

**** Masks are REQUIRED: No Bandanas, or poorly fit cloth masks. KN95/N95 ideal****
Make sure you always wear your mask when indoors.
No food or drink allowed in class.

PS4243/PS6243 Spring 2022
State Election Politics and Policy
Department of Political Science and Public Administration
College of Arts and Sciences

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Office Hours: TR 12:00-2:00pm via Teams

“STARKVILLE, Miss.—As classes resume Jan. 18 in the face of a major Covid-19 “Omicron” variant outbreak across the nation, region and state, Mississippi State University will require masks to be worn inside all university buildings.

Effective Monday, Jan. 10, the requirement applies to all students, faculty, staff, and visitors through Feb. 1 and will be reevaluated at that time after the university receives guidance from the Mississippi State Department of Health and federal public health officials.

The mask requirement extends to MSU classrooms, labs and studios during scheduled class times. MSU employees may require masks to be worn inside their personal offices – and employees may remove masks in their personal offices.

MSU’s COVID-19 task force recommended the university require all vaccinated and unvaccinated persons to wear a mask while indoors. Masks will continue to be required for everyone inside the Longest Student Health Center.” Link [here](#).

Attention: The syllabus content is subject to change, so make sure to keep track of the posted copy on Canvas.

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Course description:

In the United States, the conduct of elections constitutes a state-run affair, with the occasional oversight from Congress, the Courts, and the Department of Justice. States have traditionally regulated access to the voting process, which led to a rather diverse set of institutional and administrative practices with a non-uniform impact on voter participation, representation, and equality. Given this diversity across the states, one important question arises: Does **the voter experience** vary depending on where a voter resides, and if yes, why would some states make electoral participation more accessible than others?

In this class, students will be exposed to the fundamental challenge of state election policy, namely **access vs. integrity**, and learn about the various implications of this challenge in reforming elections, from regulating access to voter registration and turnout, drawing electoral districts, improving voting technology, to successfully counting votes. We will identify the key actors involved in adopting, implementing, and evaluating election reforms, and discuss the growing role of the courts in frequently restricting the states' regulation of the electoral process.

****By taking this class, you are responsible for reviewing the course syllabus, following all correspondence by your instructor via email and Canvas, and following all course and university policies.****

Learning Outcomes:

- By the end of this class, students will be able to evaluate states' efforts to adopt election policies by empirically assessing the impact of these reforms on citizen participation and representation, as well as the states' performance in elections.
- They will be able to get an understanding of the challenges in implementing election reforms at the local level, by interacting directly with local election officials, practitioners, and advocacy groups.
- Students will learn how to collect data and build a cross-national dataset of state election policies across the 50 states plus D.C.
- Students will learn how to critically evaluate empirical research and strengthen their academic writing by engaging in peer review.
- *Seniors and graduate students who are planning on applying to graduate school or any academic/policy position, or anyone who is interested in applying for a scholarship, will be able to use the materials produced in this class to strengthen their portfolios.*

Required Texts: No required texts for this class.

Supplementary Materials: Supplementary materials (book chapters, scholarly articles and reports, news articles) will be available on Canvas.

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Grade Weights

In-Class/Virtual Participation (40%):	Written Assignments (60%)
Class Participation 15%	State election laws essays 30%
Policy reform presentation 20%	Policy Reform Draft 10% and Policy Reform Brief 20%
Post-Legislative advocacy reflection video 5%	OR Substitute policy brief for: Voter Education Essay and Mississippi Guide to 2022 Elections 30%

*For Graduate students:

In-Class/Virtual Participation:	Written Assignments (65%)
Class Participation 15%	State election laws essays 30%
Policy reform presentation 20%	Election Administration Policy Survey Evaluation (2018-2020) (35%) see p.8
Virtual Presentations Organization (5%)	

Grade Policy:

For details on MSU grading policy, see [MSU Grades and Quality Points](#).

Incomplete Policy: An “I” grade indicates incomplete coursework and may be awarded to an undergraduate student only when a small portion of the student’s work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade.

S-U Policy: S-U contracts must be negotiated in writing within the first three days of the term.

Guidelines for written assignments

For the written assignments, you are expected to utilize the readings assigned, as well as take advantage of outside sources if needed. Wikipedia is not a reliable source, so refrain from using it. **In-text citations** (Author/s year, page number), **as well as list of references are required.** **Points will be deducted for format.**

Resources for Students

- Dr. Merivaki!
- [Google Scholar](#)
- MSU Library
 - [How-to-write a paper advice from MSU library.](#)
- The Writing Center
- [The National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\)](#)
- Ballotpedia
- <https://electionline.org/> @electionline
- Election Assistance Commission. Follow @EACgov

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Course Requirements

Engaged participation (15% of Final Grade): The success of this class is **heavily** dependent on your active engagement and contribution to class discussions. You are expected to attend class meetings and be prepared for an in-depth discussion of the assigned course materials. Note that your physical presence in the classroom (attendance) **does not** equal active participation. In other words, you do not receive participation points by merely showing up to class.

***Unless denoted as “recommended”/ “optional”, you are expected to cover ALL assigned materials.**

Perfect attendance guarantees you a 0 for participation. I will differentiate between A, B, and C grades based on how actively, respectfully and thoughtfully you contribute to class and group discussions/work.

- Excellent (90-100): Student arrives fully prepared with notes on readings, observations and questions. S/he demonstrates enthusiasm about the subject, listens carefully and respectfully and shares events/news articles that are relevant for the theme of the day. His/her understanding goes beyond the assigned texts in such a way that s/he challenges the commonly held assumptions, offers relevant, meaningful and different perspectives AND encourages his/her peers to think critically about the issues/scholars discussed in the class.
- Appropriate (80-89): Student raises questions about the readings and topics under discussion. His/her comments are relevant and reflect the understanding of the texts, previous remarks by other students and insights about the assigned material. S/he actively participates at appropriate times in a way to move conversation forward AND shows respect for his/her peers and their arguments rather than dominating the class discussion.
- Fair (70-79): Student sometimes arrives unprepared or with only superficial preparation. S/he usually offers comments, but sometimes they indicate lack of attention to previous remarks or draw unclear conclusions. Other times student is “tuned out” OR displays lack of interest in the material.
- Poor (69 and below): Student projects lack of interest and/or disrespect for others OR exhibits little evidence of having read or thought about assigned material. S/he seldom participates (or his/her remarks do not advance the conversation) AND/OR is generally not engaged.

Recommended news sources: **electionline.org; Mississippi Today, The Clarion-Ledger**, and any other news source that explicitly discusses election laws.

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State election laws essays (3x10%=30% of Final Grade): Throughout the course of the semester, you are to do three (3) essays on topics/state election laws of your choice (you will pick the topics on Week 2 from the schedule). The 1st topic will be completed by everyone.

*I will substitutions AS LONG AS you communicate with me in advance.

These essays have three components:

1. **Annotated bibliography:** The writing part of the assignment consists of an annotated bibliography of that week's reading materials. The annotated bibliography should consist of 4-6 academic sources (peer-review articles and think tank/government agency reports). This means that students may have to supplement with additional readings for some topics.
2. **Data collection:** For the topic/state election policy of your choice, you are first to collect information (data) on which states have the policy or not. We will start on the data collection in class so that students get an idea of the data collection process. Your most useful resource is the National Conference for State Legislatures' website, ncsl.org.
3. **Research Questions:** The last part of the writing assignment will include a brief analysis of the collected data (how many states have X policy vs. how many do not), and identify two (2) questions connecting the policy to an outcome relevant to the voter experience (voter turnout, confidence in elections, wait times at the polls, voter registration among young voters).

Essays will be between 800-1,500 words, in Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1.5 spaced. **You can use any citation format as long as you are consistent.**

*Make sure the submission is in a Word document, and the data collection file can be in excel (xls or csv). Canvas won't open text or any other formats.

Post-legislative Advocacy Reflection Essay/Video (5%):

In this course we will partner with [MS Votes](http://MSVotes.org), a state nonpartisan organization whose mission is to build civic engagement infrastructure in Mississippi, especially among young voters. MS Votes is organizing a virtual state legislative advocacy program, which is comprised of three parts:

Legislative Advocacy Dates

- Tuesday, February 1, 2022: Meet with partner (MS Votes)
- Thursday, February 10, 2022: Virtual legislative advocacy training
- Tuesday, March 1, 2020 (tentative): Meet with MS Senate Elections Committee member/s

Due to COVID-19, and the fact the MS legislature has convened, the sessions will be virtual, and dates might change. The goal is to have the sessions take place during class OR watch the recorded sessions at a time that works for everyone in this class. The reflection essay/video is to be submitted along with the final project as a separate submission and offers an opportunity for you to reflect on what you learned from the policy reform brief assignment, as well as by

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attending/reviewing the advocacy sessions. I will provide more details as the semester progresses.

Election policy reform brief; Draft (10%) and Final Submission (20%): The purpose of the election policy reform brief is to produce an evidence-based document to advocate that a state of your choice reforms an existing election process – say, switching from excuse absentee to no-excuse absentee, OR adopts a new reform – say adopting Online Voter Registration.

In the context of the class, your brief must utilize existing research assessing/evaluating the impact of adopting or amending an election reform on the voting experience, broadly defined. You can discuss, for example, how the status quo – a policy currently in place in the state of your choice – disproportionately affects certain voters, using empirical evidence. It is not sufficient to say that reforming a process “will increase turnout.” You will have to clearly outline *how* a policy affects the voter experience. Very importantly, you are to address both the issue of access – how the reform will expand access – as well as election integrity – how it can impact the security of elections. For both issues, you have to reference empirical research to support your argument.

If you are reading this and want some extra credit, email me a selfie with your pet! You do not have a pet? Email me a selfie in your favorite reading spot!

The first step in this assignment is to submit a **draft**, which will include an outline of your brief. You are to use each bullet point as a header in your draft:

- **The Pitch: What is the election reform policy you propose for state X?**
 - Define the policy and connect it to a specific outcome (voter turnout, voter registration, absentee voting, youth voter participation, etc).
- **Myths and Misconceptions about the policy reform**
 - What are the most prevalent concerns that have been addressed with evidence – hence they are myths or misconceptions – about this policy reform?
 - Address at least one myth/misconception that has to do with **voter access** and one for **election integrity**.
- **The facts about the policy you advocate for.**
 - What are the patterns across the state with respect to voter participation (the outcome you cite above) and the availability/absence of this policy reform?
 - For the **draft**, you are to describe in the text how many states have/do not have this policy, which source you will use/have used to collect the data, which outcome you will focus on, and which source you use for the data.
 - This will include a Table/Figure based on data you will collect, most likely through your writing assignments.
 - Evidence from research on adoption/usage/impact of reform in other states
 - For the **draft**, you are to include **an annotated bibliography** of at least 6 peer-review and at least 2 non-peer review sources (Pew Trusts, government agency reports, Democracy Fund, Bipartisan Policy Center, ncsl.org, Carter Center, etc).

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The **final** policy brief will be a revised version of the draft, with two added sections:

- **The Pitch: What is the election reform policy you propose for state X? Revised section**
 - Define the policy (or describe how it works) and connect it to a specific outcome (voter turnout, voter registration, absentee voting, youth voter participation, etc).
- **Myths and Misconceptions about the policy reform. Revised section**
 - What are the most prevalent concerns that have been addressed with evidence –hence they are myths or misconceptions – about this policy reform?
 - Address at least one myth/misconception that has to do with **voter access** and one for **election integrity**.
- **The facts about the policy you advocate for. Revised section**
 - What are the patterns across the state with respect to voter participation (the outcome you cite above) and the availability/absence of this policy reform?
 - For the final brief, this section will include a Table/Figure based on data you will collect, most likely through your writing assignments.
 - Evidence from research on adoption/usage/impact of reform in other states
 - For the **final**, you are to turn this section into bullet points, where you highlight the key findings from the literature you used in your annotated biblio.
- **Policy Recommendations**
 - What are some best practices with respect to the adoption and implementation of this reform? It is not enough to say that “state X has to adopt this policy.”
- **Opportunities and Challenges**
 - Why would it be prudent to adopt this reform now, or in the immediate future?
 - Why would it be challenging to adopt this reform now, or in the immediate future?

**We will devote a week in class to discuss research ideas and how to put together the draft components. By that time, you will ideally have written at least 3 written assignments and will have a good idea of the literature/data collection on state election policy to think about a research topic.*

Election reform briefs should be between **1,500-2,500 words** in Times-New Roman, 12-point font, 1.5-spaced, with page numbers and word limit. **You can use any citation format as long as you are consistent.**

Election Reform presentation: You will present an outline of your research proposal. The presentation, in Powerpoint/Google slides form, will be about 5-6 slides long. I will provide a template on Canvas.

*Graduate students will take the lead on coordinating with students and **organizing the virtual presentations** (5%) in terms of theme, order of presentation, and evaluating if presentations meet the standards to get full credit.

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Substitutions for Policy Brief:

Voter Education Essay (substitutes the draft 10%) and Guide to Mississippi Elections (substitutes the final 20%): This is an alternative assignment as a substitute to the policy brief. The assignment involves two parts:

a. Voter Education Essay: This essay aims to identify evidence from empirical research on what voter education is, and how states/local jurisdictions, as well as private organizations are educating voters during elections. The essay will be structured as follows:

- Introduction
- Review of the literature
- Challenges for educating voters
- Discussion

b. Guide to 2022 Mississippi Elections, where you include any information necessary for prospective and existing voters. More details will be included throughout the semester.

****Graduate students** will work with Dr. Merivaki on a collaborative project, which will utilize the **U.S. Assistance Commission’s Election Administration [Policy Survey Questionnaire and dataset](#)** from the 2018 and 2020 elections and will produce an report (35%). This report will evaluate

- a. the content of the items asked in 2018 and 2020 and the consistency of the questions asked,
- b. the content, both quantitative and qualitative, of the responses states offered in the surveys, by coding the datasets, and providing descriptive analysis.

The report will be produced by the graduate students as a team, under Dr. Merivaki’s supervision and guidance. This means that we will meet to divide tasks among the team members, and it also means that the team is responsible for coordinating to move the project along.

****Notice of Copyright****

Unless otherwise indicated, Materials in this course, including audio and visual lectures, are protected by copyright law. Materials are presented in an educational context for student’s personal use and study and should not be shared, distributed, or sold in print—or digitally—outside the course without permission.

As a student, your ability to post, link to, share or otherwise distribute course Materials is also governed by copyright law. Students may post or link to course Materials within the course environment when pertinent to course work. The university reserves the right to take corrective or disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct if Materials are used, posted, linked to or otherwise distributed outside the course environment or in an inappropriate manner.

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Class Schedule (45 Contact hours)

Part 1. Voting Rights History and the Structure of Elections in the U.S.

Week 1- January 18/20: Introduction to State Election Policy and Politics (3 contact hours)

T. Introduction to the course

R. The Structure of the U.S. Election Process and the National Mood on Election Integrity

- Hale and Brown (2020), “The Federal System and Politics: How the US Intergovernmental Architecture Shapes the Way we Vote.” (Chapter on Canvas).
- Democracy Fund Voter Study Group. June 2021. “[Crisis of Confidence: How Election 2020 was Different.](#)”
- Optional: FiveThirtyEight. 2022. “[Why Republicans Take Jan. 6 Less Seriously Than Other Americans.](#)”

Week 2- January 25-27: The Research on Voting Rights (3 contact hours)

T. Reviewing the Literature

- Burden, Barry C. et al. 2014. “[Election Laws, Mobilization, and Turnout: The Unanticipated Consequences of Election Reform,](#)” *American Journal of Political Science* 58(1): 95-109.
- Berinsky, Adam. 2005. “[The Perverse Consequences of Electoral Reform in the United States.](#)” *American Politics Research* 33(4): 471-491.
 - Dr. Hoover Green’s Guide on How to Read an Article (Canvas).
 - [Annotated Bibliography guide](#), Msstate libraries

F. The world of Election Sciences; How we collect data

- Li, Pomante and Scraufnagel (2018) “Cost of Voting in the American States,” *Election Law Journal* 17(3): 234-247 (Canvas).
 - Focus on the Cost of Voting Index Table and findings, skim the methodology section

Week 3 - February 1/3: One Person One Vote (3 contact hours)

T. Minority Representation and Political Equality

Hannah Williams, MS Votes Voting Rights Project Coordination guest

- Davidson (1992) “The Voting Rights Act: A Brief History,” pp. 7-34 (Chapter on Canvas).
- [Shelby County v. Holder](#) – Legal Information Institute

R. Redistricting

Dr. Brian Amos, Wichita State University

- Waldman (2016) *The Fight to Vote* Ch9, pp: 125-140 (Chapter on Canvas).
- Short reads on redistricting: ALL REQUIRED
 - “[Redistricting Criteria,](#)” ncs1.org
 - “[Redistricting Litigation Roundup,](#)” Brennan Center for Justice.
- “[What Redistricting Looks Like in Every State](#)” FiveThirtyEight.

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Week 4- February 8/10: Conducting Elections at the Federal and State Levels (3 contact hours)

T. Running Elections in the United States

- Hale, Montjoy and Brown (2015). "The Structure of Election Administration at State and Local Levels," pp. 27-51 (Chapter on Canvas).
- Alvarez, R. Michael, Thad E. Hall, and Morgan Llewellyn. (2008) "Who should run elections in the United States?." *Policy Studies Journal* 36.3 (2008): 325-346. (Canvas).
- Abcnews.com. 2021. "[10 new state laws shift power over elections to partisan entities.](#)"

R. State Innovation in Elections

- Hale, Montjoy and Brown (2015). "State Innovations in Election Administration" pp. 119-141 (Chapter on Canvas).
- Ballotpedia. 2020. "[Changes to election dates, procedures, and administration in response to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic, 2020.](#)"

Topic #1: State Chief Election Official (CEO) s/election method DUE Monday, February 14 EVERYONE

- Annotated Bibliography, both Hale, Montjoy and Brown (2015) Chapters; Alvarez et al. (2008) PLUS additional sources.
 - (*Good for biblio*): Election Reformers Network. 2021. "[Guardrails for the Guardians: Reducing Secretary of State Conflict of Interest and Building More Impartial U.S. Election Administration.](#)"
 - (*Good for biblio*): Kimball, David C., and Martha Kropf. "The Street-Level Bureaucrats of Elections: Selection Methods for Local Election Officials." *Review of Policy Research* 23.6 (2006): 1257-1268. (Canvas).
 - (*Good for biblio*) McBrayer, Markie, R. Lucas Williams, and Andrea Eckelman. "Local Officials as Partisan Operatives: The Effect of County Officials on Early Voting Administration." *Social Science Quarterly* 101.4 (2020): 1475-1488. (Canvas).
- Data Collection: State [Chief Election Official and Selection method](#) data collection (Source: [ncsl.org](#))

Part 2. Election Policy and Politics

Week 5- February 15/17: Who is eligible to vote? (3 contact hours)

T. Eligibility standards and Requirements

ALL BELOW ARE REQUIRED

- Voter ID
 - "[Variations in Voter Identification Laws](#)," ncs.org
 - Donovan, Todd, and Shaun Bowler. 2016. "[Strict voter ID laws make Republican Voters More Confident About Elections.](#)" USApp American Politics and Policy Blog, pp: 1-3.

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- Voter Registration
 - Merivaki, Thessalia. 2021. “Federal and State Responses to Voter Registration” Ch3 (Canvas).
- Felons and Non-Citizens
 - ACLU. “[Felony Disenfranchisement Laws \(Map\)](#).”
 - Npr.org. “[NYC Council Oks measure that would allow legal noncitizens to vote in local elections](#).”

R. Who is Left Out?

- Gasking, Keesha and Sundeep Iyer. 2012. “[The Challenge of Obtaining Voter Identification](#).” Brennan Center for Justice Report. Pp:1-22.
- Merivaki, Thessalia. (2020). Who Is Left Out? The Process of Validating Voter Registration Applications: Part of Special Symposium on Election Sciences. *American Politics Research*, 48(6), 682-686. (Canvas).

Topic #2: State voter eligibility standards and requirements **DUE Monday, February 21**

- Annotated Bibliography: Donovan and Bowler (2016); Merivaki (2021); Gasking et al. (2012); Merivaki (2020)
 - (*Good for biblio*): Mayer and DeCrescenzo (2017) “[Estimating the Effect of Voter ID on Nonvoters in Wisconsin in the 2016 Presidential Election](#),” Elections Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
 - (*Good for biblio*): Garnett, Holly Ann. 2019. “Evaluating Online Voter Registration: The Canadian Case,” *Election Law Journal* 18(1): 78-92 (Canvas).
 - (*Good for biblio*): Bennion and Nickerson. 2021. “Decreasing Hurdles and Increasing Registration Rates for College Students: An Online Voter Registration Systems Field Experiment.” *Political Behavior* (Canvas).
 - (*Good for biblio*): Merivaki and Smith (2019) “Challenges in Voter Registration,” pp. 59-82 (Canvas).
- Data Collection: State voter ID laws (ncsl.org) OR state voter registration laws([ncsl.org/Merivaki 2021](https://ncsl.org/Merivaki2021))

Week 6- February 22/24: Accessible and Convenient Voting (3 contact hours)

T. Voting From/At Home & Early in-Person

- [Early In-Person Voting, ncsl.org](https://ncsl.org/early-in-person-voting)
- [Voting by mail, ncsl.org](https://ncsl.org/voting-by-mail)
- High Turnout, Wide Margins Podcast. “[Election Mail with Tammy Patrick](#)”
- Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, and Seth J. Hill. 2013. "Identifying the effect of all-mail elections on turnout: Staggered reform in the evergreen state." *Political Science Research and Methods* 1.1: 91-116. (Canvas).

R. For who is voting convenient/accessible?

ALL SHORT READS

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- Piner et al. (2011) "The Experience of Accessible Voting: Results of a Survey among Legally Blind Users," pp. 1686-1690 (Canvas)
- Baretto et al. (2009) "Are All Precincts Created Equal? The Prevalence of Low-Quality Precincts in Low-Income Communities," *Political Research Quarterly* 62(3): 445-458 (Canvas).
- Hall (2003) "Public Participation in Election Management: The Case of Language Minority Voters," *American Review of Public Administration* 33(4): 407-422 (Canvas).

Topic #3: Accessible and Convenient Voting ... For all? DUE Monday, February 28

- Annotated bibliography: Gerber et al. (2013); Piner et al. (2011); Baretto et al. (2009); Hall (2003) PLUS more articles.
 - (Good for biblio): Herron, Michael C., and Daniel A. Smith. 2014. "Race, Party and the Consequences of Restricting Early Voting in Florida in the 2012 General Election," *Political Research Quarterly*: 646-665.
 - (Good for biblio): Gronke, Paul et al. 2007. "Early Voting and turnout," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40.4: 639-645.
- Data collection: State early in-person (EIP) availability AND absentee/mail laws (ncsl.org)

Week 7- March 1/3: Election Integrity and Security (3 contact hours)

T. Voting Technology

- Tran, Dari. 2019. "Voting Technology," in *Unrigging American Elections: Reform Past and Prologue* pp. 127-149. (Chapter on Canvas).
- Ansolabehere, S., & Stewart III, C. (2005). Residual votes attributable to technology. *The Journal of Politics*, 67(2), 365-389.
- Verified Voting.org: Voting Equipment

R. Counting Ballots and Auditing election results

- NCSL.org "Post-Election Audits"
- AP "Explainer: What is with all the election audits?"
- Verified Voting.org: "Audits vs. Recounts"
- Burden, Barry. 2021. Report on Cyber Ninjas Review of the 2020 Presidential and U.S. Senatorial Elections in Maricopa County, Arizona.

Topic #4: Election Integrity and Security DUE Monday, March 7

- Annotated Bibliography: Tran (2019); Stewart III (2014); Burden (2001) PLUS more.
 - (Good for biblio): Kimball and Kropf (2005) "Ballot Design and Unrecorded Votes on Paper-Based Ballots," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69(4): 508-529.
 - (Good for biblio): Stewart III et al. 2020. "Abstention, Protest and Residual Votes in the 2016 Election." *Social Science Quarterly* 101(2) (Canvas).
 - (Good for biblio): Cottrell, David, et al. 2021. "Auditing the 2020 General Election in Georgia: Residual Vote Rates and a Confusing Ballot Format." *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* (Canvas).

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- (Good for biblio): Stein, Robert M., et al. "Voting technology, election administration, and voter performance." *Election Law Journal* 7.2 (2008): 123-135. (Canvas).
- Data collection: Proportion of jurisdictions/state that use DREs without VVPAT for all voters (source" Verified Voting).

Week 8- March 8/10: The Stewards & Gatekeepers of Democracy (3 contact hours)

T. Local Election Officials (LEOs)

- Adona, Gronke, Manson and Cole. 2019. "[Stewards of Democracy: The Views of American Local Election Officials.](#)"
- CTCL Report. 2021. "[Election Officials Made Democracy Happen.](#)"

R. Poll Workers

MS Secretary of State Michael Watson visit

- Hall, Thad, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson (2009). "The Human Dimension of Elections: How Poll Workers Shape Public Confidence in Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 62.3: 507-522 (Canvas)
- Suttman-Lea (2020). "Poll Worker Decision-Making at the American Ballot Box." *American Politics Review* 48(6): 714-718 (Canvas).
- Lia Merivaki: "[Poll Workers on Election Day will be younger – and probably more diverse – due to COVID-19.](#)" The Conversation.

Topic #5: The Stewards & Gatekeepers of Democracy DUE Sunday, March 13

- Annotated bibliography: Adona, Gronke and Cole (2019); Hall et al. (2009); Suttman-Lea (2020) PLUS more
 - (Good for biblio): Atkeson, Lonna, et al. 2014. "Who Asks for Voter Identification? Explaining Poll-Worker Discretion," *The Journal of Politics* 76.4: 944-957 (Canvas)
 - (Good for biblio): King, Bridgett and Alicia Barnes. 2019. "Descriptive Representation and Election Administration: Poll Workers and Voter Confidence," *Election Law Journal* 18(1): 16-26 (Canvas).
 - (Good for biblio): Bryant, Lisa (2020). "Seeing is Believing: An Experiment on Absentee Ballots and Voter Confidence." *American Politics Review* 48(6): 700-704 (Canvas).
- Data Collection: Private funds across the states in 2020: add column Y/N - did state receive private funds in 2020? Add column: how many jurisdictions/state, from [CTCL spreadsheet](#)
 - List of all local jurisdictions/state: <https://www.fvap.gov/search-offices>

Week 9 March 14-18: Spring Break

Week 11- March 22/24: Conducting Research and Making Policy Recommendations (3 contact hours)

T. Identifying Policy Reforms

R. Designing Research

- Data collection, outcomes of interest
- Policy Brief guidelines

**** Masks are REQUIRED: No Bandanas, or poorly fit cloth masks. KN95/N95 ideal****
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No food or drink allowed in class.

Part 3. Election Policy Advocacy in Practice

Week 11- March 29/31: How to safeguard voter access at the polls (3 contact hours)

T. Election Transparency

- Bipartisan Policy Center. 2022. [Policy to Advance Good faith Election Observation](#).
- Lia Merivaki “[Election observers and Voter Intimidation](#)”

R. Election Disinformation

- The Carter Center. 2021. “[The Big Lie and Big Tech: Misinformation repeat Offenders and Social Media in the 2020 U.S. Election.](#)”

Week 12 - April 5/7: The Right to be informed (3 contact hours)

T. Voter Education

- Merivaki and Suttman-Lea. 2022. “Can Local Election Officials Expand the Pool of Registered Voters?” (Canvas)
- Merivaki and Suttman-Lea. 2021. “Educating Voters Online: Local Election Officials' use of Social Media During the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election.” (Canvas).

R. The Voter Education Toolbox & Voter Guides

- U.S. Election Assistance Commission, “[Voter’s Guide to Federal Elections.](#)”
- Center for Civic Design. “[Designing a voter guide to an election.](#)”
- Pew Charitable Trusts “[How your local election clerk is fighting global disinformation](#)”

Week 13- April 12/14: Writing Block (3 contact hours)

T. Writing Day – Meetings for Q&A

R. Writing Day – Meetings for Q&A

Draft 1 due/Draft Alt assignment DUE Monday, April 18

Week 14- April 19/21- Presenting your work (3 contact hours)

T. Writing Day – Meeting for Q&A

R. Virtual Presentations Day #1

Week 15- April 26/28: Presenting your work (3 contact hours)

T. Virtual Presentations Day #2

R. Course Wrap Up

Week 16- Final Assignments Due TBD

- **Policy Brief/Voter Guide**
- **Reflection Video**

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Mississippi State University Policies

****It is YOUR responsibility to go over these policies.****

Attendance policy for face-to-face instruction

This section is a face-to-face instructional class. Please refer to [Academic Operating Policy 12.09](#), regarding attendance expectations and accommodations.

Continuity of Instruction

In the event that face-to-face classes are suspended due to extenuating circumstances, such as weather, the instructor will continue instruction in a manner that best supports the course content and student engagement.

In this event, all instructors will notify students of the change via their university email address (the official vehicle for communication with students). At that time, they will provide details about how instruction and communication will continue, how academic integrity will be ensured, and what students may expect during the time that face-to-face classes are suspended. If a student becomes unable to continue class participation due to extenuating circumstances, (e.g., health and safety, loss of power, etc.) the student should contact their instructor and advisor for guidance.

For additional guidance, please refer to Academic Operating Policy 12.09.

Disability Resource Center

Mississippi State University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (01 Montgomery Hall) collaborates with students who have disabilities to arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability, please contact drc@saffairs.msstate.edu or 662-325-3335 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, conditions related to mental health, chronic health, attention, learning, autism, brain injury, vision, hearing, mobility, speech, or intellectual disabilities. In the case of short-term disabilities (e.g., broken arm), students and instructors can often work to minimize barriers. If additional assistance is needed, please contact the Disability Resource Center.

Student Honor Code

Mississippi State has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students.

The code is as follows: “As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.” Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor Code. Student will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers,

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and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor Code. For additional information, please visit the Honor Code Policy.

Title IX

MSU is committed to complying with Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination, including violence and harassment, based on sex. This means that MSU's educational programs and activities must be free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual violence and/or harassment by any member of the University community, you are encouraged to report the conduct to MSU's Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 325-8124 or by e-mail to titleix@msstate.edu. Additional resources are available at [Dean of Students Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Assault](#).

University Safety Statement

Mississippi State University values the safety of all campus community members. Students are encouraged to register for Maroon Alert texts and to download the Everbridge App. Visit the Personal Information section in Banner on your MyState portal to register. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort via Safe Walk, call University Police at 662-325-2121, or in case emergency, call 911. For more information regarding safety and to view available training including helpful videos, visit ready.msstate.edu.