**POLI 129: How to Steal an Election:**

*Room:* Solis 111  
*Times:* Tuesday and Thursday 11-1:50

*Instructor:* Paul Schuler  
*Email:* pschuler@ucsd.edu  
*Office hours:* Tuesday and Thursday 2-3 or by appointment at 326 SSB

**Course Overview:**

Most countries in the world – democratic or not – have elections. However, having elections does not mean a country is democratic. Autocrats have a bevy of tactics at their disposal to undermine the quality of elections to serve their ends. Democracies are also not immune to imperfect elections. Vote buying and clientelism can undermine the meaning of elections and consequently the quality of democracy.

This course introduces students to the politics of electoral fraud in the contemporary world. It covers topics such as the logic of elections in authoritarian states, vote buying, electoral violence, institutional design and rigging, and election monitoring.

**Assignments:**

- Presentation (see below) 20%
- Mid-term: Take home essay due July 22nd 20%
- Final: In-class essay (August 2, Saturday 11:30) 30%
- Reading Quizzes: Worst 2 scores dropped 20%
- Participation: 10%
Readings:

July 1st: Intro on manipulation and authoritarianism vs. democracy (Lecture 1)

The Economist: What’s Gone Wrong With Democracy?

Hyde, Susan and Nikolay Marinov. 2011. "Which Elections Can Be Lost." Political Analysis. (focus on the figures on the first 5 pages of the article)


July 3rd. Benefits of elections for dictators


Background

Introduction (1-42) Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. Voting for Autocracy

July 8th: Risks of Elections and Boycotts


July 10th: Institutional causes, socio-economic, and international causes


July 15th: Undermining Authoritarian Elections

Kai Ostwald “How to Win a Lost Election: Malapportionment and Malaysia’s 2013 General Election” manuscript.


July 17th: Violence

Paul Collier and Pedro C. Vicente “Votes and Violence: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Nigeria” manuscript, October 2010.


July 22nd: Vote Buying, Clientelism, and Poor Technology – Undermining Democratic Elections


Background

Andy Harris “Bring Out Your Dead!” How the Accumulation of Dead Voters Affects the Quality of Electoral Rolls in Kenya” manuscript 2013.

Cruz, Cesi. 2014. “Social Networks and the Targeting of the Vote Buying.”

July 24th: The Who and How of Monitoring


Eric Bjornlund Chapter 4 “From Non-Governmental to Governmental Organizations.”
Eric Bjornlund Chapter 5 “Jimmy Carter”, and Eric Bjornlund Chapter 11 “Domestic Monitoring”


Background:


July 29th: Consequences of Anti-Fraud Efforts


Danielle Jung, Karen Ferree, Robert Dowd, and Clark Gibson “Experimental Evidence on the Effects of Electoral Inking on Turnout in a Fragile Democracy” manuscript.


July 31st: US commitment to democracy? Presentations


Presentation: Using Lexis-Nexis, Newsbank, Google Scholar, each student will find articles in the most recent election in a regime coded as not fully free that holds elections. Using these two countries, presentations will be held in the class on July 31st on the most recent experience of the countries. In the July 15th lecture, the student will present a short 2-3 minute brief on the country and elections chosen along with the most recent results. In the final lecture on July 31st, the student will present a 5 to 10 minute Power Point presentation on the following themes, including:

1. Why those countries held those elections?
2. What the leaders hoped to gain?
3. What types of manipulation were used?
4. Was there any violence associated with the election?
5. What types of monitoring were in place?
6. Which groups attempted to monitor?
7. Did the regime face any sanctions due to its efforts?
8. What is the country’s relationship to the West and how has this impacted its election?

The regions with examples of some countries

1. Asia: Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines
3. Eastern Europe/Central Asia: Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia