POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTIONS, FALL 2012

# CHOOSING CANDIDATES: PARTY RULES

Wayne chapter 4

Friday, October 12

**Chapter 4 terms**: why Democrats changed delegate selection rules after 1968, details of rules changes; why Democrats changed rules again from 1980 onward, details of new rules changes; differences between Republican and Democratic nomination rules; open primaries, blanket primaries, crossover voting; difference between a primary and a caucus; “window” for primary and caucus scheduling; threshold for receiving delegates; superdelegates, or PLEOs or add-ons, role in Democratic nomination process; how winner-take-all primaries affect the Republican nomination race; why the Supreme Court has allowed parties to establish their own rules; impact of rules changes on voter turnout; impact of rules changes on representativeness of convention delegates; impact of rules changes on strength of state party leaders

0. Election summaries: [1824 election](https://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/1824sum.pdf)

[1828 election](https://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/1828sum.pdf)

1. Why did the Democratic Party change its delegate selection processes and rules as a result of the 1968 Democratic nomination process and convention? What are the key objectives Democrats sought to achieve through their new rules? How and why did the Democrats change rules again in the time period after 1980? Ponder and discuss.

2. How have the Democratic rules changes affected the rules by which the Republican Party selects its delegates? In what important ways do Republican rules differ from Democratic rules? Are there clear winners and losers as a result of these rules changes? Ponder and discuss.

3. Party officials in Iowa and New Hampshire strongly objected to the changes in the Democratic Party caucus/primary schedule for 2008. Describe the arguments for and against a few small states, such as IA and NH, being allowed to hold their nomination contests before the rest of the states. Have IA and NH contributed to or detracted from a fair, democratic presidential nomination process with their insistence on maintaining their “first in line” status?

4.. One significant change to the 2012 selection rules is that Republicans now award delegates proportionately (rather than winner-take-all) starting in March (see chart on p. 120 for a summary). Is this a good idea, or put another way were there advantages to the winner-take-all system employed in the last few GOP nomination races?

5. Wayne states that often candidates seek to influence party rules, and the rules themselves change quite frequently. This is a direct result of certain rules significantly assisting some candidates and hindering others. Does the constant changing of rules corrupt the nomination process, and taint the notion to have any rules regulating party nomination? Or, does it reflect the fluidity and ever-changing environment of contemporary politics?

X. Pose a question of your own about these chapters!