



**Sam Houston State University
Department of Economics and International Business
Working Paper Series**

Elemental Tests of the Traditional Rational Voting Model

Darren Grant and Michael Toma

SHSU Economics & Intl. Business Working Paper No. SHSU_ECO_WP07-09
October 2007

Abstract:

A simple, robust, quasi-linear, structural general equilibrium rational voting model indicates turnout by voters motivated by the possibility of deciding the outcome is bell-curved in the ex-post winning margin and inversely proportional to electorate size. Applying this model to a large set of union certification elections, which often end in ties, yields exacting, lucid tests of the theory. Voter turnout is strongly related to election closeness, but not in the way predicted by the theory. Thus, this relation is generated by some other mechanism, which is indeterminate, as no existing theory explains the nonlinear patterns of turnout in the data.