

# The electoral college research paper sample

[Politics](#), [President](#)



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## **Essay: The Electoral College and 2012 Presidential Candidates**

The Constitution Convention of 1787 explored several methods of electing the US President and the Vice President. Among the key methods tabled before this convention included the use of state governors, the Congress, State Legislatures, special group of members of congress or the direct popular vote.

US Electoral College is made up of 538 electors. Candidates are nominated by political parties, groups or individuals in a group (ticket or slate) of elector-candidates that matches the state's total number of electors. This system is referred to as ' general ticket' or ' winner-take-all'. The number of electors per state depends on its combined total of the Senate and House of Representatives delegations. Each state has 3 to 55 electors as stipulated in the constitution. In total, there are a total of 538 electors in the US Electoral College. The electors are elected once in every four years and they meet only once. (Bugh, 2010)

## **How it works**

The presidential race is separately contested in the 50 different states. Each state has a number of electors approximately proportionate to its population. Before several amendments took effect, the electors would cast their votes to all the presidential candidates. Then the president of the senate would preside over the vote counting for all the states and read them to the Congress. The candidate with the absolute majority became the president. The contestant with second highest number of electoral votes would then become the vice president.

In case of a tie or lack a clear win, the House of Representatives would be charged with the responsibility of choosing the president from the two top candidates. On the other hand, a tie in the vice presidency seat would be decided upon by the Senate. However, this system did meet the intended function thus; many amendments had to be adopted to save the situation. The founders of the Electoral College assumed that the electors would be independent from their parties and therefore vote uninfluenced.

Today, electors their cast votes almost in the similar way. Then, the President of the Senate opens the vote certificates alphabetically and passes them on to the four vote counters who then announce the results. The vote counting is then done and the vice president announces the winners.

Despite its continued use, the Electoral College has been seriously criticized. Many scholars have complained of its lack of democracy. It is seen as a way of locking out the American people from exercising their right on electing their president. Again, some of the electors are politically affiliated and thus may vote along party lines. It is worth noting that many attempts have been

made towards reforming of doing away with the Electoral College.

There are three alternatives to the Electoral College. First, it can be replaced by a simple national popular vote which would be better understood by the majority of the American citizens. This is what majority of the Americans prefer since it would reflect their popular sovereignty. Secondly, the Electoral College would be retained but without the unit rule that favors the proportional allocation of electoral votes within states. The third option would consider retaining the current system but allocate one electoral vote and two electoral votes to the popularity vote winner in each congressional district and state. (Nelson and Aaron, 2011)

The adoption of one of the above options will give a new face to the US presidential elections. Currently, US presidential contestants focus their campaigns in states or regions with large numbers of electoral votes. They therefore concentrate less on mobilizing the individual citizens but direct most of their resources to such states at the expense of the rest.

## **Barack Obama and Mitt Romney**

Obama vied for the American Presidency on a Democratic Party ticket and won against Mitt Romney. He promises that he has plans to improve the economy of America by creating more jobs for the jobless. He has requested for the 2013 fiscal budget which largely aims at creating more jobs. This budget is projected to increase the GDP by 0.9 percent in 2013 and 0.3 percent in 2014. Under the proposed American Job Act, Obama intends to spend \$142 billion. (Thompson, 2012)

On health, Obama has signed the 2010 health care overhaul bill and stands for the protection of the patients against insurance policies that compels

individuals to purchase health insurance.

On global warming, Obama campaigns for a compulsory cap and trade system to cut down on carbon productions. He has openly opposed the indefinite detention in Congress. Also, he stood against the war and inventions though he has of late confessed to expanding Afghan conflict to Pakistan. From the beginning he has been opposed to the military operation in Iraq and engaged in direct dialogue with Iran.

Obama advocates for same sex marriages and supports the gays to work in the military. He sided with Roe V. Wade's criticism of the upheld ban on partial birth abortion.

Mitt Romney on the other hand contested the US presidency on a Republican ticket. He is a businessman, politician and an author. On his economic policies, he aspired to maintain the Bush tax cuts and to reduce the corporate tax to 25%. He also wanted to encourage business through tax cuts and regulations. To curb deficit, he planned to lower government non-security spending by 5%. (Gordon, 2012).

On health, Romney came up with legislation close to what Obama supported but he believes that it is not the best for the Americans. He therefore proposes individual health insurance plan rather leaving the task for their employers.

His global warming policies are opposed to the cap and trade legislations but support the Keystone XL pipeline. He is also against the exportation of carbon effluents to China. According to him, humans contribute to global warming and hence he wants to set aside twenty billion dollars for research on energy and environmental friendly cars.

Mitt Romney looks at military intervention as a matter of presidential decision making provided that he guarantees the safety of the American people. However, he gives room for legal consultations with the lawyers. He supports the gays' incorporation in the military and wants the anti-gay employer discrimination banned.

Romney's stand on same sex marriage is different from president Obama's. He is strongly against same sex marriage and abortion. He advocates for legal unions among the Americans.

In conclusion, the 2012 presidential elections is one of the American most contested elections. Both President Barack Obama and the Republican Mitt Romney had very strong policies. However, the latter would be a better candidate for presidency. Being a Christian, Romney is justified to shun same sex marriages and abortion. Biblically, these are sins against God. Again, the US at the time of this election is scaling low economically. It would have been a good decision to give chance to a new face to try sort the mess. Moreover, Mitt Romney is a businessman by profession and would probably use his vast experience to boost the US economy.

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