

**Political Science 17.267  
Democracy in America  
Fall 2013**

**Final paper Assignment**

*(Version: 11/4/13)*

In this paper, please examine the effect of one potential institutional reform that we discussed in the last unit of class on representation in your home state or country. The paper should be written in the form of a policy memo to leaders in your state advising them on whether this reform is good for representation.

- If the state already has the institution, provide an evaluation about whether it has achieved its goals, and whether it should be continued.
- If the state doesn't have the institution, make a recommendation about whether the state should implement it.

Your paper should do the following:

- 1) Provide a detailed discussion of the problem(s) that this institutional reform is trying to solve (e.g., incumbency advantage, financial inequalities, etc.). How does this institution attempt to solve these problems?
- 2) Based on the readings and discussions in class, provide an evaluation of how important these problems are for representation.
- 3) Evaluate the empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the institutional reform. Discuss at least one reading from class and two readings that are not on the class syllabus.
- 4) Based on your own original research, evaluate the actual (or potential) effects of this institution in your home state. This could be based on either quantitative or qualitative analysis.
- 5) Provide a brief summary of your main conclusions and recommendations.

In writing your essay, remember to:

- Produce a final version that is in 12-point type and double spaced, has one-inch margins, and *does not exceed 15 pages*. If you wish, you may also include up to two tables or figures on additional pages. All pages must be numbered.
- 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.
- *Leave yourself enough time to write more than one draft*. 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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