General Description

This research project will explore and analyze how democratic is Oklahoma’s political system. Democracy for Oklahoma is based on the writings of Charles Tilly in his book Democracy and Levitsky and Way in their book Competitive Authoritarianism. For this project democracy is defined as a combination of: constitutional and legal definitions; the nature of the implementation of policies that promote democracy; the nature of the election system and whether there is a fair and competitive multiparty system; and ongoing democratic participation. Democratic participation includes: no barriers in voting, a competitive press with various points of view, rule by citizens controlling the political agenda rather than special interest groups, and full enfranchisement and universal suffrage of adults. Signs of a less than democratic system include: extreme inequality between economic groups, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, sexual identity and preference, and so on. Another symptom of weak or no democracy is little or no state protections in practice and action against arbitrary and capricious state actions such as being jailed with no description of the charges, violations of civil liberties such as free speech, press, or the right to association, state institutions that limit an opposition party or candidate to compete fairly in elections, unfair media access, and abuse of state resources that favor the preferred two parties.

I am looking to employ an HRAP researcher to analyze over a five year period based on empirical data all of the above factors associated with how democratic Oklahoma is.