Electoral Competitiveness and Turnout in Senatorial Elections

POSC 122 – Fall 2008 – Professor Keiser

Is electoral turnout higher in competitive senatorial elections than in non-competitive elections? What other variables seem to intervene in the causal statements:

H1: Competitive Elections -> Higher Turnout?

H2: Non-Competitive Elections -> Declining Turnout?

50 data points minimum (each single election of a Senator), 5-10 pages.

Hints:  
Vary years of elections within states  
Constant years of election across “similar” states  
Constant years of election across “different” states  
# of years as Incumbent  
Registration rules of states  
Presidential and Midterm elections

Turnout can be measured as percent of registered voters or eligible voters.  
What is your numerical definition of a competitive (closely contested, could go either way) election?