process
- Republicans: Proportional, 20% threshold – If a candidate wins more than 50% of the statewide vote, he or she is awarded all of the state's at-large delegates. If a candidate wins more than 50% of the vote in a district, he or she is awarded all of the district's delegates.

WHAT ARE THESE “SUPER” DELEGATES!?!

- Democrats have “super” delegates
- Not bound to any particular candidate
- Can state their intention to vote for someone...
- But that can change (2008)
- Instituted after several disastrous nominees
- Way for the party to weight the nomination process against/for certain candidates

THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

- Usually the out party holds their convention in July and the incumbent party in August
- In 2016, both are in July (because of the Olympics)

- Conventions are large, so cities compete to host them
- Parties may also be strategic about where they are held
 - For example, to get more votes in a battleground state
- In 2016, Republicans are in Cleveland and Democrats are in Philadelphia

- The party **platform** contains its goals and proposals (*planks*)
- Usually pretty generic language appealing to traditional party supporters
- Ideological, *not* specific policy proposals

PURPOSES - “SELECTION” OF NOMINEES

- Voting occurs to select the party's nominee for president
- This is usually a foregone conclusion since candidates can mathematically secure the nomination several months prior
- Possible to have a **brokered convention** where no candidate secured a majority of delegates
 - These are few and far between, party rules for delegate selection make this unlikely

PURPOSES - SPEECHES AND MEDIA COVERAGE

- Major purpose of the convention is media coverage
- Many speeches given by former party leaders (e.g. past presidents, past senators, etc), current party leaders, highly-regarded citizens, nominees
- Free media coverage
- Acts as the official start of the campaign season in many ways
- Unlike many campaign events, conventions can actually affect the outcome of the election

THE CAMPAIGN

THE ELECTION

- Election day is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November
- In 2016, that makes it November 8th
- What it takes to win:
 - 270 electoral votes

WHAT IS AN ELECTORAL VOTE?

- The founders liked democracy but were afraid of too much democracy
- The Electoral College is one way the devised to dilute the passions of the masses
- In November, we elect Electors to the Electoral College
- These Electors then gather later on and elect the new President
 - The Monday after the second Wednesday in December

- Each state gets as many Electors as it has representatives in Congress
 - So the minimum is three (1 Representative + 2 Senators)
 - California has the most (55 as of 2016)
 - DC also gets three
- Need an absolute majority to win (270 of 538)
- States (with the exception of Nebraska and Maine) give *all* of their electoral votes to the candidate with the most votes in their state
- So if Candidate X gets 49% of the vote and Candidate Y gets 51% of the vote, Candidate Y receives 100% of the state's electoral votes

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE, CONTINUED

- It takes 270 to win
- What happens if no candidate gets 270?
- What *should* happen?

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE, CONTINUED

- It takes 270 to win
- What happens if no candidate gets 270?
- What *should* happen?
- The newly elected Congress meets and counts the votes
- If no one gets a majority, then the House elects the President and the Senate elects the Vice President
- HOWEVER each state gets one vote

- Because of the winner-take-all allocation rules of most states, this makes campaigning in some states *much* more important than others
- Why?

- Consider Texas - do the Democrats have a chance of receiving Texas's 38 electoral votes in 2016?
- Do the Republicans have a chance of getting California's 55?

- Some states closer than others
 - These states considered battleground states
 - Which states are considered battleground states varies a bit from year to year
 - In 2016, perhaps: Nevada, Colorado, Iowa, Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida
 - 270 to win

ADVANTAGES OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

- Large margins of victory grant president-elects more legitimacy
- Encourages a two-party system
- Requires candidates to appeal to a broad electorate
- Protects minority interests (esp. rural)

DISADVANTAGES OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

- A handful of states are ever competitive
 - Swing states and small states more powerful
- Can (and has) elect presidents who lose the popular vote
 - Four times ever, most recently in 2000
- Encourages a two-party system
- Less populated areas are overrepresented
- Complicated and seems undemocratic in modern times
- “Faithless” electors
 - About half the states have laws requiring electors to vote for the popular vote winner

PROPOSALS TO REFORM ELECTORAL COLLEGE

- Individual state reforms
 - Nebraska and Maine award votes by congressional district winners
 - Statewide winner gets the remaining 2 electoral votes
- Abolish the Electoral College
 - Requires amending the US Constitution, nearly impossible to do
- National Popular Vote Interstate Compact
 - Agreement among states to award all of their electoral votes to whichever candidate gets the popular vote
 - 10 states + DC with 165 total electoral votes have passed this
 - That's 30.7% of the vote, or 61.1% of the 270 electoral votes it needs
 - MD, NJ, IL, HI, WA, MA, DC, VT, CA, RI, NY (2014)