

Political Science 485-001, Fall 2022: final paper

Your final paper should do one of three things:

1. Get data from some public election and analyze the data looking for signs of fraud or other anomalies.
2. Make a theoretical, empirical or conceptual contribution to the problem of distinguishing fraud from strategic behavior or other normal political phenomena.
3. Consider some other relevant aspect of evaluating elections.

Your topic must be approved by me. The paper should use one or more of the analytical approaches considered in the course. Your paper should in some way feature your original analysis of some kind of data. This will usually be data you use in a statistical analysis, perhaps using the Election Forensics Toolkit or `eforensics`. I encourage you to talk to me either in person or via email to discuss ideas for the paper. Making an early start is a good idea.

To get approval for a topic, you must submit a 1–3 page proposal for the paper. The proposal should summarize the argument you expect to make (e.g., what is the principal hypothesis) and give some indication of the data you expect to use to build evidence for your argument. It should also identify relevant literature—at least two academic research articles or books that are closely related to your topic. Postelection observation reports count for this purpose. As much as possible you should explain clearly how the data you plan to examine will be sufficient for your analysis. If I haven't approved your proposal, I won't accept your paper. The proposal is due by classtime on Monday, November 21 (I'll also accept it earlier).

The paper itself should run about 10 pages (double-spaced) and is due (by email or via Canvas) at noon on Monday, December 12. Both the proposal and the paper should use normal scholarly apparatus for footnotes, citations, bibliography and any tables or figures.

When you submit your proposal or your paper, please submit it in pdf format.

Walter Mebane