

Unit III

Texas Politics

- Overview of Political System
- Elements of a political system
 - Interest Groups
 - Media
 - Party System in Texas
 - Elections, Campaigns and Political Behavior

Political System:Defined

- “The institutions, machinery, and processes that enable the people to select the individuals and groups who will govern and indicate to those selected what policies and programs are desired.”

Functions of a Political System

- Articulate the demands of society
- Select the individuals who occupy positions of power
- Provide clues as to the policies that government should adopt

Environments which Influence a Political System

- Physical- geography and natural resources
- Legal- constitution and laws
- Social- ethnic/racial balance, political beliefs, religious beliefs, educational level
- Economic- wealth levels, economic activities, wealth distribution

Types of Democratic Systems

- Elitist-ruling oligarchy of interests
- Participatory-universal citizen participation
- Pluralistic-competition between interest groups creates public policy
(Pluralism with excessive interest group involvement which thwarts development of policy in public interest is known as Hyperpluralism)

Political Culture

- “System of shared values, beliefs, and habits of behavior in regard to government and politics.”

Elements of the Texas Political Culture

- Conservatism
 - General hostility to government activity
 - Stress on individualism
 - Belief in free market economy-(laissez-faire)
 - Emphasis on low taxes
- Pseudo laissez-faire economics
 - Support for business and wealthy
 - Belief in Social Darwinism

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Voters, Campaigns, and Elections

Texas Government

Suffrage and Voting

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Constitutional Provisions for Suffrage

- US Constitution
 - Race- 15th Amendment
 - Sex- 19th Amendment
 - Taxes- (especially poll tax) - 24th Amendment
 - Age- if >18 years- 26th Amendment
- Texas Constitution (bars voting by)
 - Mentally incompetent
 - Felons
 - Paupers

Legal Requirements in Texas for Voting

- US Citizenship
- Over 18 years of Age
- Residency in state and county for 30 days prior to voting

Registration Procedures

- Application-
 - In person
 - By mail
- Effective 31st day after application received
- Good until Dec 31 of odd numbered year
- Automatically renewed unless persons has moved or died

Conditions for an Ideal Democracy

- Election campaigns are contests by opposing candidates in elections in which
 - Candidates debate issues of public policy rather than in personal insults and negative campaigns
 - Voters vote on the basis of policy issues
 - Virtually universal participation

Elections in Texas

- Public Elections-
 - held by governmental body
 - to decide issues or elect public officials
- Types of public elections
 - Partisan- (1st Tues after 1st Monday in November of even year
 - Non-partisan- all other public elections in Texas

Partisan Elections

- Securing a ballot position
 - Nominees of legal political parties
 - Qualified independent candidates
 - Declared write-in candidates
- Conducting the election
 - County Clerk or Election Administrator
 - Texas Secretary of State supervises
 - Cost is paid by county

Non-partisan Elections

- Types of non-partisan elections
 - Special elections- called to fill interim vacancies or decide on issues
 - Called and paid for by the unit of government responsible
 - Generally conducted by this unit unless contracted to another unit of government
 - General (local) elections
 - held on one of the “uniform” election dates
 - 2nd Saturday in May/ 1st Tues after 1st Monday in odd year
 - plurality vs majority (majority requires runoff election)

Types of Elections

- At-large- all voters vote on all offices to be filled
 - By-place or position- if there are multiple positions for the same office, voters chose from among candidates running for designated places or positions.
- District elections- voters may vote only for candidates in the district where they live.

Ballot Listing

- Office column ballot- candidates listed by office sought. No indication of party affiliation noted on ballot.
- Party column ballot- candidates listed by party and by office sought

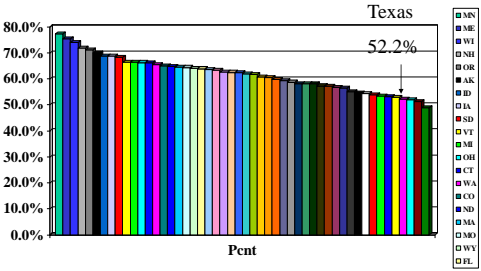
Plurality Vote
vs Majority Vote

- Plurality- candidates receiving the most votes wins. If there are more than two, a candidates may win without an absolute majority.
- Majority- candidate must receive more votes than all opponents combined. This may require a run-off election.

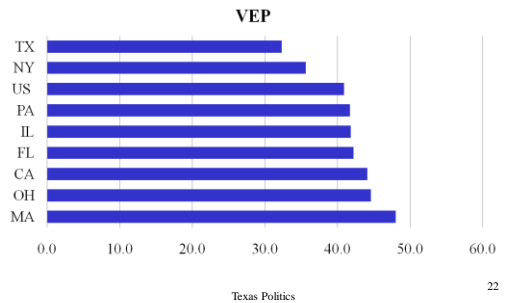
Party Primaries

- Held by the major parties primaries
 - 1st Tuesday March
 - Runoff on 2nd Tuesday in April
- Qualification of candidates
 - Filing fees
 - Petition
- Financed by
 - Filing fees
 - State of Texas

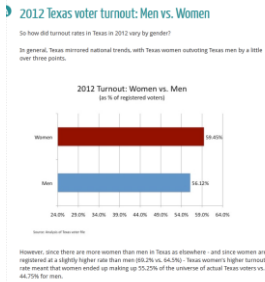
Voter Turnout in US-2008



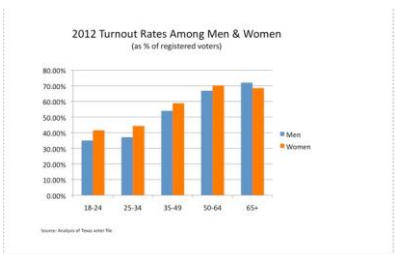
Voting Turnout Nov 2010



Gender Voting



Gender Gap by Age Brackets



Presidential Turnout
2012

- Romney (Rep) 4,569,843
- Obama (Dem) 3,308,124
- Johnson (Lib) 88,580
- Others 27,204
 - Totals 8,021,055

Voter Turnout Compared

STATE	TURNOUT	RANK '12 ('08)	STATE	TURNOUT	RANK '12 ('08)	STATE	TURNOUT	RANK '12 ('08)
Minnesota	75.1%	1 (1)	Missouri	63.1%	18 (7)	Rhode Island	58.6%	35 (31)
Wisconsin	73.2%	2 (2)	New Jersey	62.6%	19 (19)	Kansas	58.1%	36 (28)
Colorado	71.1%	3 (5)	Delaware	62.0%	20 (37)	Nevada	57.2%	37 (43)
New Hampshire	70.9%	4 (4)	Connecticut	61.5%	21 (14)	South Carolina	57.1%	38 (42)
Iowa	70.2%	5 (6)	North Dakota	61.1%	22 (23)	Utah	56.0%	39 (48)
Maine	69.2%	6 (3)	Louisiana	61.0%	23 (32)	Indiana	56.0%	40 (38)
Virginia	66.9%	7 (11)	Idaho	60.9%	24 (27)	California	55.9%	41 (33)
Maryland	66.8%	8 (12)	Vermont	60.9%	25 (18)	Kentucky	55.9%	42 (40)
Massachusetts	66.6%	9 (20)	Nebraska	60.8%	26 (30)	New Mexico	54.9%	43 (39)
Michigan	65.3%	10 (8)	Mississippi	60.3%	27 (35)	New York	53.6%	44 (41)
North Carolina	65.2%	11 (21)	South Dakota	60.1%	28 (25)	Arizona	53.3%	45 (46)
Ohio	65.2%	12 (16)	Pennsylvania	59.9%	29 (26)	Tennessee	52.6%	46 (44)
Washington	65.0%	13 (15)	Alabama	59.5%	30 (34)	Arkansas	51.0%	47 (49)
Oregon	64.3%	14 (9)	Illinois	59.3%	31 (29)	Texas	50.1%	48 (47)
Montana	63.6%	15 (17)	Wyoming	59.3%	32 (24)	Oklahoma	49.6%	49 (45)
Florida	64.0%	16 (13)	Alaska	59.2%	33 (10)	West Virginia	46.8%	50 (50)
DC	63.3%	17 (22)	Georgia	58.7%	34 (36)	Hawaii	44.5%	51 (51)

Source: U.S. Elections Project. The table ranks states by total ballots cast as a percent of eligible voters in the 2012 general elections (see methodology page 4). 2008 turnout rank is in parentheses.

General Election 2012

- Reg Voters 13,646,226
- VAP 18,710,830
 - % of VAP registered 74.65%
- Turnout 7,993,851
 - % of turnout to registered 58.58%
 - % of turnout to VAP 43.73%

Primary Turnout 2014
Republican

- Reg. Voters 13,601,324
- VAP 18,915,297
 - % of VAP registered 71.91%
- Turnout 1,358,07
 - % of turnout to registered 9.98%

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Primary Turnout 2014
Democratic Primary

- Registered Voters 13,601,3243
- Voting Age Population 18,915,297
 - % of VAP registered 71.91%
- Turnout 560,033
 - % of turnout to reg voters 4.12%
 - % of turnout to VAP 2.96%

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November 2014

- Registered Voters 14,025,441
- Voting Age Population 18,915,297
 - Percentage of VAP Reg 74.15%
- Turnout 4,727,208
 - % of turnout to registered 33.70%
 - % of turnout to VAP 24.99%

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Trends in Texas Politics

- Impact of ideologically oriented groups
- Impact of Political Action Committees
- Inclusion of new groups
 - Women
 - Hispanics
 - Afro-Americans
 - Religious groups
- Return to partisan equality in 2014-2020?

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Interest Groups
in the Political Process

Texas Government

Interest Groups

Organized collection of individuals
that are organized

- Are bound together by shared attitudes or concerns
- To make demands on political institutions in order to realize goals

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Analytical Approaches
to Interest Groups

- Level of involvement
- Distribution of membership
- Membership structure
- Organizational patterns

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Classification by Degree of
Involvement

- Primary- goals of group are completely political
- Secondary- main goals are not achieved by political means, but political goals are significant
- Incidental- generally non-political, but may become involved when necessary

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Distribution of Membership

- Local- membership confined to a very small geographical area
- Regional- membership spreads beyond local areas, but is not national
- National-members drawn from the entire nation

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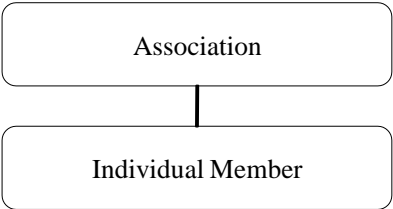
Types of Membership Structure

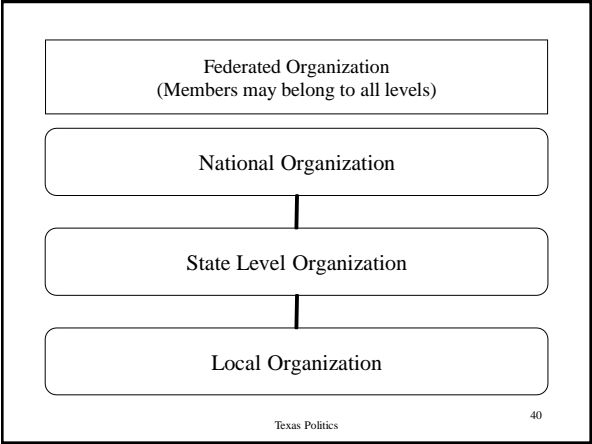
- Individual memberships- only persons may belong to group
- Organizations- membership extended to groups
- Hybrid- both persons and groups may belong

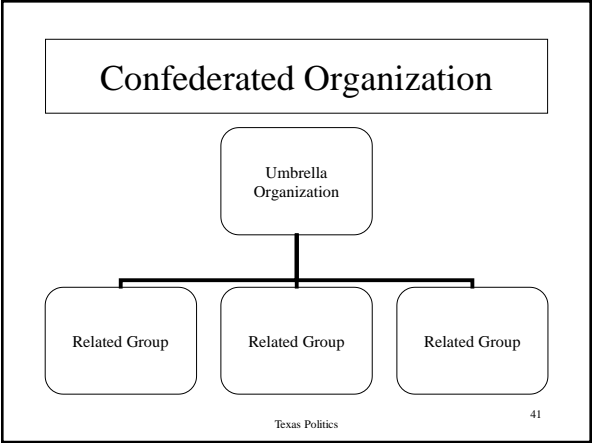
Organizational Patterns

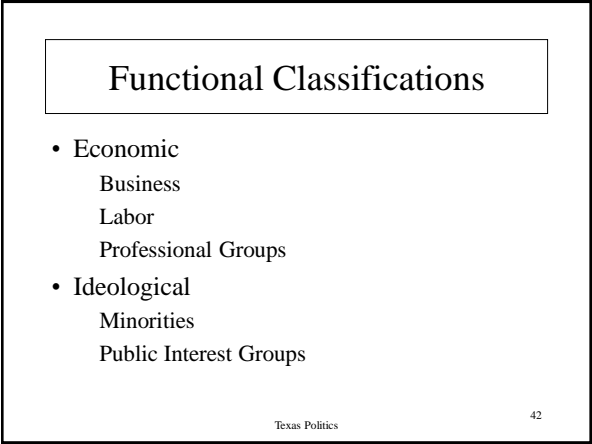
- Unitary- only one national organization exists. Members belong directly
- Federated- may have local, state, and national units
- Confederated- groups belong, may share goals and efforts

Unitary System









Factors Affecting Organizational Success

- Size of membership
- Cohesion (focus)
- Geographical distribution
- Economic resources
- Leadership
- Reputation
- Public support of goals

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Reasons to Join Groups

- Material benefits
- Social (solitary)
- Ideological/shared beliefs

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Tools of Influence for Interest Groups

- Lobbying
- Influencing public opinion
- Legal action
- Direct action
- **Electioneering***
- **Campaign contributions***
- **Prohibited for a 501(C)(3) filer*

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Lobby Registration
<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/>

- Levels of expenditure >\$500/quarter on covered expenses
- Compensation & Reimbursement >\$1000/quarter on covered expenses (exemption if less than 5% of compensated time is spent lobbying)

See Chapter 305, Government Code, VACS
<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/statutes/305.htm#003>

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Costs for Registration

- Fees paid to Texas Ethics Commission
- Non-profit organization- \$100/year
- All others- \$500/year

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Classification of Lobbyists

- Citizen lobbyists-represent the interests of a group or self
- Paid Lobbyists
 - representatives of business, trade, labor, or professional groups
 - hired guns (lobbying firms or lawyers)
 - governmental liaison representatives

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Texas Political Parties
and Elections

<http://www.txdemocrats.org/>



<http://www.texasgop.org>


<http://www.greenpartyus.org/>


<http://www.lp.org/>

Texas Government

Texas Political Parties

- Political party- “any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect governmental officeholders under a given label”

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Functions of Political Parties

- Intermediaries between electorate and government
- Recruitment of candidates
- Contest elections and mobilize voters
- Organize and manage government
- Accountability to voters
- Conflict resolution
- Agenda setting

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Basis of Party Conflict

- Ideology- a system of beliefs and values about the nature of society, the relationship between government and the economy, moral values, and the conduct of government
 - a) Conservatism
 - b) Liberalism

Basis of Party Conflict

- Interests- something of value or some personal characteristic that people share that is affected by government activity
 - a) economic interests
 - b) personal interests- race, ethnic, religion

Eras of Party History in Texas

- One party period, 1876-1952
- Modified one party, 1952-1978
- Two party era, 1978-present

Classification of Parties

- Major political parties- received at least 20% of vote for Governor in last general election. MUST use direct primary to nominate.
- Minor parties- received less than 20% of the vote for Governor in last general election May use any legal method to nominate candidates. Usually conventions.

Legal Requirements for Parties

- Maintain required machinery
- Nominate by methods required by law and follow laws on internal procedure
- Make all report required by law
 - financial
 - officers
 - procedures

Required Structure for Parties

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committees<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Executive Cmt<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 31 Committeemen• 31 Committeewomen• Chair/Vice-Chair• Others• County Executive Cmt<ul style="list-style-type: none">• County Chair• Precinct Cmt Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conventions<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Convention
(Date in June, Even Year)• County Convention
(2nd Sat after primary in March)• Precinct Convention
(Night of primary, 2nd Tues in March) |
|--|---|

The Texas Media

Austin American-Statesman

statesman.com

DallasNews.com

The Dallas Morning News

San Antonio Express-News

ksat.com

Houston's leading information source

HoustonChronicle.com

El Paso

Laredo Morning Times

We're your Hometown newspaper and more

For a list of Texas Media

http://dir.yahoo.com/Regional/u_s_states/texas/

Texas Government

Newsgathering Sources

- Capitol News Corps- full-time -approximately 60 full-time staffers
 - Associated Press
 - Major dailies
 - Television bureaus
 - News radio stations

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Types of Mass Media in Texas

Newspapers

- Newspapers
 - Major dailies- *Houston Chronicle, Dallas Morning News, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Austin American Statesman, San Antonio Express-News, El Paso Times*
 - Other dailies- approximately 80
 - Weeklies- no really accurate count, number constantly changes

For detailed listings see

<http://www.texaspress.com/onlinepapers.html>

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Types of Mass Media in Texas

Magazines

- Newsmagazines (with political content)
 - *Texas Monthly*
 - *Texas Observer*
 - *Texas Tribune*

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Types of Mass Media in Texas

Electronic

- Radio Stations
 - News radio stations
 - Drive music (rock, country, oldies, black music, Hispanic)
 - National Public Radio
 - Local AM community stations
 - Religious stations- generally AM/low power

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Types of Mass Media in Texas

Electronic

- Television (approximately 20 separate markets)
 - Major markets- Houston, Dallas/Ft Worth, Austin-San Antonio, Rio Grande Valley, El Paso
 - Secondary markets- less than million- examples- Tyler/Longview, Bryan/College Station, Victoria, Corpus Christi, Beaumont-Port Arthur-Orange
 - Cable News- CNN, Cspan, MTV, BET, Hispanic Channels

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Roles of the Mass Media

- Agenda setting- selection of events, level of coverage
- Agenda building- shapes climate for political action
 - **proactive** - seeks to initiate change
 - **reactive**- reacts which issues are made public

Trends in Mass Media

- Concentration of ownership/ cross-ownership
 - **Hearst Corp-** *Houston Chronicle, SA Express-News, Beaumont Enterprise, Midland Reporter-Telegram, Plainview Daily Herald, Laredo Morning Times*
<http://www.hearstcorp.com/>
 - **A.H. Belo-** *Dallas Morning News, Arlington Daily News, Garland Daily News, Grand Prairie Daily News, Irving Daily News, Mid-Cities Daily News, Richardson Daily News, Metrocrest News, WFAA (Dallas), KHOU (Houston)*
<http://www.belo.com/compa.html>
 - **Clear Channel Corporation** 1200 radio stations, 100 TV stations
<http://www.clearchannel.com/>

Trends in Mass Media

- **Lin Broadcasting-KXAS-TV (Dallas-Ft Worth), KXAN-TV (Austin)**
- **Cox Enterprises-** *Austin American-Statesman, Longview News-Journal, Lufkin Daily News, Daily Sentinel (Nacogdoches), Waco Tribune-Herald*
- **Hart-Hanks Communications-** *Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Abilene Reporter-News, San Angelo Standard-Times, Harte-Hanks Community Papers, KENS (Houston)*
- **Capital Cities/ ABC- Ft Worth Star Telegram, KTRK-TV**

Major Newsgathering Concerns

- Pack journalism
- “flacks”- role of paid public relations agents for agencies and politicians
- Shield laws
- Media bias
- Open meetings/ open records

Major Media Organizations

- Freedom of Information Foundation- political arm which works on Open Meeting/Records
 - <http://www.foift.org/>
- Texas Media- lobby arm of media organization
- Texas Daily Newspaper Association*
- Texas Press Association*
- Society of Professional Journalists*
 - *501(C)(3) organization

Media and Campaigns

- Focus of coverage- horserace aspect/polls
- Coverage techniques
 - Sound bites
 - Press conferences
 - Psuedo-events
- Advertising techniques
 - Fluff/ feel good
 - Negative attack ads
