DEmocracy
2020
REED Alumni College

Mechanics, Opportunities + Perils
STEWARDING THE ELECTIONS

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EARLY VOTING INFORMATION CENTER

• Research Areas:
  – Local Election Official Survey Program
  – National and Statewide Public Opinion Polling
  – Election Audits
  – Vote by Mail / Vote at Home
GOALS FOR THIS TALK….

1. Survey of Election Administration
2. Research Efforts around Election System
3. Perspectives from within Elections
4. Some Challenges and Questions to ask for 2020
So you want to run an election....
THE INITIAL CHALLENGE…. STATES

Source: NCSL 2020
DISTRIBUTIONAL CHALLENGE
VOTER REGISTRATION OPTIONS....

- Online Voter Registration (OVR)
  - 39 states plus DC
- Automatic Voter Registration (AVR)
  - 17 states plus DC
- Don’t Use One!
  - North Dakota
- Same Day Registration
  - 21 states plus DC
- Traditional
  - 5 without SDR, AVR or OVR in place
A majority of states have taken key steps to modernize voter registration. These updates provide more accurate voter rolls, particularly in a time of crisis.
ELECTION PREPARATION AND EARLY VOTING

- Uniformed And Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOVAVA)
  - As early as 60 days prior to election
- Early Voting Options
  - Early In Person
  - Absentee (Permanent and Otherwise)
  - Universal Vote at Home/Vote by Mail
- Election Day Polling Places
  - Precincts and Vote Centers
VOTING TECHNOLOGY

Source: Natl Academy of Science 2016
CANVASSING AND CERTIFYING

Networks Try To Explain Blown Call

By David Bauder
AP Television Writer
Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2000; 6:54 p.m. EST

NEW YORK — Television networks were trying to explain how they blew the call on the presidential election twice — the second time was enough to give George W. Bush the next president.

The networks wereforced to reverse course when it became clear that Al Gore had lost.

"We don't just have eggs, we have an omelette."

NBC had been first to declare a Gore victory at 7:50 p.m. Tuesday. But they reversed course later that night, their information largely on polling data provided by Voter News Service, a consortium created by The Associated Press, ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox and NBC.
CANVASSING AND CERTIFYING

- Canvassing
  - Review of ballots and counting processes
  - Resolve provisional ballots
  - Recounts if required
  - Prepare for Certification

- Certification
  - Final legal statement of election

- Takes time…..
ELECTION AUDITS

• Traditional
  • Either a fixed or tiers set of recounts by geography to compare to official totals.

• Risk Limiting Audits
  • Statistically modelled recount with variable tolerance thresholds

Source: NCSL 2020
PAUSE!

QUESTIONS....
EXPLORING ELECTION

• Local Election Officials Survey
• Oregon Election Audit Project
STEWARDS OF DEMOCRACY

• 8,000 - 10,000 local government officials tasked with administering elections
• Critical in interpreting and implementing election law and policy
• Rarely a direct focus of research (outside exogenous events)

Source: Multnomah County Elections
PREVIOUS LEO RESEARCH

• Periodic analysis – focused on election administration policy changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elected</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary over $40,000</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 50 years</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESEARCH QUESTION

• Given under-representation of women in so many offices....
  – 24% of Congressional seats
  – 29% of state legislative seats
  – 30% of statewide elected offices
  – 23% of the 100 largest city mayors
• Why such a stark over representation in LEOs?
• And a pattern seen in other clerk level positions. (Gordon 2011, Crowder-Meyer et al. 2015)
THEORIES TO EXPLORE

Cultural and Gatekeeping Explanations: Norms around gender limit public and elite perspectives on women in office (cf. Dolan 2010, Conway 2011)

Desirability of Office: The perceived power and prestige of offices filters access by gender (Engstrom, McDonald, and Chou 1988)

Gendered Nature of Work: LEOs or clerks represent a type of work that meets norms for women in workplace – balance of work and life (Gordon 2011)
RESEARCH DESIGN

• 2018 and 2019 Surveys of LEOs:

  – 2018: Email and Mail Follow Up (n=1051 / 34% Response Rate)
  – 2019: Mail and Email Follow Up (n=871 / 28% Response Rate)
SAMPLE CHALLENGES

Response Rate by State

Proportion of Response by State
## RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>2018 Survey</th>
<th></th>
<th>2019 Survey</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>&lt;=25,000</td>
<td>&gt;25,000</td>
<td>Overall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 or more</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
<td>73.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College and above</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years or older</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LEO Survey Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
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<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without College Degree</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary over $40,000</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 50 years</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SATISFACTION...

The diagram illustrates the percentage of individuals who agree or disagree with the statement "My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment." The chart shows the responses for both male and female participants:

- **Male**: 96% Agree, 4% Neither, 1% Disagree
- **Female**: 94% Agree, 5% Neither, 2% Disagree
ENCOURAGE CHILDREN…

I would encourage my own child to pursue a career in local election administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WORK-LIFE BALANCE…
INTEREST IN HIGHER OFFICE....

- **Male**: 68% Disagree, 23% Neither, 10% Agree
- **Female**: 70% Disagree, 23% Neither, 7% Agree

My career goals include running for elected office, (different than my current position if elected).
ELECTION PERFORMANCE AUDITS

• Real-time assessment of data
• Measuring static and dynamic rates of change
ELECTION PERFORMANCE AUDITS

- Real-time assessment of data
- Measuring static and dynamic rates of change

Source: Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project and Reed College Early Voting Information Center
ELECTION PERFORMANCE AUDITS

- Real-time assessment of data
- Measuring static and dynamic rates of change

Ballots Sent After Deadline (%)

County
ELECTION PERFORMANCE AUDITS

- Real-time assessment of data
- Measuring static and dynamic rates of change
AUDITS AND PUBLIC OPINION

• 4 annual Oregon public opinion polls
• Explore:
  – Voting experience
  – Voting tools
  – Assessment of voting system
ELECTION PERFORMANCE AUDITS

- Real-time assessment of data
- Measuring static and dynamic rates of change

Voter Confidence in County Elections

2019 Oregon Survey

2018 CCES, VBM States

2018 CCES, National

Very confident | Somewhat confident | Not too confident | Not at all confident | Don't know

REED COLLEGE
Some voters experienced problems receiving or marking their ballots in the November 2018 election.

- 4% had problems receiving ballot
- 3% had problems marking or completing ballot

2,763,105 registered voters in November 2018
3–4% equals 82,893–110,524 voters
Voters are more likely to think election fraud almost never occurs (range of opinion 35–47% for five specific types of fraud) than that it occurs commonly (5–14%).

Range of opinion about five types of election fraud

- Almost never: 47% maximum, 35% minimum
- Infrequently: 20% maximum, 18% minimum
- Occasionally: 21% maximum, 12% minimum
- Common: 14% maximum, 5% minimum
- Don't know: 18% maximum, 14% minimum

DHM RESEARCH | REED COLLEGE OREGON ELECTION AUDIT SURVEY | JUNE 2019
## Election fraud demographic tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common/occasional</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>18–29</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Dem</th>
<th>Rep</th>
<th>NAV</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>POC</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steal/tamper with ballots</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote more than once</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials changing reported vote count</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-US Citizens voting</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ballot intended for someone else</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>34%</td>
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<td>45%</td>
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52% of voters don’t know whether state officials audit election results. Of the 39% who said officials do audit results, one-third didn’t know when such audits take place.
SOME CONCLUDING CONCERNS

• While the challenges of COVID19 are focused on law and policy - logistics maybe more the issue!
• Outcomes will matter less than legitimacy.
• Looking ahead – the need to build trust and understanding in election systems.
THANK YOU AND SUPPORT

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• Jay Lee, ‘19 Research Fellow

• Funding and support from:
  – Democracy Fund
  – Oregon Secretary of State
CONTACT – MORE INFORMATION

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Blog and reports:  
evic.reed.edu