POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTIONS, FALL 2012

**VOTER TURNOUT, A SECOND LOOK**

**(and some presidential debate discussion, too!)**

Hershey 8

Monday, October 8

A. Brief review of expectations for group election review project (first one due for this Wednesday, two more Friday and every class day for the following two weeks)

B. Presidential debate and post-debate trends: discussion!

**Hershey chapter 8 terms**: voter mobilization, GOTV; 19th Amendment; legal barriers to voting; Voting Rights Act (1965) and how it addressed discrimination against African Americans; majority-minority districts; Election Day Registration; why voter ID has become so widespread and controversial; reasons given why people do not vote; what parties do to mobilize voters; how voter turnout challenges the political parties

1. Hershey (and Wayne previously) emphasize that education is the key factor influencing a citizen’s likelihood to vote: more formally educated people are more likely to vote. How then can we explain the fact that voter turnout **declined** from the 1960s through the early 2000s despite the overall increase in formal education among Americans during that same time period?

2. Why have so many states recently begun to require some form of government-issued ID in order to vote (and in some cases to show proof of citizenship to register and/or vote)? Are these laws necessary? What are the pros and cons of requiring voters to show proof of who they are at the polls?

3. The box on pp. 166-7 lists reasons nonvoters gave for not voting in the 2008 elections. Assume this is a fairly typical set of responses given by nonvoters. What if anything can or should we do about these reasons, and who would “we” be (the government, political parties, candidates, individual citizens)?

4. Why has voter turnout been higher in 2004 and 2008, including the turnout of young voters?

X. Ask your own question here.