

AP USGP
Unit II/III
Electoral College Reform

Name _____
Hour _____

Directions: Review proposals 1-5 and determine which one you would recommend to revise the Electoral College

Proposal 1: The Direct Vote System -- One candidate must outdistance the others in the vote count and also win by garnering at least 40 to 50% of the total votes. If the winner fails to reach a specific percent threshold, a run-off election will be held between the top two.

Proposal 2: The Direct Plan -- This plan would keep the electoral college but would change the system to allot electoral votes by congressional districts, as is already the case in Maine and Nebraska. Under this system, two of the electors (representing the state at large, as senators do) would cast their ballots for the candidate receiving the most popular votes in that state. The rest of the electors (representing the various congressional districts) would cast their ballots for the candidate receiving the most popular votes within their districts. This would de away with the winner-take-all outcome and allow candidates to gain at least one electoral vote for each congressional district they win. These changes could be made through state legislatures and would be much easier to pass.

Proposal 3: The Proportional Plan-- The plan would keep the electoral college but allot the electoral votes in the same percentages as the popular vote. Thus, if a candidate received 30 per cent of the popular vote in a state with 10 electoral votes, he or she would receive three electoral votes while the other candidates received seven.

Proposal 4: The National Bonus Plan -- This plan would keep the electoral college and its winner-take-all system, but would “weight” that feature to the benefit of the winner of the popular vote. A bloc of 102 electoral votes would be awarded automatically to the winner of the popular vote. These votes would then be added to the bloc of regular electoral votes that the candidate won through the regular election. A candidate would need 321 votes to be declared the winner, and if no winner emerged, there would be a run-off election.

Proposal 5 – The National Popular Vote – States would pledge their electoral votes to the winner of the national popular vote in an attempt to get presidential candidates to visit their states more often. This would occur only if states with a combined total of 270 electoral votes – the number now required to win the presidency – also agreed to decide the election by popular vote. California, a National Popular Vote supporter, is trying to force candidates to visit states that do not fit the “battleground, or swing state specifications.” Critics of the proposal claim candidates would only visit the most populous states around the country, shutting out rural America.

AP USGP
Unit II/III
Electoral College

Article II. Section 1

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.