

**Political Science 333: Elections, American Style
Spring 2007**

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Course Summary:

Readings and other resources:

The following books are available for purchase at the Reed bookstore.

Abramson, Paul, John Aldrich, and David Rohde. 2006. *Change and Continuity in the 2004 Elections*. Washington DC: CQ Press. This is a standard reference for elections and electoral behavior research. Note that if you are going to buy this book, make sure you get the newest edition.

Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. New York: Cambridge University Press. This is the seminal text that applies new institutionalism to electoral rules and voting.

Donovan, Todd and Shaun Bowler. 2007. *Reforming the Republic: Democratic Institutions for the New America*. New York: Pearson. This is a new book on electoral institutions and election reform in the United States. I have invited one of the authors to visit Reed this semester.

Popkin, Samuel. 1994. *The Reasoning Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. This book provides a very accessible introduction to the way the cognitive psychology and communication studies help us think about electoral behavior.

As befits an area of political science as dynamic as electoral behavior, the course will rely on recent journal articles and significant portions of other books. All books have been placed on reserve, and when there is only one copy in the library, we have also produced a second printed copy of the readings. If the book is not owned by Reed, there will be a reserve copy and an "honor" copy kept outside my office.

We will make use of an online guide to analyzing the 2004 Election, called "Setups", available at this website: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/SETUPS/>. The system uses the same online data analysis package that is taught in Soc211 and Pol210. The 2004 survey is also available through the regular SDA analysis system (<http://sda.berkeley.edu>). We may conduct analyses of the 2006 election, but this will require a higher level of expertise.

Websites that provide good sources for election results, electoral systems, public opinion, and voting behavior include

1. The Lijphart Elections Archive: <http://dodgson.ucsd.edu/lij/> provides a wealth of election statistics and links to other archives. This archive contains the data used in Cox's book.
2. Elections and Election Systems around the world, a comprehensive guide: <http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.htm>
3. Wikipedia guide to recent elections provides results on recent elections: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elections_by_country
4. [Pollingreport.com](http://www.pollingreport.com) provides all sorts of polling data, but only recent.
5. Project Vote Smart is a voter guide for US citizens. <http://www.vote-smart.org/index.htm>
6. The National Journal's website, available to Reed users, has one of the best sources of "inside the Beltway" information, campaign updates, "tip sheets", and a wonderful archive of recent campaign ads <http://nationaljournal.com/about/policycentral/>
7. The National Election Study conducted at the University of Michigan is the premier academic survey dedicated to American electoral behavior. It is available either at <http://sda.berkeley.edu>, via a web-based statistics interface, or can be directly downloaded at NES home page: <http://www.umich.edu/~nes/>.

Class requirements:

- Five 3 page memoranda: 50% of course grade.
- Two 7 page essays: 50% of course grade.

Course Schedule

1. January 23: What is Political Behavior?

- a. Carmines, Edward and Robert Huckfeldt. "Political Behavior: An Overview." Ch. 8 in Goodin and Klingemann, *A New Handbook of Political Science*.

2. January 25: What happened in 2004?

- a. Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde. Part 1 (pg. 1-72)
- b. Jeffrey M. Stonecash (2005) "Scaring the Democrats: What's the Matter with Thomas Frank's Argument? *The Forum*: Vol. 3: No. 3, Article 4. <http://www.bepress.com/forum/vol3/iss3/art4>
- c. Alan Abramowitz and Kyle Saunders (2005) "Why Can't We All Just Get Along? The Reality of a Polarized America", *The Forum*: Vol. 3: No. 2, Article 1. <http://www.bepress.com/forum/vol3/iss2/art1>

3. January 30. Congressional Elections and the 2006 Midterms

- a. Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde. Part 3 (Chs. 9-10).
- b. A packet of news articles on the 2006 election (available from the professor)

- c. “The 2006 Midterms: Post-Election Appraisal.” Articles from *The Forum: A Journal of Applied Research in Contemporary Politics*. Articles by Schier, Pitney, Connelly, Kamarck, and Klinkner and Schaller.

4. February 1: Laboratory Exercise, a first take on the 2004 and 2006 Elections

- a. Complete directed analysis of the 2006 ANES . Discuss this exercise and complete problem set in class. If possible, everyone should bring a computer or we will work in the Public Policy Workshop.
- b. **First memorandum:** Turn in a 3-5 page memo including empirical results, on party polarization, the working class vote, economics and politics, or incumbency advantage in the 2004 or 2006 elections. Memo due February 8th.

5. February 6: Why do we hold elections?

- a. Manin, Bernard. *The Principles of Representative Government*. Chs. 1-2.

6. February 8: Rules of the Game 1: The diverse world of election systems

- a. Lijphart, Arend. 1994. *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*. Chapter 2.
- b. **First memo due.**

7. February 13: Duverger’s Law and the impact of electoral laws on party systems

- a. Duverger, Maurice. *Political Parties*. Book 2, Chapter 1, Section I (dealing with two party systems), p. 206-228
- b. Cox, Gary. *Making Votes Count*. Part I.

8. February 15: Electoral laws, strategic Voting and strategic candidate entry

- a. Cox, Gary. *Making Votes Count*. Parts II and III.

9. February 20: Duverger’s Law, what does Cox conclude?

- a. Cox, Gary. *Making Votes Count*. Part IV and Chapter 15

10. February 22: Empirical Exercise: Duverger’s Law, what do we conclude?

- a. Rein Taagpera and Matthew Shugart. *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems*. Chs. 6-8 and 11.
- b. Produce updated estimates for the ENP (Effective Number of Parties) for at least five countries, using Chapter 8 (especially Table 8.1) of Rein Taagpera and Matthew Shugart. *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems*. Be prepared to present and discuss these results in class.
- c. **Second memorandum:** Write a 3-5 page memo presenting and analyzing your results. You may work in groups of two on this project. Memo due in class.

11. February 27, March 1: Election laws and election reform in the US?

- a. Donovan, Todd and Shaun Bowler. *Reforming the Republic: Democratic Institutions for the New America*. Chs. 1-6, 9-10.
- b. (Optional: "Voting: What Is, What Could Be". Report of the CalTech/MIT Voting Technology Project. Available online here: <http://www.vote.caltech.edu/reports/2001report>)
- c. **Major essay assignment:** Research one reform proposal (listed below) and write a 7 page analytical essay detailing the advantages and disadvantages of it. This essay should include explicit consideration of previous readings and analyses that you have conducted. Due March 8th.
 - i. "Building Confidence in U.S. Elections: A Report of the Commission on Federal Election Reform." Available online here: <http://www.american.edu/ia/cfer/>
 - ii. Instant Run Off Voting: <http://www.fairvote.org/?page=22>
 - iii. The National Popular Vote: <http://www.fairvote.org/?page=773>
 - iv. Non-partisan legislative redistricting: <http://www.fairvote.org/?page=1428>
 - v. Reed's Single Transferable Vote system, described at wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single_Transferable_Vote).

12. March 6: The "Michigan Model" of Voter Choice

- a. Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes. *The American Voter*. Chapter 2 "Theoretical Orientation."
- b. Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes. *Elections and the Political Order*. Chs. 2-4.

13. March 8: Updates on the Michigan Model

- a. Kelly, Stanley and Thad W. Mirer. 1974. "The Simple Act of Voting." *American Political Science Review*. 68(June): 572-91.
- b. Dalton, Russell and Martin Wattenberg. "The Not So Simple Act of Voting." Chapter 8 In Ada Finifter (ed), *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*.
- c. Lau, Richard and David P. Redlawsk. 1997. "Voting Correctly." *American Political Science Review*. 91(September): 585-98.
- d. **Major Essay 1 Due Today**

14. March 20: Partisan Identification

- a. Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde. Ch. 8.
- b. Wattenberg, Martin. 1991. *The Rise of Candidate Centered Politics*. Chs. 1-3.
- c. Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. Chs. 1-2 and 8.
- d. Erikson, Robert, Michael MacKuen, and James Stimson. 2002. *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge Univ. Press. Chs. 4-5.

15. March 22: Laboratory exercise, party ID and voter choice since 1972

- a. Using SDA, estimate the proportion of strong, weak, and “leaners” who voted for the other party’s presidential candidate since 1972.
- b. **Third memorandum.** Analyze the frequency of partisans who voted for their party’s nominee for President in 2004 and for either the House or the Senate in 2006. Comment on these results in a 3-5 page analytical memo, due Tuesday.

16. March 27: Presidential personality assessment

- a. Bryce, James. *The American Commonwealth*. “Why great men are not elected president.” Chapter 8 of volume 1, available online: <http://oll.libertyfund.org/ToC/0004.php>
- b. Kinder, Donald R. 1986. “Presidential Character Revisited.” Ch. 10 in Lau and Sears (ed), *Political Cognition*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- c. Funk, Carolyn. 1999. “Bringing the Candidate into Models of Candidate Evaluation.” *Journal of Politics* 6(August): 700-20.
- d. Goren, Paul. 2002. “Character Weakness, Partisan Bias, and Presidential Evaluations.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46(July): 627-41.
- e. Aldrich, John and Paul Gronke. 2004. “Policy, Personality, and Presidential Performance.” Unpublished manuscript. Available at <http://www.reed.edu/~gronkep>
- f. **Third memo due today.**

17. March 29: Laboratory Exercise, Trait and Affect in the 2004 Election

- a. Using SDA, examine the trait and affect profiles of Bush and Kerry in the 2004 election.
- b. **Fourth memorandum.** Write a brief 3-5 page memo describing your results, due Tuesday, April 5th.

18. April 3rd Issue Voting

- a. Fiorina, Morris. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American Presidential Elections*. Chs. 1-3.
- b. Kinder, Donald, Gordon Adams, and Paul Gronke. 1989. “Economics and Politics in 1984.” *American Journal of Political Science* 33: 491-515.
- c. Nadeau, Richard and Michael S. Lewis Beck. 2001. “National Economic Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections.” *Journal of Politics*. 63(January): 159-81.

19. April 5th: No class today. Makeup movie night: *The War Room*, to be scheduled (attendance required). Begin work on second major essay.

- a. **Major Essay 2. Did voters vote “simply” in 2004?**
Replicate either Lau and Redlawsk or Kelly and Mirer model using 2004 data. Discuss results in class and turn in a 7 page analytical essay describing your results on **April 19th**.

20. April 10th Issues in the 2004 Presidential Contest

- a. Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde. Chs. 6-7.

21. April 12th Election Forecasting

- a. Campbell, James. 2000. "The Science of Presidential Forecasting." Ch. 10 in Campbell and Garand. *Before the Vote: Forecasting American National Elections*.
- b. Fair, Roy. 2002. *Forecasting Presidential Elections and other things*. Chs. 1-4.
- c. Lewis-Beck, Michael and Tom Rice. 1992. *Forecasting Elections*. Ch. 4: "House elections."

22. April 17th: No Class. Makeup class: visiting lecture on election reform to be announced (attendance required).

23. April 19th: Forecasting models in 2004

- a. Symposium on 2004 Forecasts in *PS: Political Science and Politics* October 2004. All articles are available here:
http://apsanet.org/content_13000.cfm
- b. **Fifth memorandum:** Produce your own forecast for the 2006 Midterm contests. Be ready to comment on the deviation (if any) between your forecasts and the final results in class.
Write a 3-5 page memo and turn in on April 24th.

24. April 24th Summing it up: the "reasoning" voter?

- a. Popkin, Samuel. *The Reasoning Voter*. Entire book.

25. April 26th Student Roundtable on the 2006 Election

- a. Student presentations on the 2004 and 2006 elections and the current state of politics in America.
- b. Continue discussion of Popkin.
- c. **Fifth memo due.**