

This is an upper-level course that focuses on the interaction between voters and political representatives across different types of electoral rules and contextual factors. Students will read both classic readings and recent works on a weekly topic as well as apply the concepts learned in class to the analysis of contemporary elections. The course is designed for students to (1) familiarize with some of the most relevant topics in the field of electoral studies and (2) develop their writing skills.

Format

We will meet once a week for the duration of the semester. There are assigned readings for each lecture, and students are expected to come to each class having read all the required material. We will complement the material learned from the readings with introductory lectures, group presentations, and a collective blog.

Course Requirements

Reading Quizzes: There will be a quiz at the beginning of every lecture based on the readings assigned to that day. Each quiz will consist of multiple choice questions and a short essay. Answers will be obvious for those who read the material. Quizzes missed due to absences or late arrival cannot be made up. When estimating your final grade, I will drop out your three lowest quizzes. The average of your ten best scores is worth 40% of your final grade.

Course Blog: The blog for the course is located at <http://electionsintheworld.tumblr.com>. The purpose of the blog is to learn and engage more actively analysis of recent elections in the world. Throughout the semester, students will submit two original posts and participate in the edition process of the posts submitted by their peers. Each op-ed should focus on a contemporary election and demonstrate student's ability to apply readings and topics from the course. Students will collaborate to the blog in two ways:

- **Op-eds:** An Op-ed is a brief essay in a newspaper or magazine that expresses the personal opinion of an independent author. Along this semester, you will write two Op-eds that will be posted in course blog. Each Op-ed should focus on an contingent issue for any of the national elections occurring during the semester. Posts should amount 750 words and are due every Sunday at midnight. The submission schedule and additional guidelines will be discussed the first day of class. Each op-ed is worth 15% of your final grade. Additional instructions are in the last page of the syllabus.
- **Peer-reviewing:** Students will provide feedback to two posts submitted by a peer. Reviews are double-blinded, which means that the author identity will be concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. Each revision is worth 5% and it will be evaluated on the concrete suggestions of the review to improve the author's work.

Group Presentation: Students will participate in a group presentation on an election held during the semester. Each group will consist of 3-4 students and the presentation should last about 10-15 minutes. The presentation is an opportunity to apply the materials taught in the course as well as to gather new ideas for discussing the event in course. At the end of presentations, you should have prepared some questions for discussions. We will organize the groups and the set the presentation schedule the first day of class. Your final grade of this assignment will combine your individual and collective performance, which will be evaluated by the instructor and the students attending your presentation. This activity is worth 10% of your final grade.

Participation: Class participation means that you are fully present during lectures, group presentations and other class activities. This entails offering relevant and informed insights, keeping com-

peting conversations with classmates to a minimum, and refraining from use of electronic devices.

Grading

Reading Exams	40%
Blog Collaborations	$2 \times 15\% + 2 \times 5\% = 40\%$
Presentation	10%
Participation	10%
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100%

Final letter grades will be calculated in an absolute scale as follows: A (94-100%), A- (90-93%), B+ (87-89%), B (84-86%), B- (80-83%), C+ (77-79%), C (74-76%), C- (70-73%), D+ (67-69%), D (64-66%), D- (60-63%), F (0-59%).

Electronic Devices

Out of respect for your fellow students, your professor, and the educational process the use of cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices is not allowed during class. Using laptops in class has detrimental effects for students,¹ and they distract others students around and myself. If texting, using social media, and attending to tasks other than the class material is more important than paying attention in class, please consider dropping off. That said, let me know if you feel that your learning will be hampered by not having access to your laptop for note-taking or other legitimate purposes, so we can find a solution.

Disabilities

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both me and the Center for Students with DisAbilities (CSD).² You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriate accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the "Let's Talk" program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus.³

Academic Integrity

There will be a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism in any of the required activities for this course, and any violation will be penalized in the terms cited by the UH's Academic Dishonesty Policy.⁴ Feel free to consult with me before submitting your blog posts if you have concerns about the correct way to reference the work of others.

Deadlines and extensions

The deadlines for all the written assignments will be on Sunday at midnight. The late submission period will be 48 hours after the Sunday deadline. Assignments submitted up to 24 hours late will receive a 10% point penalty. Assignments submitted up to 48 hours late will receive a 20% point penalty. After 48 hours, no assignments will be accepted.

Assignments submitted close to the deadline risk being marked as late, so please submit your work early. Corrupted files will not be graded, and you are responsible for checking your file thoroughly before uploading. Screenshots will not be accepted as proof.

¹<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/05/16/why-smart-kids-shouldnt-use-laptops-in-class/>

²<http://www.uh.edu/csd/>

³http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html

⁴<http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/policies/academ-reg/academic-honesty/>

Office Hours

Wednesday 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 429 Philip Guthrie Hoffman Hall. If you cannot make it at that time, please send me an e-mail to schedule a meeting outside those hours.

Teaching Assistant

Paul Johnson (pjohnson7@uh.edu). Office hours: Monday 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at 426 Philip Guthrie Hoffman Hall.

Readings

The reading load is not burdensome, but the material may prove challenging. On average, you will read two book chapters or journal articles per week. All reading assignments are available on Blackboard.

August 21. Logistics and Introduction of the Course

No reading assigned.

August 28. Representation**Read:**

Sen, A. (1999). Democracy as a universal value. *Journal of Democracy*, 10(3):3-17

Riker, W. H. (1982). *Liberalism Against Populism*. Waveland Press: 1-19

September 11. Electoral Institutions**Read:**

"Engines of Our Ingenuity (No. 2427): Arrow's Paradox" (Houston Public Radio) http://www.kuhf.org/programaudio/engines/eng2427_64k.m3u

Taagepera, R. and Shugart, M. S. (1989). *Seats and Votes*. Yale University Press, New Haven:19-37

Reynolds, A., Reilly, B., and Ellis, A. (2005). *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Stockholm: 39-42, 45-46, 50-51, 62-70, 78-81, 86-89, 100-103 (available for free at: <http://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/electoral-system-design-the-new-international-idea-handbook.pdf>)

September 18. The Consequences of Electoral Institutions**Read:**

Shepsle, K. A. (2010). *Analyzing Politics*. W.W. Norton & Co: 176-179

Blais, A. and Bodet, M. A. (2006). Does proportional representation foster closer congruence between citizens and policy makers? *Comparative Political Studies*, 39(10):1243-62

Rosen, J. (2013). The effects of political institutions on women's political representation: A comparative analysis of 168 countries from 1992 to 2010. *Political Research Quarterly*, 66(2):306-321

September 25. Electoral behavior

Read:

Dalton, R. J. (1996). *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Chatham House Publishers, Chatham, NJ: 220-238

Popkin, S. (1991). *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns*. University of Chicago Press: 1-21

Westen, D. (2007). *The Political Brain*. Public Affairs, New York: ix-xv

October 2. Turnout

Read:

Sides, J., Shaw, D., Grossmann, M., and Lipsitz, K. (2015). *Campaigns and Elections*. W.W. Norton & Co: 152-177

Kasara, K. and Suryanarayan, P. (2015). When do the rich vote less than the poor and why? Explaining turnout inequality across the world. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3):613–627

October 9. Economic Voting

Read:

Tufte, E. R. (1978). *Political control of the economy*. Princeton University Press: 105-136

Hellwig, T. (2010). Elections and the economy. In LeDuc, L., Niemi, R. G., and Norris, P., editors, *Comparing Democracies 3*. Sage Publications, Ltd: 184-202

October 16. Electoral Campaigns

Read:

Vavreck, L. (2009). *The Message Matters: The Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton University Press: 1-5, 26-40

Greenberg, S. B. (2009). *Dispatches from the War Room*. St. Martin's Press, New York: 348-392

October 23. Public Opinion

Read:

Bolger, G. (2014). The use of survey research in campaigns. In Thurber, J. A. and Nelson, C. J., editors, *Campaigns and Elections American Style*. Westview Press, Boulder: 47-76

Bischoping, K. and Schuman, H. (1992). Pens and Polls in Nicaragua: An Analysis of the 1990 Preelection Surveys. *American Journal of Political Science*, 36(2):331–350

October 30. Elections in Dictatorships

Read:

Gandhi, J. and Lust-Okar, E. (2009). Elections under authoritarianism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, (12):403–422

Levitsky, S. and Way, L. A. (2002). The rise of competitive authoritarianism. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2):51–65

November 6. Vote Buying

Read:

Stokes, S., Dunning, T., Nazareno, M., and Brusco, V. (2013). *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism*. Cambridge University Press, New York: 3-26

Wang, C.-S. and Kurzman, C. (2007). The logistics: How to buy votes. In Schaffer, F. C., editor, *Elections for Sale: The Causes and Consequences of Vote Buying*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder

November 13. Electoral Fraud

Read:

Schedler, A. (2002). The menu of manipulation. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2):36–50

Case, W. (2006). Manipulative skills: How do rulers control the electoral arena? In Schedler, A., editor, *Electoral Authoritarianism*. Lynne Rienner Publishers: 95-112

November 20. Perceptions of Integrity and Electoral Protests

Read:

Anderson, C. J., Blais, A., Bowler, S., Donovan, T., and Listhaug, O. (2005). *Losers' Consent: Elections and Democratic Legitimacy*. Oxford University Press: 1-9, 17-32

Tucker, J. (2007). Enough! Electoral fraud, collective action problems, and post-communist colored revolutions. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3):535–551

November 27. Fixing elections

Read:

Norris, P. (2014). *Why Electoral Integrity Matters*. Cambridge University Press: 191-205

Pastor, R. A. (1999). The role of electoral administration in democratic transitions: Implications for policy and research. *Democratization*, 6(4):1–27

“New methods and technology can make elections fairer” *The Economist*. Jul 20, 2017.