

While drawing electoral districts and its special type called gerrymandering (redistricting with a certain purpose in mind) has been present in American politics since the founding of the United States, it has recently received a lot of attention and criticism. Gerrymandering has been accused of ruining electoral competition, contributing to the gridlock in Congress, and hampering the spirit of American democracy. Moreover, legislators responsible for redistricting are frowned upon for choosing their own voters and thus ruining the purpose of the electoral process. Redistricting currently follows certain principles, the most important of which and the only two recognized at the federal level are population equality and minority representation. These principles were designed to limit the redistricting bodies when drawing districts. State legislatures remain the most common redistricting institution. However, for the criticism that they face various redistricting commissions with different powers were established. The current trend in the redistricting reform is to delegate the redistricting power to independent commissions which can adopt a redistricting plan without the consent of a legislature and whose members have no connections to politics. Competition and partisanship are the two most discussed phenomena that accompany any redistricting reform. The reform community currently struggles to find a perfect composition of a redistricting commission, and also the principles that such a commission should be obliged to follow. The objective of this thesis is to analyze the redistricting principles and redistricting bodies that currently exist, point out the non-existence of a redistricting reform proposal that would not be criticized, and to show the problems any redistricting reform has to deal with.