POLITICAL PARTIES & ELECTIONS, FALL 2012

# THE PRESIDENTIAL SELECTION PROCESS, A First (Historical) Look

[Wayne](http://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/cgsw.jpg) chapter 1

Monday, September 17

**Wayne chapter 1 terms**: Electoral College & why it was created; partisan congressional caucuses; why national nominating conventions arose to guide presidential selection; significance of 1912 election procedures; why primaries became so frequent after 1968; 12th Amendment; elections with disputed outcomes (1800, 1824, 1876, 2000) & the nature of each dispute; specific concerns raised in counting the 2000 Florida vote; *Bush v. Gore*, built-in biases of the Electoral College

1. Why did the Framers create the Electoral College as the means of presidential selection? Would any of the Framers’ alternative ideas have worked better than the Electoral College?

2. What biases are present in the Electoral College today?

3. Wayne discusses the numerous problems and potential problems with the presidential general election process, including:

* legitimacy questions – winning the most popular votes does not make one the winner
* distribution questions – winner take all process in most states distorts importance of close contests; larger states with close contests (and their voters) get more attention
* rules questions – the tiebreaker system (House of Representatives, top three electoral vote getters, one vote per state) is just plain weird

(Problems with the nomination process will be covered in later chapters)

Considering these concerns, should the president be selected using a modified Electoral College or some alternative process, and if so what should the modifications or the alternative process look like?

4. Having read about the Florida mess in 2000, what do you believe **should have been** the most important issue to consider in resolving the Florida election results? Who or what should have been responsible for addressing the issue you identify? Finally, was the Florida outcome in 2000 “fair” (define fair” as you address this)? [**Florida 2000 “final tally” graphic here**](http://homepages.gac.edu/~cgilbert/p215/fl2000.pdf)

5. Add your question here….