

5.8 Electing a President

**Explain how the different processes work in a U.S. presidential election.
Explain how the Electoral College impacts democratic participation**

1. Before any candidate can win an election they first must win their political party's nomination. Today that is done primarily through
 - a. Winning the spoils system
 - b. Winning at the party conventions
 - c. Winning party caucuses
 - d. Winning primary elections

2. To win any modern political office you must actually win two separate elections. They are
 - a. Primary and general elections
 - b. Convention run-offs and caucuses
 - c. Primary and Plurality elections
 - d. Caucuses and primaries

3. Tom has decided to get involved in this year's presidential election. He wants to be a part of choosing the candidates for next fall's presidential election. His party, however, has an incumbent running without a challenger. Tom goes instead to cast a vote for an opposition candidate. At the polling place he is told that unless he switches his membership he cannot vote for a candidate from the opposing party. What rule is his state following?
 - a. Open primary
 - b. Closed primary
 - c. Blanket primary
 - d. Non-partisan primary

4. National party conventions, held every four years, have all of the following important objectives EXCEPT
 - a. Hold debates between the two leading candidates
 - b. Nominate their presidential candidate
 - c. A kick-off to the general election campaign
 - d. Showcase their platform and prospective ticket

5. Some critics have argued that the national political conventions held every four years would soon become extinct for all of the following reasons EXCEPT
 - a. Falling TV ratings
 - b. Lack of any newsworthy events
 - c. Overly staged
 - d. Party nominations are no longer necessary

6. Early primaries and caucuses in a national presidential campaign play a disproportionate role. The influence of these early primaries and caucuses is called “frontloading.” The two states that traditionally frontload their primaries and caucuses are

- a. Iowa and Nevada
- b. Iowa and New Hampshire
- c. New Hampshire and Nevada
- d. Minnesota and New Mexico

7. What kind of election is meant to choose candidates?

- a. Primary
- b. General
- c. Presidential
- d. Midterm

8. All of the following could be expected at a party national convention EXCEPT

- a. Selection of presidential nominee
- b. Selection of vice-president nominee
- c. Selection of Congressional leaders
- d. Promotional ads for party nominee

9. What is it called when only registered party members can participate in selecting a party nominee?

- a. Open primary
- b. Closed primary
- c. General election
- d. Organized primary

10. The national political party conventions held every four years allow every day citizens a voice in the presidential selection process. As with the Founding Fathers, so too today’s political party leaders have built in a protection against the fickleness of public opinion. Both parties include these delegates at their conventions to protect against possible mistakes made by the rank and file.

- a. Base delegates
- b. Super delegates
- c. Partisan delegates
- d. Plurality delegates

11. The modern campaign can be characterized in all of the following ways EXCEPT

- a. Longer
- b. More expensive
- c. Higher voter turnout
- d. More democratic

12. This institution was created to provide a filter between the direct votes of citizens and the selection of our chief executive

- a. Free media
- b. Electoral College
- c. Political parties
- d. State referendums

13. The Electoral College is the means by which we indirectly elect the president of the United States. The Electoral College is comprised of 538 votes. How many votes are necessary to win in the Electoral College?

- a. 538
- b. 356
- c. 270
- d. Most votes wins

14. When assessing the Electoral College it becomes apparent that large amounts of campaign resources are applied in bellwether states. Why?

- a. These are the few competitive states
- b. These are the home states of the candidates
- c. These are the few states with the highest media costs
- d. These are the most populated states

15. You must win 270 of the 538 electoral votes to become president. If no candidate wins a simple majority in the Electoral College how is our next president chosen?

- a. Supreme Court
- b. Run-off election
- c. Vote by state governors
- d. House of Representatives

16. All of the following make it difficult to reform the Electoral College EXCEPT

- a. Elites increasingly would like to see the Electoral College changed
- b. Most likely would require a constitutional amendment
- c. No clear consensus exists on an alternative
- d. Key battleground states would hate to lose the attention they receive

17. Look at the following data set and determine the most likely Electoral College outcome for the states provided. [For each state listed their total Electoral College vote is in parenthesis].

2012 Results	Votes for Obama	Votes for Romney
Illinois (20)	3,019,512	2,131,216
Indiana (11)	1,152,887	1,420,543
Iowa (6)	822,544	730,617
Wisconsin (10)	1,620,985	1,407,966

- a. Obama wins 36-11
- b. Obama wins 25-22
- c. Obama wins 3 states to 1
- d. Romney wins 24-23

18. The size of the Electoral College is determined by the total number of representatives serving in Congress plus three for the District of Columbia. Or in other words there are _____ Electors. To win the presidency you must receive at least _____ votes in the Electoral College.

- a. 538; 270
- b. 435; 220
- c. 100; 51
- d. 678; 340

19. Due to the winner-take-all rule in the Electoral College the outcome in most states becomes predictable. This means that presidential campaigns focus on a few key battleground states. All of the following would be considered presidential battleground states EXCEPT

- a. Ohio
- b. Florida
- c. Colorado
- d. Illinois

20. The rule in the Electoral College that makes it likely that presidential candidates campaign in only a small number swing states is called

- a. Rule of hard knocks
- b. Majority rule
- c. Winner-take-all
- d. Plurality

21. The Electoral College exemplifies what foundational principle?

- a. Separation of powers
- b. Minority rights
- c. Federalism
- d. Rule of law