

Short Course 3: New Opportunities, New Challenges: The CSES Data Set

Co-Sponsors: CSES (Comparative Study of Electoral Systems)
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Registration: No fee
Time: 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Location: On the premises of the APSA Annual Meeting
Instructors: John Aldrich, Duke University; André Blais, Université de Montréal;
Matt Golder, Florida State University; and Matthew Singer, University of Connecticut

John Aldrich and André Blais will begin with an introduction to the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project (CSES; <http://www.cses.org>) and its data, along with some examples of it in use. Matt Golder and Matthew Singer will then address a variety of methodological issues, problems and potentials that arise from working with such data, using CSES Modules 1 and 2. The instructors will then work with the participants on issues and concerns that arise in their own research.

Goals for the participants: A first goal is exposure and familiarization with a remarkably rich set of data newly available, with consideration of both its strengths and limitations. A second goal is to develop an appreciation of negotiating a dataset with macro and micro components and some contextual variation within nations, with the goal of generalization across nations. Thirdly, we intend to discuss methodological issues in using cross-national individual level data. Most important is the goal of developing an appreciation of the theoretical issues that arise in a series of surveys designed to advance our understanding of the practice of democracy through elections.

The afternoon will consist of direct consultation, with the instructors being available to discuss with participants their own related research projects.

Participants are invited to bring their laptops, equipped with their statistical package of choice, for use in the afternoon session. Internet access will not be available to participants - while CSES datasets will be made available on CD, if you already use CSES data please bring your datasets with you on your laptop.

When registering, participants are invited to provide a description of their current research projects using CSES data that they might like to use or discuss in the workshop setting. Suggestions of considerations participants would like to see addressed in the short course are welcomed. Registration is required, as the class size is limited. To register, please send an email to: cses@umich.edu.

Prerequisites:

Some statistical knowledge for analyzing large N data sets, some knowledge of a "standard" package, such as STATA, and some knowledge of CSES.