POLI 129: How to Steal an Election

Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:00 am – 12:20 pm
Warren Lecture Hall 2113

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Office Hours: Monday 8:30-9:30 a.m.  Tuesdays 3:30-4:30

Overview:

Many former democracies are turning into “electoral dictatorships.” This course seeks to introduce 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, manipulating institutional design, vote rigging, and election monitoring.

The Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza once said to his electoral opponent who claimed to have defeated him at the polls: “You may have won the voting, but I won the counting.”

Course Requirements and Grading:

The course will have two exams (30% each), final (to be discussed), reading quizzes (30%), and in-class discussion (10%)

- Exams will be comprised mainly of short answers.
- Reading Quizzes occur very frequently. Read the assignment before the day on which they are to be discussed. You may drop two quizzes without reason – use this power judiciously. There are no make-up quizzes.
- Discussion is graded on your command of the reading material and your presentation of ideas.

Nota Bene: This course focuses heavily on in-class activities. If you prefer courses that require less attendance and allow you to “catch up” with the readings before an exam, do not take this course.
POLI 129 - Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments

**January 5**  
Introduction: What has happened to democracy around the world?  
Review of syllabus; other sundries.

**January 7**  
Elections = Democracy?  


**January 12**  
Why would an autocrat hold elections at all?  
Barbara Geddes “Why Parties and Elections in Authoritarian Regimes?” Department of Political Science UCLA, manuscript March 2006.


**January 14**  
What kinds of electoral fraud are committed?  


**January 19**  
Rigging by electoral institutions  
Kai Ostwald “How to Win a Lost Election: Malapportionment and Malaysia’s 2013 General Election” manuscript.


**January 21**  
Vote buying  

January 26  
Vote buying and turnout buying
Eric Kramon “Vote Buying and Turnout in Kenya’s 2002 Elections” manuscript.

January 28  
Using violence to manipulate elections I
Paul Collier and Pedro C. Vicente “Votes and Violence: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Nigeria” manuscript, October 2010.

February 2  
Using violence to manipulate elections II

February 4  
Exam 1

February 9  
Using fiscal and monetary policy to manipulate elections

February 11  
The view from “below”
Javier Auyero “From the client's point(s) of view": How poor people perceive and evaluate political clientelism” Theory and Society 28: 297-334, 1999.

February 16  
The importance of votes
Alberto Simpser “Cheating Big: On the Logic of Electoral Corruption in Developing Countries” manuscript April 27, 2008.
Andy Harris “Bring Out Your Dead!” How the Accumulation of Dead Voters Affects the Quality of Electoral Rolls in Kenya” manuscript 2013.
February 18  Counting fraud

February 23  Workers and journalists

February 25
Eric Bjornlund Chapter 4 “From Non-Governmental to Governmental Organizations.”

March 1
Eric Bjornlund Chapter 5 “Jimmy Carter”
Eric Bjornlund Chapter 11 “Domestic Monitoring”

March 3

March 8
Danielle Jung, Karen Ferree, Robert Dowd, and Clark Gibson “Experimental Evidence on the Effects of Electoral Inking on Turnout in a Fragile Democracy” manuscript.

March 10  Exam 2
Final exam on designated date.

Students are expected to follow UCSD’s Student Conduct Code:
https://students.ucsd.edu/student-life/_organizations/student-conduct/regulations/22.00.html