## Elections

Class Notes...
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## Terms to remember...

- registering to vote
- US citizen, states have varying rules for residency; for example, TX requires residence in a county, 18 on election day, not a convicted felon, not legally judged mentally incapacitated
- polling place-location of voting machines; ballot boxes; where votes are cast on primary or election days
- election judge-oversees polling place
- administers oaths to election officers and assistants
- all must wear identifying badges
- holds list of eligible voters
- arranges tables and voting booths
- post distance markers, sample ballots, notices
- markers (rules vary; in TX markers go 100 feet in all directions from the entrance to the polling place)
- voter ID
- poll watchers
- parties may appoint up to 2 poll watchers, must have a certificate of appointment; no cell phones or devices may be used; may not talk with anyone directly
- Secretary of State may appoint election inspectors; sometimes federal \& international observers
- ballot types
- office-block-focus on office rather than candidate or party affiliation
- party-column-focus on candidate and party affiliation over office
- ticket types
- straight-vote by pulling one lever, pressing one button for the party of choice
- split—vote based on individual choices of candidates; possible split of vote between parties' candidates
- primaries/caucuses
- open-all registered voters may vote in the party primary of their choice without being a member
- closed-only voters registered in advance with the party can vote-loyalty
- frontloading-a few states are allowed by parties to hold their primary or caucus very early in the election season; receiving more time and attention from media and candidates; more choice in the field of candidates
- early voting-an accommodation that allows voting before Election Day
- early voting
- begins weeks in advance; ends Friday before election day
- may vote by mail, but requests for ballots take awhile and must be in before the election day deadline
- election day
- polls open 7 am to 7 pm
- take ID with you
- conventions
- run by political parties but must abide by state rules and regulations on line at SOS.Texas.gov/elections
- precinct-usually night of primary election day; any registered voter who votes that day
- county/district
- state
- national—every 4 years; write/update platform; nominate candidates for general election
- super delegates
- party platform
- mid-term election-middle of presidential term
- general election
- voter turnout-measure of political engagement
- early voting-attempt to increase turnout
- running for office (method of participation)
- incumbent-current office holder
- competitive seat-challenger runs against incumbent
- open seat-incumbent not running for reelection
- PACs (political action committees) influence vote; organizations created to raise money for campaigns and spend money to influence policy
- Electoral College—ballots cast in December following November general presidential election; each state has electors equal to number of national legislators; a majority of EC votes is required to win the presidency; in a tie situation, the House elects
- winner-take-all-all electoral votes for a state are given to the candidate who wins the most votes overall
- district-electoral votes divided based on state rules for districts

Expanding Voting Rights for Elections...
$\Rightarrow$ 15th Amendment—all males citizens regardless of race unless Native American
$\Rightarrow$ 19th Amendment-all women citizens
$\Rightarrow$ 24th Amendment-no more poll taxes
$\Rightarrow$ 26th Amendment-all persons over age 18 and citizen
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## Review...

$\Rightarrow$ Voting-channel for people to get involved with the policy making process
$\Rightarrow$ Parties-teams seeking control of government through political office/elections
$\Rightarrow$ Participation by Citizens
$\Rightarrow$ initiative-ballot proposal by voters
$\Rightarrow$ referendum - vote by citizens on law proposed by state government
$\Rightarrow$ recall-removal of politician or government official from office

## New...

$\Rightarrow$ Motor-Voter Act (NVRA of 1993)—open opportunity for registration at time of change to driver's license; registration for government aid, etc.
$\Rightarrow$ Voter Disenfranchisement
$\Rightarrow$ literacy test-must pass exam on politics, history, etc.; illegal under Voting Rights Act
$\Rightarrow$ grandfather clause-no exam or tax if grandfather had previously voted
$\Rightarrow$ poll tax—pay a fee to vote; ended by 24th Amendment
$\Rightarrow$ Campaign Finance
$\Rightarrow$ Buckley v. Valeo (1976) limits on personal spending by candidates is protected free speech if not using federal money; FEC (regulatory agency) Federal Election Commission oversees spending

