

Political Science 17.267
Democracy in America
Fall 2013

Essay #2

In this paper, please examine a factor (e.g., malapportionment or unequal voter knowledge) in your home state or country that could lead to non-majoritarian policy outcomes.

Your paper should do the following:

- 1) Based on our class readings and discussions, provide a brief theoretical overview about *why* this factor could cause non-majoritarian political outcomes.
- 2) Critically evaluate the empirical evidence on whether this factor causes non-majoritarian political outcomes.
 - a. Provide a critical analysis of the evidence from our class readings and discussions. No outside research is required for this section.
 - b. Examine the effect of this factor in your home state (or country if you are not from the United States). For instance, in the case of malapportionment, did malapportionment lead to biased political outcomes in your state? This analysis should draw upon at least one information source outside of our class readings.
- 3) In your conclusion, discuss any larger lessons of your analysis for democratic governance.

In writing your essay, remember to:

- State your analysis clearly and succinctly. In the body of the essay, support your analysis with clear reasoning and persuasive evidence.
- For quotations and the citation of specific information, use embedded citations (Smith 2004) in the text, with a reference list at the end of the essay.
- Produce a final version that is in 12-point type and double spaced, has one-inch margins, and *does not exceed* four pages. If you wish, you may also include a table or figure on fifth page. All pages must be numbered.
- *Leave yourself enough time to write more than one draft.* Before doing a final round of edits, remember to look at the writing tips in the syllabus. You might want to share your paper with a friend who is not in this class to receive comments on clarity and persuasiveness.
- Submit a Word document. And turn your essay in before the deadline. As noted on the syllabus, I will deduct points from essays that are turned in late.

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