

Voting/Elections/Campaigns

Lecture Notes

Early Voting Rights (1789-1870)

- 1789: Only white male property owners could vote
- States controlled voting requirements for federal elections
- 1810: Religious tests for voting eliminated
- 1870: 15th Amendment passed
 - Prohibited denial of voting rights based on race
 - However, barriers like literacy tests and poll taxes continued

Expanding Voting Rights (1920-1971)

- 1920: 19th Amendment - Women gain right to vote
- 1961: 23rd Amendment - DC residents get presidential vote
- 1964: 24th Amendment - Eliminated poll taxes
- 1965: Voting Rights Act ensures racial equality
- 1971: 26th Amendment - Voting age set at 18

Modern Voting Rights (1975-Present)

- 1975: Permanent ban on literacy requirements
- 1982: Voting Rights Act extended 25 years
- 1994: National Voter Registration Act
 - "Motor Voter Law"
 - Allows registration with driver's license renewal
- Current focus on accessibility and fairness

Voter Registration Process

- Requirements vary by state
- Basic requirements:
 - Name and address
 - Social Security number
 - Date of birth
 - Signature
- Registration deadlines: 1-30 days before election
- Multiple registration locations available
 - DMV offices
 - Libraries
 - County clerk offices

Voting Methods

- Lever Machines:
 - Pull lever to close curtain
 - Make selections
 - Can change votes before final submission
- Punch Card Ballots:
 - Insert card into machine
 - Use stylus to make selections
 - Cannot change after punching
 - Submit in envelope

Voting Demographics

- Gender patterns:
 - Women tend to favor Democratic candidates
- Age influences:
 - Voting patterns vary by generation
- Income factors:
 - Higher income often correlates with Republican voting
 - Lower income tends toward Democratic voting
- Regional differences exist across the country

Election Cycles

- Congressional Elections:
 - House: Every 2 years
 - Senate: Every 6 years
- Presidential Elections:
 - Every 4 years
- State/Local Elections:
 - Often align with federal elections
 - Some occur in "off years"

Campaign Finance

- Regulated by Federal Election Commission (FEC)
- Key restrictions:
 - Cash gifts over \$100 prohibited
 - \$1,000 limit per candidate
 - Corporate contributions restricted
- Political Action Committees (PACs):
 - Must have 50+ contributors
 - \$5,000 maximum per candidate

Modern Voting Influences

- Personal characteristics:
 - Age, gender, income
 - Education level
 - Religious/ethnic background
- External factors:
 - Family influences
 - Party identification
 - Current issues
 - Candidate presentation