



Elections and Politics

Instructional Slides



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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Topic 1: Elections, Voting, and Representation



Framing Question:
How are U.S. elections
conducted and regulated?



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Several candidates vied for the Democratic Party and Republican Party nominations in 1844. This political cartoon, titled "The Great American Steeple Chase for 1844," shows some of the candidates, including Martin Van Buren riding a fox and James K. Polk riding a donkey.



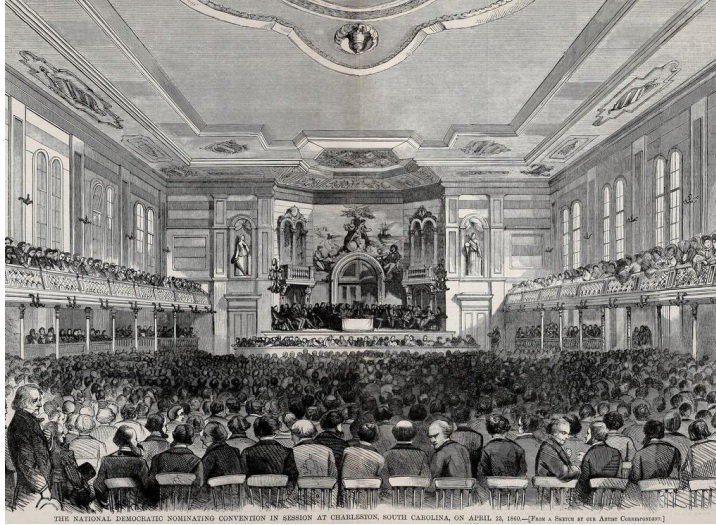
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On Election Day, voters may cast ballots for federal, state, and local offices, as well as weigh in on other issues. Polling places are set up to protect voters' privacy and security to ensure that their secret ballot remains a secret.



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In April 1860, the Democratic Party held its nominating convention in Charleston, South Carolina. Delegates were divided on the issue of slavery, leading many to leave the gathering before the party selected its candidate. Meanwhile, delegates to the Republican Party nominating convention, held in Chicago, Illinois, chose Abraham Lincoln as their nominee.



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Types of Primaries and Caucuses

Type	Description	Pros and Cons
Open	Voters may vote in any party's primary or caucus, regardless of which party they belong to; this allows voters to cast ballots across party lines.	Pros: Voters have the flexibility to vote for whoever they want to while maintaining their privacy. Independent voters may participate. Con: Voters from one party can influence the nominations of another party's candidate.
Closed	Voters must be registered party members to vote in that party's primary or caucus; they are limited to voting for candidates from their own political party.	Pro: A strong party organization is encouraged. Con: Independent voters may not participate.
Semi-closed	Political parties may decide if independent voters can participate in their primary or caucus before the election cycle begins.	Pros: Parties have the flexibility to make their own rules from one year to another. More voters can participate in the candidate selection process. Con: It can be unclear who is allowed to participate in primaries and caucuses and when.

Primaries and caucuses fall into three main categories, each with its own pros and cons for parties and voters.



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At the 1976 Democratic Party convention, nearly three-quarters of delegates were chosen during primary elections.

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Ratified in 1961, the Twenty-Third Amendment allocated electors in the Electoral College to Washington, D.C.



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Timeline of Events in the Electoral College

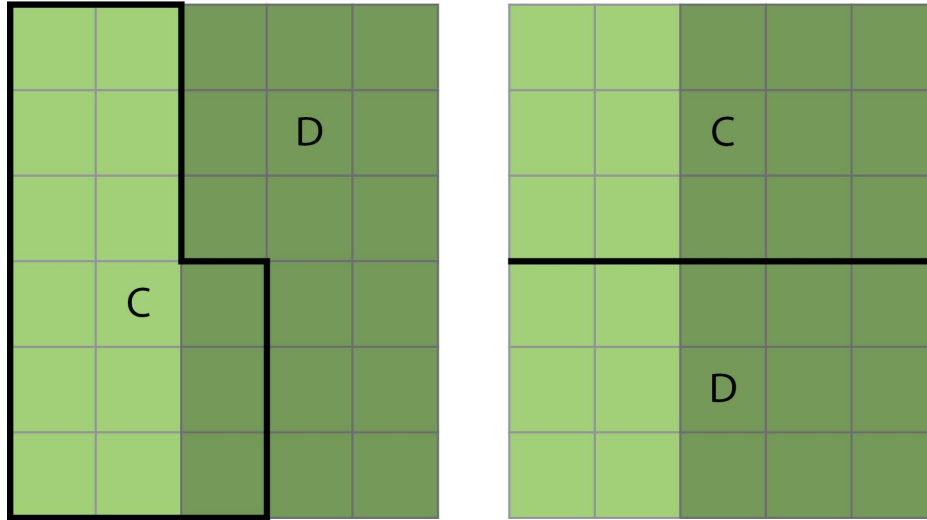
- **First Tuesday after the first Monday in November (Election Day):**
Voters cast ballots in the general election.
- **At least six days before the electors meet:**
States must send the certified results of the election to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).
- **Mid-December:**
Electors vote for the president and vice president in their states; certificates of vote are signed and sealed.
- **On or before the fourth Wednesday in December:**
Certificates of vote must arrive at the Senate and the NARA.
- **On or before January 3:**
NARA transfers certificates of vote to Congress; the new Congress starts.
- **January 6:**
A joint session of Congress counts the votes; the vice president announces the result.

The presidential election begins with the general election and ends with the counting of electoral votes in Congress on January 6.



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Before and After Redistricting



This graphic shows the effects of redistricting. In the first diagram, a majority of voters in District C are registered Democrats, while the majority of voters in District D are registered Republicans. After redistricting, the majority of voters in both districts are now Republicans.

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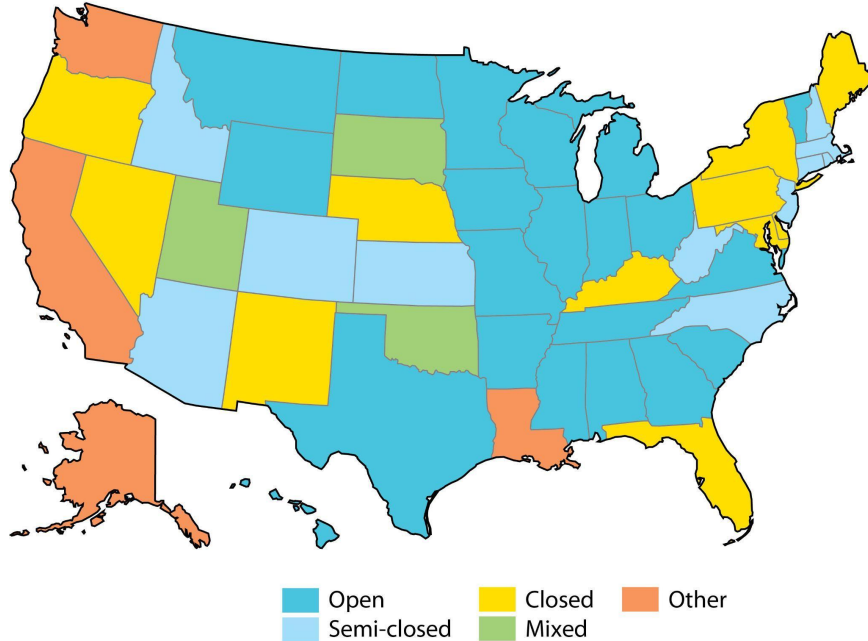


Louisiana requires a different number of signatures for qualifying petitions based on the office. For example, candidates running for governor must collect at least five thousand signatures, with a minimum of five hundred from each district.



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Congressional Primary Election Method by State



This map shows the system each state uses for congressional primaries. In mixed states, the Democratic Party uses semi-closed primaries, while the Republican Party uses closed primaries. Alaska, California, Washington, and Louisiana use their own unique forms of primaries.

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The Louisiana Public Service Commission (LPSC) has regulatory power over many of the state's public utilities. The commission's five elected members are charged with overseeing many issues that affect consumers in their district, including reviewing the rates that electricity providers charge their customers.



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Elected Officials in Louisiana

Elected State Office	Qualifications	Term of Office
Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least twenty-five years old• U.S. and Louisiana citizen for a minimum of five years• Eligible to vote in Louisiana	Four years (limit of two consecutive terms)
Lieutenant governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least twenty-five years old• U.S. and Louisiana citizen for a minimum of five years• Eligible to vote in Louisiana	Four years
Secretary of state		
Treasurer		
Commissioner of agriculture		
Commissioner of insurance		
Attorney general		
Board of Elementary and Secondary Education	Resident of related district	Four years (limit of three consecutive terms)
Louisiana Public Service Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least eighteen years old• Louisiana resident for a minimum of two years• Resident of related district for a minimum of one year• Eligible to vote in Louisiana	Six years (limit of three consecutive terms)

Elected State Office	Qualifications	Term of Office
State senator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least eighteen years old• Louisiana resident for a minimum of two years• Resident of related district for a minimum of one year	Four years (limit of three consecutive terms)
State representative		
State supreme court	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practiced law for a minimum of ten years• Resident of related district for a minimum of one year	Ten years
State courts of appeals		
District, family, juvenile, and parish courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practiced law for a minimum of eight years• Resident of related district for a minimum of one year	Six years
City courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practiced law for a minimum of five years• Resident of related area for a minimum of two years	Six years

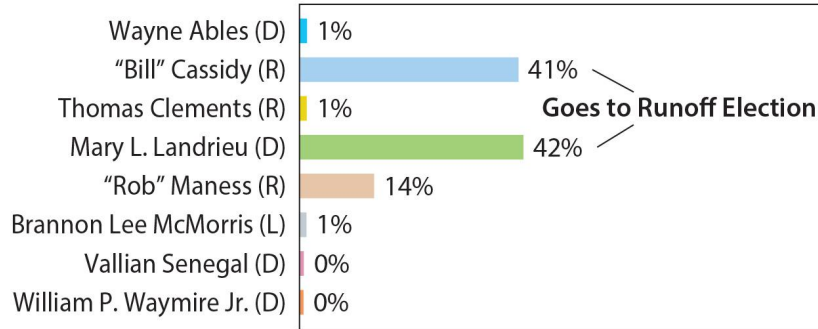
Many officials in Louisiana are elected to their positions. The qualifications for office vary, as do how long and how many times a person may hold office.



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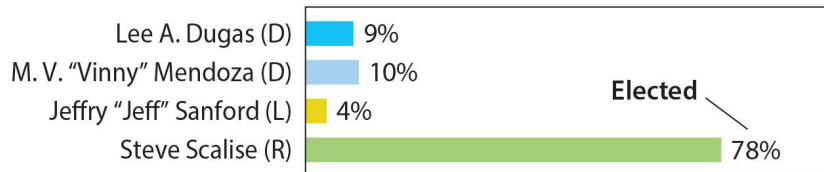
Louisiana November 2014 Election Results

U.S. Senate Race



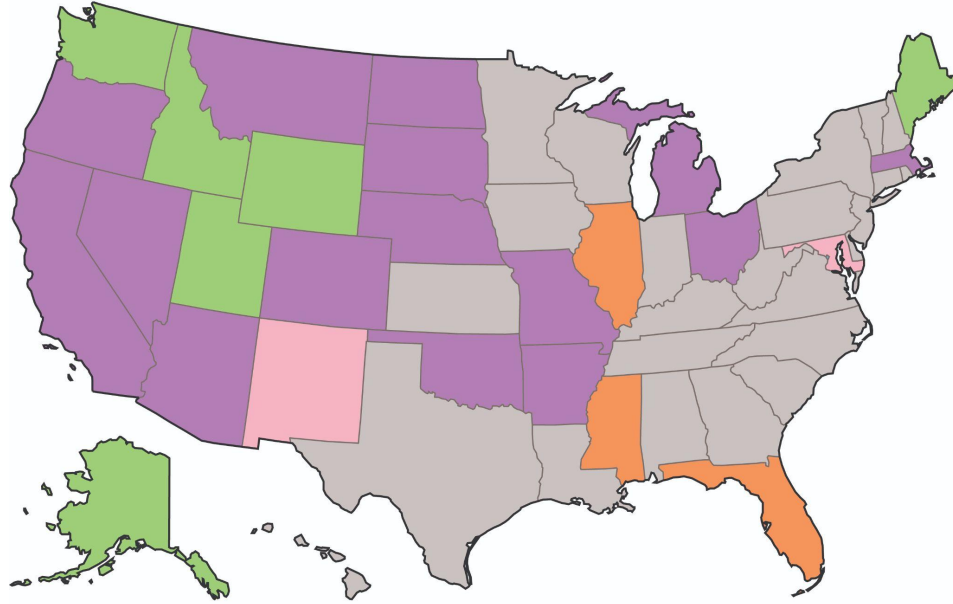
In 2014, the race for U.S. senator went to a runoff election in December, while Steve Scalise won the U.S. representative election for the First Congressional District during the primary.

U.S. House of Representatives— First Congressional District Race



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States with Ballot Measures



Twenty-six states allow for ballot measures, though what the ballot measures may be used for varies from state to state.

- None
- Statute and veto referendum
- Amendment
- Amendment, statute, and veto referendum
- Veto referendum



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Louisiana Requirements to Initiate a Recall

Population of Voting Area	Percentage of Eligible Voters Who Must Sign Recall Petition
1,000 people or less	40 percent
1,000 to 24,999 people	33 and 1/3 percent
25,000 to 99,999 people	25 percent
100,000 people or more	20 percent

In Louisiana, for a recall to appear on the ballot, the petition must be signed by a certain percentage of eligible voters in an area based on the population of the jurisdiction.



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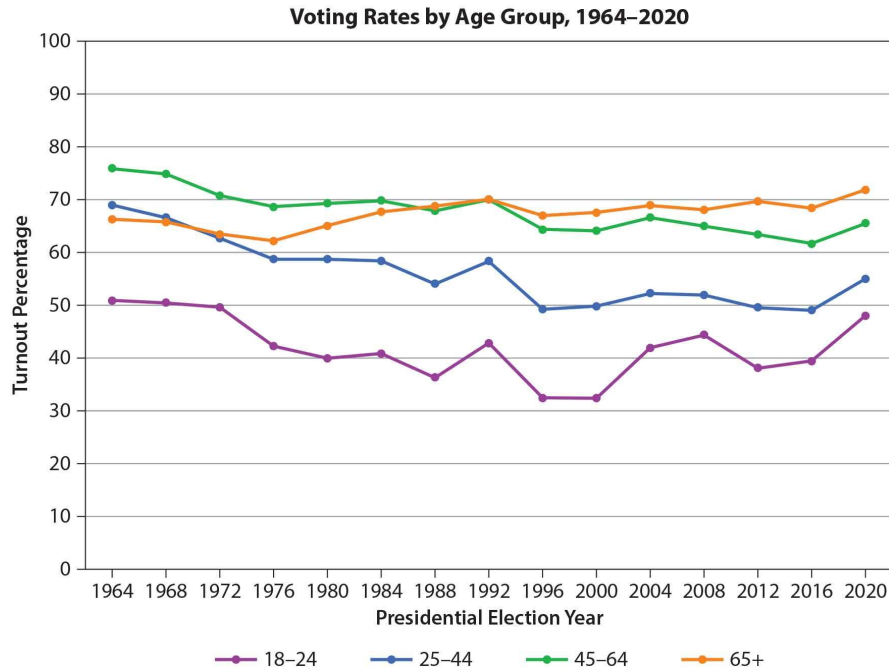
Voter Turnout in the 2020 Presidential Election by Population

	Population	Voter Turnout
Total U.S. population	331,449,281	N/A
Voting-age population	252,274,000	60.8 percent
Voting-eligible population	242,690,810	63.2 percent
Registered voters	168,308,000	94.2 percent

Voter turnout is calculated by dividing the total number of on-time ballots cast by a given population and multiplying by one hundred.



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This graph shows voter turnout by age group during presidential election years. Turnout was calculated against the total voting-age population (VAP) for each group.



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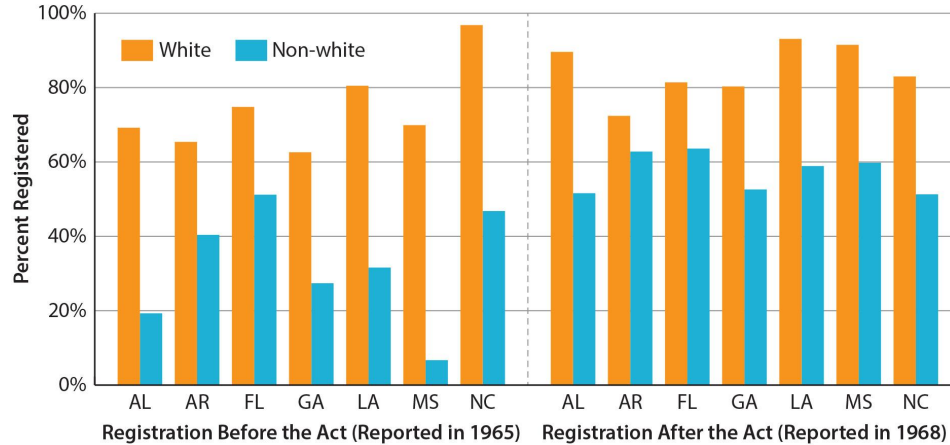


A sign outside a polling place in Arlington, Virginia, reminds voters to bring a photo ID with them to vote.

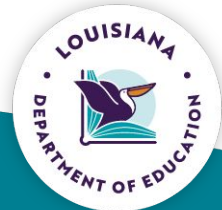


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Voter Registration Before and After the Voting Rights Act of 1965



The Voting Rights Act of 1965 had a major effect on voter registration, especially in the South. This graph illustrates the changes in white and non-white voter registration in selected Southern states after the law was enacted. Note the major increase in registration of non-white voters in just three years.



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The term *gerrymander* comes from the salamander-or serpent-like shape formed by early nineteenth-century redistricting in Massachusetts.

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National Democratic nominating convention in session, Charleston, South Carolina on April 23, 1860. The convention remained deadlocked on its last day, and adjourned without choosing candidates for President and Vice President. It scheduled a second convention in Baltimore, Maryland for June 18–23, 1860 (wood engraving)/Everett Collection / Bridgeman Images: 6a

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