

## The Election Process

- US= more elections
  - Elections = “American”
  - Too elections detrimental?
- Major purposes of elections
  - 3 major purposes:
- Framers & elections
  - Created a “Republic” - not a “Democracy”
- Right to vote
  - Originally
  - In MA
  - Property requirements gradually dropped
- Amendments to US Constitution
  - 15th Amendment
  - 19th Amendment

- 26th Amendment
  
- Issues
  
- Officials limited voting rights
  - Literacy tests
  
  - Poll taxes
  
  - Grandfather clause
  
- SCOTUS acts
  - *Williams v. Mississippi* (1898)
  
  - *Guinn v. United States* (1915)
  
- 1960s Congress acted
  - 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment
  
  - Voting Rights Act (1965)
  
- States resisted, but SCOTUS acts
  - *Katzenbach v. South Carolina* (1966)
  
  - *Katzenbach v. Morgan* (1966)

- *Harper v. Virginia Board of Ed* (1966)
  - Result = today
  
- Guiding Principle = 1 person, 1 vote
  - Developed by SCOTUS
  - Constitution requires census
  - Reapportionment
  - Fair apportionment = difficult
  - Divided into unequal electorates
  - Drawn by dominant political party
  - Gerrymandering
  - SCOTUS intervenes
    - *Baker v. Carr* (1962) & *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964)
    - Equal protection clause
  - Only exception

- Reapportionment = direct consequences for political power
- *Davis v. Bandemer* (1986)
- *Miller v. Johnson* (1995)
- Elections (Types)
  - 3 broad types:
  - Primary elections
    - Open primaries
    - Closed primaries
    - Non-partisan primaries
    - Caucus
  - General elections
    - Congress set date
    - Why?
  - Special elections
- Congressional elections

- Every 2 yrs
- Every 4 yrs
- “Mid-term” elections
- Most generally same
  - “All politics are local”
  - Power of incumbency
  - 1955-1992
- 1994 – Republican Revolution
- 2006 – Pendulum Swings
- Thought to be exception, not rule
- 2010 = Tea Party Revolution
- State and local elections
  - State election laws & procedures vary
    - Turnout = lower
    - States time elections to coincide

- At local level
- Statewide races resemble national elections
- POTUS elections have ripple effect
- Ballot questions
  - Initiatives
  - Referendum
  - Recall
- Electoral System in MA
  - Constitution only provides
    - Authorizes Gen Court set rest
  - Qualifications
    - Voter registration
    - Registrar of Voters
    - Board of Registrars of Voters

- Laws about registration
  - Easier to list when you *cannot* register
  - “Closed” periods
  - Extra session
  - NOTE:
  
- Requirement for Registration
  - To become voter
  - Special provisions
  - Registration = permanent
  - NOTE:
  
- Party Designation
  - Unenrolled voters
  - FYI: closed primaries
  
- Verification of voting list
  - Developed via town census

- “Visitation”
- To protect voters
- Separate rules for different elections
  - M.G.L. Title VIII, Chaps 50-57
  - State-Wide elections
  - Special elections
  - City Elections
  - Town Elections
- Party Organization
  - Political party defined:
  - To qualify
  - State, city/town & ward committees
  - Chosen @ *primaries*
  - To sit on committee
- MA = all three types



- Primaries
- Preliminary elections
- Non-partisan elections
- Caucus
  
- To Run = nomination
  - State-wide elections
  - On local level
  
- Methods of voting/counting
  
- Absentee Voting