**REPORT SUBMISSION SHEET**

**Please follow these instructions carefully**

Add your URN and report subject and upload this page as the first page of your report submission to SurreyLearn to the Report folder in the Assignments tab by

**17:00 on Thursday March 16th**

Please upload three copies of the report (each containing this cover sheet). The file name of the **Word** documents you upload must be your URN, followed by a space, a dash and a space, then “report” plus the letter A, B or C. **It is very important that you follow these instructions exactly**. This is to ensure confidentiality at all stages of the peer review process.

Thus if your URN is 9008708 the title of your three documents will therefore be

**“9008708 - reportA.docx”, “9008708 - reportB.docx” and “9008708 - reportC.docx”**

Do **not put your name** anywhere on your report, either in the body of the text, the title or any headers or footers.

**Do not upload the document as a pdf or in any other format than Word.**

You need to delete any references to authorship in order to maintain anonymity.  In your Word document click on **File**, in the **Info** page which comes up click on **Check for Issues** and then **Inspect Document**.  On the **Document Inspector** dialog box click **Inspect**.  Word will check the document and a box will come up headed **Document Properties and Personal Information**. Click on **Remove All** and then click **Reinspect**.  Continue to click on any other **Remove All** buttons which appear and once more click **Reinspect.** Then click on **Save.**

These steps will ensure that your report can be given anonymously to the three peer reviewers and that every document is uniquely identified in the marking process. You will receive feedback, anonymously from each of the three reviewers.

6442094

**URN**

**REPORT SUBJECT**

Different forms of proportional representation

***Late Submission***

*If you do not submit your report by the deadline specified and there are no confirmed extenuating circumstances,* ***the mark awarded will be reduced by 10 percentage points for each 24 hour period after the deadline, up to and including the third day after the submission*** *(30 percentage points).  Therefore, if the mark were 80%, but the report was submitted 30 minutes past the deadline, you would be awarded a mark reduced by 10% to 70%. The mark recorded for a* ***report submitted******after 10am on Thursday 21st April is zero****.  The same penalties will apply to the peer review submissions. If you have not submitted a report you will not participate in the peer review process and will receive a zero mark for this piece of work.*

**Different forms or proportional representation:**

**What is proportional representation?**

Proportional Representation is a general term for different election processes which all attempt to fix the problems of majoritarian voting systems, to ensure that the distribution of power in a system is as equal as possible to the voting preferences of the population. The goal is to make every vote count as much as another, regardless of whether the vote was for a popular candidate or party. It is a system which chooses fairness over political stability, as it nearly always results in coalitions.

Before getting into the different types of Proportional Representation, it is important to highlight the main issues it attempts to resolve:

* First Past the Post (FPTP) elections: This is the most basic form of majoritarian voting systems. In FPTP, the candidate or party with the most votes wins 100% of the election. While this may not seem unreasonable, if one considers a scenario where three parties are competing against each other and two of them receive 30% of votes each while the last party receives 40%, the last party will win the entire election and the 60% of the population that voted for other parties will not be represented at all. This encourages the population to vote tactically, rather than for the party they like the most.
* The Spoiler Effect: This is an effect which even other majoritarian systems, such as the Alternative Vote, seek to mitigate. New parties entering a FPTP election help their biggest opponents, and damage the success of similarly motivated parties due to votes being split between them. Consider a FPTP election where the “Blue” Party will win 40% of the vote and the “Orange” party is predicted to win 60%. If a third party, the “Pink” party, with similar ideas to “Orange” decides to enter the election, the “Orange” party’s votes will now be split between both themselves and the new “Pink” party. If they each then win 30% of the vote, the “Blue” party’s 40% will win the entire election, even if it’s the party that the majority of the population liked the least. This discourages any political diversity and means that FPTP voting will always trend toward a Two-Party System.
* Gerrymandering: This is a practice that can be abused by a party already in power to maximise their chances of being re-elected. It is done by manipulating the boundaries of constituencies so that their voters make up the minimum majority in each constituency.

**The different forms of Proportional Representation:**

**Single Transferable Vote (STV):**

Although not too common, the Single Transferable Vote system focuses on giving each constituency multiple representatives proportional to the votes in that constituency. It is used in Ireland’s Presidential election, as well as smaller elections in many other countries.

It works as follows:

1. Each constituency will want to elect a number of representatives relative to its size. A candidate will need 100%/n of the vote, where “n” is the number of representatives, to be elected.
2. Several candidates will run for election. Multiple candidates from the same party can run alongside each other.
3. The population votes for the candidates, ordering them in terms of preference, much like the Alternative Vote.
4. If any candidates meet the voting quota, they are elected. Any votes that take them above this quota are redistributed to the second choice candidate.
5. If the redistribution of excess votes takes another candidate above the quota, they are elected. If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and their votes are redistributed to their second choice candidates. This step is repeated until the number of representatives needed is met.

This is an effective type of Proportional Representation, as it encourages the population to vote for the candidate they like most, even if they are worried they might not win. This is because if they are eliminated from the election, the vote goes to the second-best candidate, rather than going totally to waste, as in FPTP. It also gives a chance for smaller parties to be represented if they are the second choice for many other candidates. Because this system’s tries to make each person’s vote as valuable as possible, Gerrymandering is mitigated to a large extent. The greatest strength of STV is that you vote for direct representatives of your constituency, rather than for a party in general. It is however not as representative as Party-list Proportional Representation.

**Party-list Proportional Representation:**

Party-list Proportional Representation is different from STV in that a population will vote for a party in a larger district rather than a candidate in a constituency. This is interesting, as it means that parties are integral part of the voting system, and any individual candidate is treated as a party too.

Each district has a certain number of seats and each party will receive a number of seats proportional to the percentage of the vote they won in the district.

There are two main types of Party-list PR: Open-list PR and Closed-list PR. In Open-list, voters can decide which candidates they would like see take seats in the district. This is used in many European countries such as Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands. In Closed-list, voters do not get the choice, the candidates are decided within the party. This is used in Russia, South Africa, and other countries.

The advantage of Party-list PR is that it is the most fair, proportional system. Small parties and minorities are encouraged. Everyone is represented relative to the size of the vote. Because of this, there is near to no incentive to Gerrymander. It will however nearly always result in a coalition government, as it becomes incredibly difficult to achieve a majority with this system.

**Semi-proportional representation:**

There are also a couple of systems which marry concepts from majoritarian and proportional elections. Most notable of these is Mixed Member proportional representation (MMP), where each constituency will elect one candidate using the FPTP model, but then an equal amount of candidates are elected to fit the proportional split in parties. If one were to consider five constituencies where three parties, the Green party, the Yellow party, and the Brown party were competing, and in each constituency, there was 20% support for Green, 35% support for Yellow and 45% support for Brown, the Brown party would win all five FPTP candidate elections. However, now the number of seats is doubled to ten, and the largest party is given a seat until they are over-represented. So here, Yellow would be given four seats, and Green would be given one, so that even if they did not win the FPTP elections, they are still proportionally represented overall.

**Conclusion:**

There are many ways to assemble a proportional election, but the goals of preventing minority rule, giving a fair voice to all people, and the mitigation of Gerrymandering are the same with them all. Their strength is however also their greatest weakness, as they nearly always result in coalitions.

## **References**

Aceproject.org. (2017). *Proportional Representation (PR) —*. [online] Available at: http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esd/esd02/default [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].

CGP Grey. (2017). *Mixed-Member Proportional Representation Explained*. [online] Available at: http://www.cgpgrey.com/blog/mixed-member-proportional-representation-explained.html [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].

Electoral-reform.org.uk. (2017). *Proportional Representation | ERS*. [online] Available at: http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/proportional-representation [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].

FairVote. (2017). *Proportional Representation Voting Systems - FairVote*. [online] Available at: http://www.fairvote.org/proportional\_representation\_voting\_systems [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].

politics.co.uk. (2017). *Electoral Reform and Voting Systems*. [online] Available at: http://www.politics.co.uk/reference/electoral-reform-and-voting-systems [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].

The Center for Election Science. (2017). *The Spoiler Effect*. [online] Available at: https://electology.org/spoiler-effect [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].

Washington Post. (2017). *This is the best explanation of gerrymandering you will ever see*. [online] Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/03/01/this-is-the-best-explanation-of-gerrymandering-you-will-ever-see/?utm\_term=.fcddd5e1fef2 [Accessed 16 Mar. 2017].