



WORKSHOP  
"NEW INSIGHTS INTO  
COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING"  
12-13 FEBRUARY 2026

## **Pack-Crack-Pack: Gerrymandering with Differential Turnout**

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### **Abstract**

This paper studies the manipulation of electoral maps by political parties, commonly referred to as gerrymandering. At the core of our analysis is the recognition that not all inhabitants of a district vote. This is important for gerrymandering as districts must have the same population size, but only active voters matter for electoral outcomes. We propose a model of gerrymandering that allows for heterogeneity in turnout across individuals. This model reveals a new strategy for the gerrymanderers: the pattern is to pack-crack-pack along the turnout dimension. Specifically, parties benefit from packing low-turnout supporters and high-turnout opponents, while creating cracked districts that combine moderate-to-high-turnout supporters with lower-turnout opponents. These findings yield testable empirical implications about the relationship between partisan support, turnout rates, and electoral maps. Using a novel empirical strategy based on comparing maps proposed by Democrats and Republicans during the 2020 U.S. redistricting cycle, we test these predictions and find supporting evidence.