Political Science 688  
Voter Behavior in the Context of Electoral Institutions  
Tuesday, 4-6, 3440 Mason Hall

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Course description:  
The course will discuss voter behavior in the context of electoral institutions. In particular, it will examine the incentives for voters set by electoral systems, regime types, and institutional factors in general, and analyze voter behavior in light of the institutional environments in which voters operate. The readings will include behavioral, rational, and psychological approaches. The majority of the studies we will read develop theoretical statements and test them using observational data, yet some of the studies rely on experiments, and others are purely theoretical. Most topics will be discussed in the empirical context of OECD countries.

Books and reading materials:  
The following books are on reserve and available for purchase at Ulrich, Michigan Union Bookstore, and Michigan Book and Supply:


The rest of the materials will be available on e-reserves, reserves, and the course web site unless mentioned otherwise.

Assignments:  
Attendance and participation: attendance, participation, and contribution to the discussions are an important part of the course requirements. You are expected to attend the session having done the reading and reflected upon them and to contribute to the discussion. Please let me know ahead of time if you have to miss a session.

Discussion leading: each student will be responsible for one topic. This includes distributing a few questions that will serve as a guide for reading the material, giving a short presentation in class (5-10 minutes) as an introduction to the discussion, and
participating in leading the discussion on that week. Questions should be distributed by Friday at 5.

**Research presentation:** in the last few weeks of the semester, students will present their research to the class and receive feedback on their projects.

**Research paper:** an original research paper. By November 7 at 5PM you will have to hand in one page of preliminary research about your topic and the form the paper will take. Papers are due on December 19 at 5PM.

**Reading list:**

* = recommended

**September 6**  
Introduction

**September 13**  
Economic Voting


**September 20**  
Issue Voting


**September 27 Strategic Voting**


**October 4 Electoral Cycles**


October 11  
Ticket Splitting


October 18  
Fall study break, no class.

October 25  
Second-Order Elections and Others


November 1  Leadership Effect


November 8  Information


November 15  Party Attachment


November 22  Turnout


November 29  From Parties to Voters


December 6  Elections and Democracy


December 13  Poster Session