

# AP GOV

## NOMINATIONS, CAMPAIGNS & & VOTING BEHAVIOR REVIEWED!

Government in America (Pearson) Chapter 9

American Government:  
Institutions & Policies (Wilson) Chapter 10

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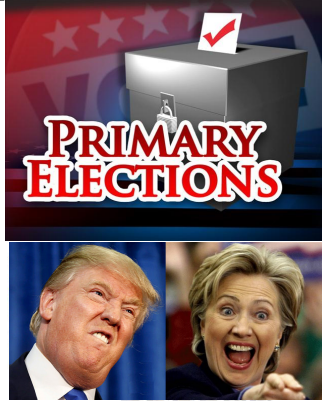
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### THE BASICS OF THE NOMINATION GAME

- **Nomination** is a official political party endorsement for office
- Nominees are *usually* chosen by a political party in the **primary election**
- The **general election** decides who will get to serve in office
- Elections in the U.S. (especially for President) last a very long time:
  - 2016 Presidential election- 597 days!
- Political parties have adapted to **candidate-centered campaigns**, and their role in nominating candidates has been weakened.




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### NOMINATING A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

- The **National Party Convention** is held every 4 years
  - Formally nominates P & VP
  - Adopts the party's platform
- Today the party nominee for president is known before the national convention
  - Based upon the **primary election** results
  - Primary election is a competition for **delegates**
- **Superdelegates** are individuals who are automatically delegates to the convention due to their being a member of Congress or the party's national committee




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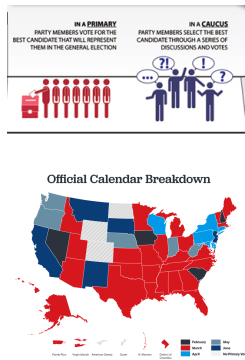
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## COMPETING FOR DELEGATES

- The **invisible primary** takes place out of the public eye and well before primary voting begins
- Most states hold **primary elections**, but a small number conduct **caucuses**
  - Caucus** is a meeting in which citizens debate and vote on a nominee
  - Iowa** is the first state to hold its caucus
    - Lots of money being spent and intense media attention
- New Hampshire** is the 1<sup>st</sup> to hold a presidential primary election
  - Presidential primary** is when citizens vote for their choice for candidate
  - Open vs. closed primary
- Early primaries/caucuses
  - Attract attention from supporters & donors
  - Does not guarantee a candidate will stay the frontrunner
- Proportional vs. winner take all primaries**




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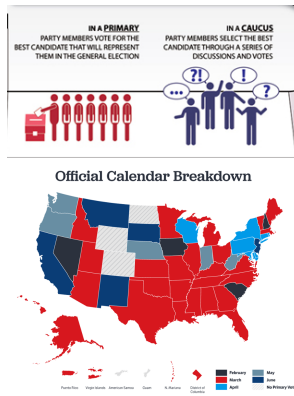
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## EVALUATING THE PRIMARY & CAUCUS SYSTEM

- The Good**
  - Made the nominee selection process much more democratic
- The bad:**
  - Disproportionate amount of attention spent on early primary and caucus states
  - Candidates often neglect their duties while campaigning
  - Lots of money spent on these early contests
  - Voter turnout is low and voters are unrepresentative of party members views
  - Too much power to the media




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## THE CONVENTION SEND-OFF

- Even before the national convention it is already known who will be the nominee
- The National Convention has basically become a infomercial for the party
  - Messaging
  - Get pumped
  - Party platform




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## THE CAMPAIGN GAME

- Today highly orchestrated, high-tech media campaigns are used by candidates
  - Cultivate a image to voters
- **TV** remains the primary way of reaching voters
- Internet / **Social media** increasingly important to raise money & gain support
- Targeted **direct mail** still plays a role
- Candidates can get attention:
  - Advertising
  - News coverage




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## ORGANIZING THE CAMPAIGN

- Effective campaigns often have:
  - Campaign manager
  - Media consultants
  - Fundraisers
  - Policy advisors & researchers
  - Pollsters
  - Press Secretary
  - Lawyers
  - Campaign support staff
  - Website / Social Media crew
  - Volunteers

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## CAMPAIGN FINANCE



- Ongoing debate over the role of money in campaigns
- **Federal Election Campaign Act** (1974) established the Federal Election Commission
  - Required candidates to disclose publicly who gave them money and how the money was used
  - Placed limits on individual and interest group contributions
  - Created a fund for public financing of elections
- **Soft money contributions** (\$ given to a party rather than a candidate) were originally NOT prohibited

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## CAMPAIGN FINANCE

- **McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Reform Act (2002)** prohibited soft money contributions
- **527 groups** emerge as a way to influence elections
  - Groups can spend unlimited money as long as they do so:
    - independently with no coordination with the campaign
    - do not explicitly endorse a candidate
- **501 (c) groups** do not have to publicly disclose donor names or the amount of donations
- **Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010)**
  - Money equals speech
  - Corporations are people
  - Prohibiting electioneering was a violation of speech rights
  - Rise of new interest groups known as **Super PACs**
- Many argue that campaigns have become too expensive
  - 2016 cost for Presidential and Congressional campaigns: 6.5 billion

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## IMPACT OF CAMPAIGNS

- Campaigns serve three main purposes:
  - **Activation**: inspire citizens to not only vote, but also to contribute time and money to a candidate
  - **Reinforcement**: reinforce a voters preference for a candidate
  - **Conversion**: changing voters minds
- Campaigns predominantly reinforce and activate
- **Conversions are rare**
  - Selection perception
  - Party identification
  - **Incumbent advantage phenomenon**




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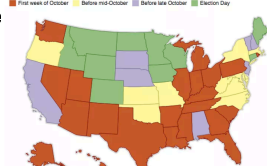
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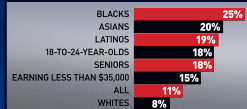
## VOTING

- Throughout American history there has been a **slow expansion of suffrage**
  - 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> Amendments
- Small percentage of the electorate choose to exercise their right to vote
- Variety of reasons many citizens choose not to vote
- Challenge: **voter registration** differs state by state
- **Voter ID laws** in some states require voters to show a government issued photo ID when voting

Voter registration deadlines



ADULTS WITHOUT VALID PHOTO ID




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### Different Models of Voting Behavior



- **Rational-choice voting**—Voting based on what is perceived to be in the citizen's individual interest
- **Retrospective voting**—Voting to decide whether the party or candidate in power should be re-elected based on the recent past
- **Prospective voting**—Voting based on predictions of how a party or candidate will perform in the future
- **Party-line voting**—Supporting a party by voting for candidates from one political party for all public offices across the ballot

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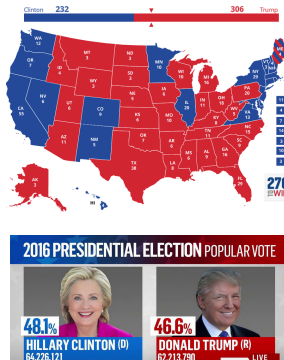
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### ELECTORAL COLLEGE

- Winner of the presidential election is chosen by the **electoral college**
  - NOT the popular vote
- **Winner-take-all allocation** of votes (except Maine & Nebraska))
  - Whoever gets the most votes gets all the state's electoral votes
  - Maine and Nebraska divide their electoral votes **proportionally**
- Campaigns focus on **battleground states**




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