

## **Appendix 1. Competence Assessment Tool for Voting (CAT-V)**

[Note the potential modifications to the instrument suggested in the text.]

“I’m going to ask you some questions about elections. This should take about five minutes. If you don’t understand something I say or ask, please tell me and I will repeat it. Some of the questions may seem very simple to you, but don’t worry about that. We are just looking for straightforward answers. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

### **Understanding**

“Imagine that two candidates are running for Governor of [fill in name: your state], and that today is Election Day in [fill in name: your state].”

### **Understands the Nature of Voting**

“What will the people of [fill in name: your state] do today to pick the next Governor?”

*[Score of 2: Completely correct response, e.g., “They will go to the polls and vote.” “Each person will cast his/her vote for one or the other.” Score of 1: Ambiguous or partially correct response, e.g., “That’s why we have Election Day.” “They will go to state capital and vote” Score of 0: Incorrect or irrelevant response, e.g., “There’s nothing you can do; the TV guy decides.”]*

### **Understands the Effect of Voting**

“When the election for governor is over, how will it be decided who the winner is?”

*[Score of 2: Completely correct response, e.g., “The votes will be counted and the person with more votes will be the winner.” Score of 1: Ambiguous or partially correct response, e.g., “By the numbers.” Score of 0: Incorrect or irrelevant response, e.g., “It all depends on which sign they were born under.”]*

### **Choice**

“Let me ask you to imagine the following about the two candidates who are running. Candidate A thinks the state should be doing more to provide health insurance to people who don’t have it, and should be spending more money on schools. He is willing to raise taxes to get the money to do these things. Candidate B says the government should not provide health insurance but should make it easier for employers to offer it. He believes that the schools have enough money already but need tighter controls to make sure they use it properly. He is against raising taxes.

“Based on what I just told you, which candidate do you think you are more likely to vote for: A or B?”

*Note to interviewer: If interviewee cannot choose a candidate or is vacillating, ask:*

“If you had to make a choice based on the information you have before you, who would you pick?”

*[Score of 2: Clearly indicates choice. Score of 1: Choice is ambiguous or vacillating, e.g., “I think I might go for the guy who doesn’t like taxes, but I’m not sure because schools are important too.” Or “Candidate A, no candidate B, no Candidate A., I can’t decide” Score of 0: No choice is stated, e.g., “I don’t know. I can never make up my mind.”]*

### **Comparative Reasoning**

*If interviewee identifies a choice, ask: “How is voting for [interviewee’s choice] better than voting for [name of other candidate]?” [Or if interviewee had no choice, ask: “How might voting for Candidate A be better or worse than voting for Candidate B?”]*

*[Score of 2: Identifies at least one comparative attribute in relation to the views of the two candidates, e.g., “Someone who really cares about health care would be a better governor.” Score of 1: Ambiguous response, e.g., “Health care.” Score of 0: Fails to mention a comparative attribute of the respective candidates, e.g., “I just think he’s good” or “I can’t see any difference”]*

### **Generating Consequences**

*“If [Interviewee’s choice or Candidate A if interviewee had no choice] were elected governor in your state, how could that affect your life?”*

*Note to interviewer: Probe for a reason if the interviewee says it will not affect him/her*

*[Score of 2: Identifies a consequence for his or her life, e.g., “I’d have more money to spend” or “I’d have better access to health care”; if sees no personal consequences, interviewee gives a coherent reason (“I’ll be moving to another state soon.” “I’ll be dead in a year anyway.”)] Score of 1: Gives a vague consequence for his or her life, e.g., “Health.” Score of 0: Does not give a consequence for his or her life or a reason for saying that there are no personally relevant consequences.]*

### **Appreciation**

*“Would you want to vote in the next election for governor of your state? If yes, why? If no, why not?”*

*[Score of 2: Response based on reason that reflects reality of voting situation. E.g., if yes: “My doing that makes it more likely that the candidate I like will win.” If no, “I don’t care who wins”; “My one vote is unlikely to make much of a difference.” Score of 1: Ambiguous response that partially reflects reality of voting situation. E.g., if yes: “It helps to run the country.” If no, “They might not let me.” Score of 0: Responses that fail to reflect reality of voting situation; confused or delusional responses. E.g., if yes: “The person I pick will win.” If no, “They never count my vote anyway.”]*