

American Elections and Voting

Required Texts:

- (1) William Flanigan and Nancy Zingale, Political Behavior of the American Electorate (paperback).
- (2) Gerald Pomper (ed.), The Election of 2000 (paperback).

Formal Course Requirements:

Course requirements will include a mid-term and a final examination. With regard to examinations, both material covered in the class lectures and required readings will be considered “fair game” for test questions. The mid-term and final examinations will be equally weighted and be of the “written” or “essay” variety.

Topic Outline:

- I. Democracy and Voting
(definitions of democracy; democratic procedures; relation of elections and voting to democracy)

Flanigan and Zingale, chapter 1
- II. Election Laws and Voting
(history of the suffrage; election laws relating to the pre-nomination, nomination, and general election stages of the electoral process)

Flanigan and Zingale, chapter 2
- III. Theories of Voting
(the sociological, psychological, rational, and ideological theories of voting)

Flanigan and Zingale, chapters 3, 4, 5
- IV. Causes of Voting
(party, issue, and candidate influences on the vote)

Flanigan and Zingale, chapters 6, 7, 8

- V. The Modern Political Period: 1932-1996
(coverage of the specific elections in the 1932-1996 period since the last party realignment)

***** Mid-Term Examination *****
(At instructor's discretion, the mid-term examination may only cover elections up to the Reagan era in the 1980s for topic V.)

- VI. The Elections of 2000 and 2002
(detailed coverage of the Bush presidential victory and congressional elections)

Pomper, read entire book

- VII. Issues and Ideology
(definitions of an issue voter and an ideological voter; ascertaining who are the issue and ideological voters in America)

- VIII. Voting Turnout in Contemporary America
(theories of voting and nonvoting; ascertaining who votes and who does not in contemporary America using survey polling information)

Flanigan and Zingale, chapter 2 (reread)

- IX. Voting Turnout in American History
(who voted and who did not in the 1788-1944 period; theories to explain changes in American voting turnout in the last 2 centuries)

- X. History of Voting
(causes of voting prior to 1932; different interpretations of American historical voting patterns)

***** Final Examination *****

