
January, 2020

PRESENTATION FOR DELAWARE LEAGUES

Alternative Voting/Election Systems Overview

*Preceding the LWWVUS Electoral Systems
concurrency decision at Convention 2020*



What we'll cover

- LWVDE Study – what & why?
 - Alternative Voting Systems
 - Standard Runoff Elections
 - RCV w/Instant Runoff
 - Range (Score) Voting
 - RCV w/Multi-member Districts
 - Study findings
 - How this applies to Delaware
 - Proposed LWVUS Concurrence
- Ballot demonstration exercises**

LWVDE Alternative Voting Methodologies Study

- Suggested by NCC member; approved (LWVDE membership) June 2019.
- *Purpose* – review alternative voting methodologies to identify those that may have the potential to improve the democratic process in Delaware.

- *Timeline...*

2019 – Background research, set study scope, prepare League presentation.

Early 2020 –League meetings. Respond LWVUS by 3/10. Convention 6/25.

Late 2020 - Conduct interviews with non-League stakeholders.

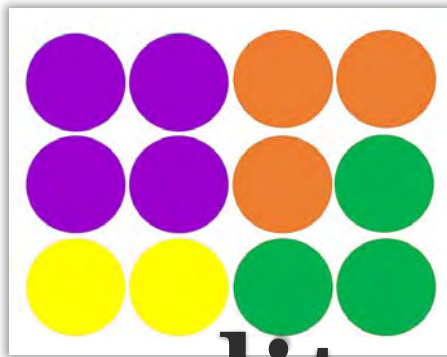
Early 2021 – Evaluate the results of our research. Hold consensus meetings in Delaware if needed (prior to June LWVDE convention).

- *Primary Goal* – increase awareness.
- *Secondary Goal* – create an LWVDE action position.

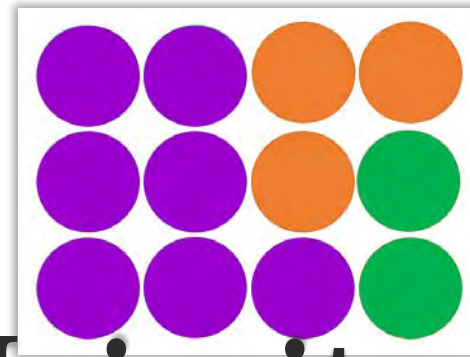


One Key Concept before We Start

- **Majority** winner – gets more than 50% of the vote
- **Plurality** winner – gets more votes than any other single opponent.
 - Plurality voting is used in U.S., Canada, and other former colonies of Great Britain



Plurality



Majority

Why look at alternative voting systems? (i.e. If it ain't broke, why fix it?)

SINGLE-WINNER RACES

Simple plurality problems when more than 2 candidates...

1. Vote-splitting
2. “Spoiler” candidates
3. Strategic voting and candidate discouragement
4. Lack of majority support
5. Adversarial, zero-sum politics

REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

Single-winner districts with plurality vote...

Pro – represents local interests

Cons – see list at left. Plus...

1. Difficult for minority interests to get a seat
2. Unrepresented segments of population – e.g. rural liberals, urban conservatives
3. Gerrymandering



Where are we?

- ✓ LWVDE Study – what & why?
- **Alternative Voting Systems**
 - Standard Runoff Elections
 - RCV w/Instant Runoff
 - Range (Score) Voting
 - RCV w/Multi-member Districts
- Study findings
- How this applies to Delaware
- Proposed LWVUS Concurrence

Standard Runoff Voting

How does it work?

- Standard “vote for one candidate” ballot
- If no candidate gets > 50% of vote, second election held
- Top two candidates listed on second ballot
- One of them will get a majority vote

Round 1

<input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Smith
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John Citizen
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jane Doe
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fred Rubble
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mary Hill

Round 2

<input type="checkbox"/>	Jane Doe
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mary Hill

An example of runoff voting. Runoff voting involves two rounds of voting. Only two candidates survive to the second round.

(source: Wikipedia)

By User:Mysid, User:lota - Vectorized by Mysid in Inkscape from en:Image:TRS ballot papers.jpg, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2580966>

Standard Runoff Voting (Two-Round)

Where is it used?

- **Georgia, Louisiana** – *general elections*
- Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina (40%), Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota (35%), Texas – *primaries*
- **France** - *presidential, legislative, and departmental elections*
- **More than 70 countries around the world** – *President*
- About a dozen countries – *national assemblies*

"PROS"

- Leader has majority support
- Can encourage coalitions (in second round)
- Lessens "vote-splitting" effect

"CONS"

- Expensive
- Logistics of runoff (e.g. timing)
- Varied voter turnout
- Can work against Minorities

Standard Runoff - First Round Ballot

For standard runoff voting, the initial ballot is same as standard plurality voting.

Voters can make only one choice.

Mark the box next to your favorite dessert.

Standard Runoff Voting – 1st Round

- Vote for ONE dessert candidate by marking the box next to the candidate of your choice.
- If you vote for more than one candidate, your ballot will be invalidated.
- The candidate with the most votes wins.

- brownie
- banana split
- sugar cookie
- lemon bar

Ranked-Choice Instant Runoff Voting










RCV / IRV – what is it?

- Voters rank candidates in order of preference (1st, 2nd, 3rd...)
- If a candidate receives more than half of first choices, they win
- If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and voters who picked this candidate as #1 will have their votes count for their next choice
- Process continues until someone gets more than 50% of the votes

<https://www.fairvote.org>

RCV example 2000 Presidential Election in Florida

Example of rank choice ballot

Candidate	1 st choice	2 nd choice	3 rd choice
Bush			
Gore			
Nader			

Actual voting results

Candidate	#votes	%
Bush	2,912,790	49.18
Gore	2,912,253	49.17
Nader	97,488	.16

Under FPTP, Bush wins. Under RCV, no majority yet. Eliminate Nader, allocate his votes to the voter's second choice. If their 2nd was Gore...

Candidate	#votes	%
Bush	2,912,790	49.18
Gore	3,009,741	50.81
Nader		

Instant Runoff Voting (RCV / IRV)

Where is it used?

- Statewide: *Maine* also NYC starting in 2021
- Party Elections: *Texas and Virginia*
- Presidential Nominees: *Alaska, Nevada, Wyoming, and Kansas*
- Local Elections: *Minneapolis and St Paul, Memphis, Santa Fe, Sarasota, Tacoma Park, Amherst, Cambridge, Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco*
- Military and Overseas: *Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, South Carolina*
- Other: *the Oscars, Australia, India*

"PROS"

- Winner has majority support
- Less negative campaigning
- Minimizes strategic voting
- More opportunity for 3rd party candidates

"CONS"

- Election process is more complicated and confusing
- Encourages centrism
- Election process is more costly
- Requires centralized vote tally

Instant Runoff Ranked-Choice Ballot

Make a mark in the first column next to your favorite dessert.

Mark your 2nd and subsequent choices if desired.

Only one mark per row, and one per column.

Instant Runoff (or Single-Winner Ranked Choice) Voting (IRV)

- To vote, RANK the desserts in order of preference.
 - Mark the box in the 1st-choice column which is in the row of your preferred dessert.
 - You may also rank the other dessert candidates in order of preference.
 - Fill in no more than one box per candidate (row) or per ranking (column).

	1 st choice	2 nd choice	3 rd choice	4 th choice
brownie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
banana split	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sugar cookie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
lemon bar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Range Voting (Score Voting)

How does it work?

- Voters rate each candidate on a numeric scale
- All votes are tallied and candidate with highest average wins
- As below, descriptive terms can be provided to ease math phobia or confusion

VOTE for best leader (Range voting demo)

Award each candidate a *numerical score* from 0 to 9. Advise giving your favorite candidate 9 and the worst one 0. If you intentionally wish to express *no opinion* about that candidate, then please *do not select any score* for him – equivalently leave the default "X" choice selected; only numerical scores will be incorporated into the averaging.

Theodore Roosevelt	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> X
Franklin D. Roosevelt	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> X
Winston Churchill	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> X
Nelson Mandela	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> X
Martin Luther King	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> X

Submit Vote!

Clear All

(source: rangevoting.org/quickdemo)

Governor Candidates	1 / Poor	2 / Acceptable	3 / Good	4 / Very Good	5 / Excellent	No Opinion
Candidate A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(adapted from LWV Oregon Election Methods Study Update 2016)

Range or “Score” Voting

Where is it used?

- Internet product ratings and contests (“five stars” scale)
- Olympic gymnastics and figure skating
- ESPN.com for NBA player rankings
- Orgs – e.g. Harvey Milk Club, Fedora Project, German Pirate Party
- The Green Party of Utah, to elect officers, on a 0–9 scale

Start by rating it:



“PROS”

- Every vote matters
- Detailed expression of voter preferences
- Highest theoretical voter satisfaction (computer modeling)
- Familiar to internet users / youth
- Easy to understand & administer

“CONS”

- Highly susceptible to strategic voting**
- Voters need nuanced knowledge
- No past use/experience in governmental elections

**The new STAR variant (Score, Then Automatic Runoff) may help mitigate this.

Sample Score Voting Ballot

Indicate how well you like each dessert.

Zero if don't like at all, three if really like it, or something in between.

You can give two desserts the same score if you've no preference between them.

Score (or Range) Voting

- To vote, rate EACH candidate by marking one score in that candidate's row.
 - No support = 0. Maximum support = 3.
 - Leaving a row blank is equivalent to 0.
- You may give equal ratings to different desserts.
- The candidate with the highest total of scores on all the ballots wins.

brownie	0	1	2	3
banana split	0	1	2	3
sugar cookie	0	1	2	3
lemon bar	0	1	2	3

Election Results - Tally the Ballots

("Best Dessert" election... voted three different ways).

Standard U.S. Election Ballot	
↓ Select one box (checkmark or X)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hershey's Kisses
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kit Kat
<input type="checkbox"/>	M&M's
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reese's Peanut Butter Cups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Skittles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Snickers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Twix
<input type="checkbox"/>	Twizzlers

Score Voting - Rate each candidate (circle one number in each row)						
	Yuck!	Meh	Good	Better	Best	No opinion
Hershey's Kisses	0	1	2	3	4	X
Kit Kat	0	1	2	3	4	X
M&M's	0	1	2	3	4	X
Reese's Peanut Butter Cups	0	1	2	3	4	X
Skittles	0	1	2	3	4	X
Snickers	0	1	2	3	4	X
Twix	0	1	2	3	4	X
Twizzlers	0	1	2	3	4	X

Ranked-Choice Election	
↓↓ Mark your choices - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.	
	Hershey's Kisses
	Kit Kat
	M&M's
	Reese's Peanut Butter Cups
	Skittles
	Snickers
	Twix
	Twizzlers

RCV with Multi-Member Districts

A.K.A. “Single Transferable Vote” (STV)

- Fair Representation Act: [H.R.4000, 116th Congress \(2019-2020\)](#), Rep. Don Beyer of Virginia

- *Summary of 2017 version...*

- Requirements: (1) ranked-choice voting for U.S. House of Representatives, (2) create districts with 3-5 Representatives each, (3) states with fewer than six Representatives elect all of them at-large.
 - Also requires congressional redistricting by a state-established independent commission or a panel of judges.

- Video available - [FairVote.org FRA Video](#)

- Watch video:

- [“Queen Lion and the Jungle Council”](#)



Single Transferable Vote (RCV / STV)

Where is it used?

- *Republic of Ireland* – all elections, since 1921
- *Island of Malta* – all elections, since 1947
- *Australia* – two different kinds, must vote. Problem “donkey voting”
- *Canada* – some territories, in the past
- *India* - indirect election of most members of the Rajya Sabha
- *New Zealand, Scotland, Northern Ireland* – some local elections
- USA – Cambridge, MA and Minneapolis, MN one small council each
- USA – 22 cities have used in the past. [Arden, DE Board of Assessors](#).
 - Eastpointe, MI City Council starting in 2019 (per federal lawsuit)

“PROS”

- More representative bodies
- Encourages coalitions
- Independents have a chance
- Less negative campaigning

“CONS”

- Ranked voting is new to voters
- Tallying is complex, centralized
- Can fragment parties
- Could cause “Donkey voting”

Districted races – quick take-aways

1. Current system - “Winner take all” (1 representative per district)
 - ❖ “Pizza” analogy / brochure... (why all pepperoni? Why not half pepperoni, ¼ cheese, ¼ mushroom?)
2. Multi-member districting can improve representation
3. For DE, would need to amend State Constitution
4. RCV within multi-member districts is called STV (single transferrable vote)
 - ❖ Village of Arden, DE uses STV – go Arden!
5. Read about Don Beyer’s “Fair Representation Act”
6. Watch the Queen Lion & jungle council video
7. Other proportional systems less likely in US –
 - ❖ Party List, MMP (mixed-member proportional)





Where are we?

- ✓ LWVDE Study – what & why?
- ✓ Alternative Voting Systems
 - ✓ Standard Runoff Elections
 - ✓ RCV w/Instant Runoff
 - ✓ Range (Score) Voting
 - ✓ RCV w/Multi-member Districts
- **Study findings**
- How this applies to Delaware
- Proposed LWVUS Concurrence

Comparing the Voting Methods

Criterion	Plurality (current)	Standard runoff	RCV	Range/ Score
Simplicity of use for voter	High	Medium	Low	Low
Discourages negative campaigning	No	No	Yes	Yes
Resistant to spoilers	Low	Medium	High	Medium
Resists strategic voting (1)	Low	High	High	Low
Maximize effective votes	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Encourages 3 rd party candidates	Low	Medium	High	High
Cost to implement	Low	High	High	High
Later no harm (2)	n/a	n/a	Yes	No
Prospects for US	High	High	Medium	Low

(1) Example of strategic voting is to vote for 2nd choice to avoid election one's last choice

(2) A voter giving an additional ranking to a less preferred candidate cannot cause a more preferred candidate to lose.

COMPARISON OF LWV STATE POSITIONS

State	Study Year	Majority	SRV	RCV/IRV	Range
Arizona	2005			Yes	
California	2000	Yes			
DC	2015	Yes		Yes	
Maine	2011	Yes	No	Yes	
Maryland	2015			Yes	
Mass.	2005	Yes	No	Yes	
Minnesota	2017			Yes	
Oregon	2017			Yes	No
S. Carolina	2005	Yes	No		
Utah	2017			Yes	
Vermont	2008			Yes	
Wash.	2000	Yes	No	Yes	

Delaware Elections and RCV

Review of Elections from 2012-2018

- In the state and national general elections all candidates won with over 50% with 3rd party candidates getting 1-2% of the vote.
- In the primaries, there were several races won with under 50% of the vote
 1. 2018 McGuiness (auditor) won with 41%
 2. 2018 Darius Brown (senate district. 2) won with 38%
 3. 2018 Siegfried (Rep. dist. 7) won with 28%
 4. 2016 Hall Long(lt. governor) won with 29%
 5. 2016 Rochester(U.S. House) won with 44%
 6. 2016 Purzycki (Wilmington mayor) won with 24%
- Most municipal elections are nonpartisan and most winners got over 50% of vote (Newark is an exception). The real issue with these elections is low voter turnout (10-20%) and many of the candidates ran unopposed.

Conclusion: RCV would be beneficial in primary elections in Delaware

Before we dive deep into League stuff, questions? Then stand and stretch or escape.

Where are we?

- ✓ LWVDE Study – what & why?
- ✓ Alternative Voting Systems
 - ✓ Standard Runoff Elections
 - ✓ RCV w/Instant Runoff
 - ✓ Range (Score) Voting
 - ✓ RCV w/Multi-member Districts
- ✓ Study findings
- ✓ How this applies to Delaware
- **Proposed LWVUS Concurrence**

Proposed LWVUS Concurrence

Voter Representation/Electoral Systems Position

Recommended by LWVUS for Adoption via Concurrence

LWVUS Convention 2020

Position in Brief:

Support electoral systems at each level of government that encourage participation, are verifiable and auditable and enhance representation for all voters.

Proposed LWVUS Concurrence

Position in Full: (part 1)

LWVUS promotes an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive. We encourage electoral methods that provide the broadest voter representation possible. Whether for single or multiple winner contests, the League supports electoral methods that:

- Encourage voter participation and voter engagement
- Encourage those with minority opinions to participate, including under-represented communities
- Are verifiable and auditable
- Promote access to voting
- Maximize effective votes/minimize “wasted” votes (see [terminology](#))
- Promote sincere voting over strategic voting
- Require the winner to receive a majority of the votes for executive and single seat offices
- Are compatible with acceptable ballot-casting methods, including vote-by-mail

Proposed LWVUS Concurrence

Position in Full: (part 2)

The LWVUS believes in representative government. The League supports electoral systems that elect policy-making bodies—legislatures, councils, commissions, and boards—that proportionally reflect the people they represent. We support systems that inhibit political manipulation (e.g. gerrymandering).

The LWVUS supports enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to explore alternative electoral methods, as well as supporting state election laws allowing for more options at both the state and local levels. With the adoption of any electoral system, the League believes that education of the voting public is important and funding for startup and voter education should be available. We encourage a concerted voter education process.

Concurrence Process – what's next?

- This concurrence pilot project is NOT a study; traditional study steps are not necessary.
- The LWWUS Board has already voted to recommend / support this concurrence.
- **LWWUS program planning forms due March 10th**
 - Each State & Local League can note support (or not) on the online form, in comments section
- Official vote will be taken at National Convention June 2020

"This action is a pilot as the LWWUS Board explores new ways to adopt and/or update LWWUS positions. We will evaluate how this process works and report back to leaders after the 2020 Convention."



Additional Resources - 1

- For Concurrence – LWV.org [League Management Site](https://www.lwv.org/league-management/recommended-concurrence-lwvus-board-2020-22-program-planning)
<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/recommended-concurrence-lwvus-board-2020-22-program-planning>
- LWV State Studies... CA, DC, MN, OR, PA, UT, WA
[League of Women Voters Education Fund Clearinghouse](#)
- Wikipedia “[electoral systems](#)” – good overviews of all types.
- Proponent websites: [fairvote.org](https://www.fairvote.org) (ranked-choice),
[electionscience.org](https://www.electionscience.org) (approval), [rangevoting.org](https://www.rangevoting.org) (range/score).
- Less partial websites: [thefulcrum.us](https://www.thefulcrum.us), the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#), others??
- [International IDEA Handbook](#) (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance)
- [Ranked Choice Voting in Maine](#) (report for Hewlett Foundation)

Additional Resources – 2

A run-down of YouTube videos...

- **“Cartoon Critters” (by FairVote)**
[RCV/IRV](#) (single-winner ranked-choice)
- **“Sticky Notes” (by MPR News)**
RCV/IRV ([single winner](#)), RCV/STV ([multi-winner](#))
- **“Queen Lion” (CGP Grey)**
[STV 1](#) - Single Transferable Vote
[STV 2](#) - more complex cases
[MMP](#) - Mixed-Member Proportional
- **Real-Life Instructions**
RCV / IRV – [Minneapolis](#), RCV / IRV – [Maine](#),
STV - [Scottish council elections](#)



Begin challenging your own assumptions. Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in."

Alan Alda

Things I Overheard While Talking to Myself

(end of presentation)