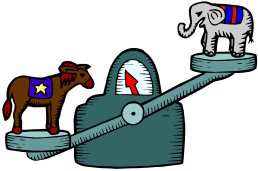


## Party Systems



## Party Systems Overview

- Number of political parties in country
- U.S. two-party system & reasons
- Third (minor) parties in U.S.

## U.S. Two Party System

- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- independent – NOT A PARTY
- Grammar lesson (proper v. common nouns)
  - democrat v. Democrat
  - republican v. Republican

## Four Reasons for Two Parties in U.S.

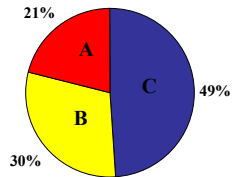
1. Electoral system
2. Presidential system
3. Nature of public opinion
4. Continuity of existing system

## Reason 1: Electoral System

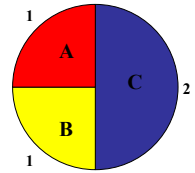
- United States
  - single-member districts
  - plurality elections
- Most European democracies
  - multimember districts
  - proportional representation

## Proportional Representation One Four-Member District

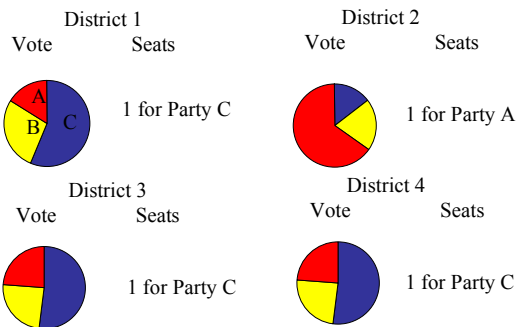
Percent of Vote



Number of Seats



## Plurality Elections Four Single-Member Districts



## U.S. Electoral System

- With single-member district, plurality elections:
- Small parties rarely win a seat
- Could have 30% of vote nationwide and no seats in the legislature
- Parties that don't win seats disappear

## Other Reasons for Two Parties

- 2. Presidential system versus parliament
- 3. Nature of public opinion
- 4. Continuity of existing system
  - Ballot access
  - Campaign finance
  - Media
  - Public

## Benefits of Multi versus Two-Party System

- Representation?
- Stability of government?

## Third Parties in America

- Any party other than 2 major parties
- Issue or ideological parties
  - smaller & long term
  - Green, Libertarian
- Factional or personality party
  - larger & short term
  - Reform (Perot 1992-96/Buchanan-2000), Bull Moose (T. Roosevelt, 1912)

## Current Third Parties

- Homework assignment