

SS 202b: Political Institutions

Winter 2018–19
Thursday, 1:00pm to 4:00pm
Baxter 237

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Purpose

The purpose of this course is to familiarize the students with the various literatures on political institutions from a political economy perspective. Of course, we will cover only a small fraction of the large literature of the topic.

Course Requirements and Grading Policies

The course is organized as a seminar. That means all students are expected to have read all of the materials for the week and be prepared to discuss them.

In terms of written assignments you must write four (4) short response papers of approximately three to five pages each on a given week's readings. These response papers are to critically analyze the week's readings; it is not just to be a summary or book report. These papers must be turned in by Friday at 5:00pm PST of the week the readings come from. All required materials should be emailed to me at jkatz@caltech.edu by their respective due dates. There are no exceptions to these deadlines, and written work that is not turned in by these dates and times will not be graded nor receive any credit.

Finally, each student is required to be a discussion leader for at least three of the weekly meetings. Students can co-lead with one other student for two of their lead sessions. As discussion leader, the student will produce a written summary of the readings and topics for the week, and will develop an agenda for discussing the course materials. These summaries will be distributed to the other students in class for their reference.

Grades for the course will be based on performance in class (20%), discussion leadership (20%), response papers (40%), and the final written exam (20%).

Schedule

Week 1: Course Introduction.

Week 2: Reasoning and Rationality.

Required:

Ferejohn, John and Debra Satz. 1995. "Rational Choice and Social Theory" *Journal of Philosophy*. 91(2):71–87.

Lucas, Gale M., Mathew D. McCubbins, and Mark Turner. 2015. "Against Game Theory." in *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* edited by Robert Scott and Stephan Kosslyn. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Cox, Gary. 1999. "The Empirical Content of Rational Choice Theory: A Reply to Green and Shapiro." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 11:147–169.

Fiorina, Morris. 1975. "Formal Models in Political Science" *American Journal of Political Science*. 19: 133-159.

Amadae, S.M. and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. 1999. "The Rochester School: the Origins of Positive Political Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 2:269-295

Week 3: Institutions.

Required:

Coase, Ronald. 1937, "The Nature of the Firm." *Economica* 4:386-405.

Diermeier, Daniel, and Keith Krehbiel. 2003. "Institutionalism as a Methodology." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 15(2): 123-144.

Fama, Eugene. 1980. "Agency Problems and the Theory of the Firm" *Journal of Political Economy* 88:288-307.

Miller, Gary J. 2005. "The Political Evolution of Principal-Agent Models." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 8:203–225.

Greif, Avner, Paul Milgrom, and Barry Weingast. 1994. "Coordination, Commitment, and Enforcement; The Case of the Merchant Guild." *Journal of Political Economy* 102:745–776.

Week 4: Elections I.

Required:

Cox, Gary W. 1997. *Making Votes Count* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Week 5: Elections II.

Required:

Erikson, Robert S. and Thomas R. Palfrey. 2000. "Equilibria in Campaign Spending Games: Theory and Data" *American Political Science Review* 94(3): 595–609.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M. de Figueredo, and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2003. "Why is There so Little Money in U.S. Politics?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(1):105–130.

Cox, Gary W. and Jonathan N. Katz. 2002. *Elbridge Gerry's Salamander: The Electoral Consequences of the Reapportionment Revolution*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Week 6: Organization of Legislatures.

Required:

Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1979. "Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models." *American Journal of Political Science*. 23(1):27–59.

Riker, William H. 1980. "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions." *American Political Science Review*. 74:432–446.

Baron, David P. 1994. "A Sequential Choice Theory Perspective on Legislative Organization." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19(2):267–296.

Diermeier, Daniel, Carlo Prato, and Razvan Vlaicu. 2015. "Procedural Choice in Majoritarian Organizations." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(4): 866–879.

Kitt, Matthew P., Craig Volden, and Adam E. Wiseman. 2017. "Spatial Models of Legislative Effectiveness." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2):575–590.

Week 7: Legislative Parties.

Required:

Cox, Gary W. and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1994. "Bonding, Structure, and the Stability of Political Parties." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 19(2):215–231.

Snyder, James M. Jr. and Michael M. Ting. 2002. "An Informational Rationale for Political Parties." *American Journal of Political Science*. 46(1):90–110.

Gilligan, Thomas and Kieth Krehbiel. 1990. "Organization of Informative Committees by a Rational Legislature." *American Journal of Political Science* 34: 531-64.

Poole, Keith and Howard Rosenthal. 1985. "A Spatial Model for Legislative Roll Call Analysis." *American Journal of Political Science* 29:357–384.

Week 8: Parliaments/Multi-Party Systems I

Required:

Laver, Micheal and Kenneth A. Shepsle. 1996. "Coalitions and Cabinet Government." *American Political Science Review* 84: 873-890.

Schofield, Norman J. 1995. "Coalition Politics: A Formal Model and Empirical Analysis," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 7: 245–281.

Deirmeier, Daniel, Hülya Eraslan, and Antonio Merlo. 2003. "A Structural Model of Government Formation." *Econometrica* 71(1):27–70.

Austen-Smith, David and Jefferey Banks. 1988. "Elections, Coalitions, and Legislative Outcomes." *American Political Science Review* 8(2):405–422.

Week 9: Parliaments/Multi-Party Systems II

Required:

- Persson, Torsten, Gerard Roland, and Guido Tabellini. 2007. "Electoral Rules and Government Spending in Parliamentary Democracies." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 2(2):155-188.
- Huber, John. 1996. "The Vote of Confidence in Parliamentary Democracies" *American Political Science Review* 90(2)269-282.
- Smith, Alastair. 2003. "Election Timing in Majoritarian Parliaments." *British Journal of Political Science* 33:397-418.
- Lupia, Arthur and Stom, Kaare. 1995. "Coalition Termination and the Strategic Timing of Parliamentary Elections." *American Political Science Review* 89(3):648-665.

Week 10: Bureaucracy and Courts:

Required:

- McCubbins, Mathew D., Roger Noll, and Barry Weingast. 1990. "Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 3(2):243-277.
- Eskridge, William N. and John Ferejohn. 1992. "Making the Deal Stick: Enforcing the Original Constitutional Structure of Lawmaking in the Modern Regulatory State" *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 8(1): 165-189.
- Ting, Michael M. 2016. "Politics and Administration." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2): 305-319.
- Huber, Gregory A. and Sanford Gordon. 2007. "Directing Retribution: On the Political Control of Lower Court Judges" *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 23(2):386-420.
- Dragu, Tiberiu, Xiaochen Fan and James Kuklinski. 2014. "Designing Checks and Balances", *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 9(1):45-86.