

9/4/12 11:30 a.m.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Department of Government
American Politics Field Seminar – Gov. 2305
Fall 2012
Monday, 2 to 4 p.m., Room 107, CGIS

PLEASE NOTE READING ASSIGNMENT FOR FIRST CLASS

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Office hours: Tuesday, 1:40-3:50
(sign-up sheet on office door)

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This seminar is designed to acquaint students with classic, recent, and current scholarly writing on American politics. Our goal is to acquaint students with various lines of substantive inquiry in political science regarding politics in the United States, as well as the many frameworks and methods used to study American political activity, institutions, beliefs, and governance. The course is also designed to begin your transition from a consumer to a producer of knowledge, by developing interesting and research-able questions, examining research designs or conceptual frameworks, and making *constructive* critiques of the materials you are reading. Perhaps most important, the course intends to introduce or re-introduce you to work that is among the best produced by our discipline and its predecessors; the readings and discussion will provide resources for your own further work as a political scientist, professional in other fields, or concerned and knowledgeable citizen (or observer).

Of course, a one-semester seminar cannot provide a complete survey of the field. Students planning to focus on American politics should read other books and articles, as well as materials included in versions of this seminar offered in the past few years and reading lists of peer universities. Other courses in American politics are also essential for learning the field.

Requirements

Everyone should read and reflect on the required reading prior to class. All materials not available on JSTOR or some other electronic source will be available on the course website. The books with longer assignments are available in the Textbook section of the Coop, and many are available as used copies at on-line sources such as Amazon.com, Alibris.com, Abebooks.com, or Barnes and Nobles.

You must participate in seminars and complete the written assignments to pass the course. At the end of each class session, be prepared to state orally what you would do if you were to develop a research project on the topic of that week's readings and discussion.

Books on Order at the Coop

Bailey, Michael A. and Forrest Maltzman. *The Constrained Court: Law, Politics, and the Decisions Justices Make*. Princeton University Press. 2011.

Bruce Ackerman, *We the People: Transformations*. Harvard University Press, 2000.

Daniel Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks, and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928*. Princeton University Press, 2001.

Robert Dahl, *Who Governs? Power and Democracy in an American City*, 2nd edition, Yale University Press, 2005

Robert Erikson et al. *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Andrew Gelman, *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State*, Expanded Edition. Princeton University Press, 2009.

Martin Gilens, *Affluence and Influence*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. Yale University Press, 2004.

James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, *Federalist Papers*. Any complete edition – also available online.

Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*. Harvard University Press, 1997.

Eric Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*. Princeton University Press 2001.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*. Any complete edition – also available online.

Lynn Vavrick, *The Message Matters: The Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton University Press, 2009.

Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, and Henry Brady, *Voice and Equality*. Harvard University Press, 1995

Keith Whittington, *Political Foundations of Judicial Supremacy*. Princeton University Press, 2009.

James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy*. Basic Books, 1991.

John Zaller, *Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Weekly Forum

The Weekly Forum is an online discussion/resource bank designed to facilitate collaborative investigation and extension of the weekly topic. The forum is created on the course website. The weekly process is the following:

1. The designated lead student or students will each, separately, post an initial post of 1000-1250 words by 2:00 PM on the Friday before class. This post should be a thoughtful exploration of the readings. No summarizing is necessary or desired – you should assume that everyone knows and understands the readings (you can, of course, make a point about something in the reading that deserves clarification). The heart of this post should be questions that might be used to thoughtfully explore potential research associated with the readings.
2. Every other student is responsible for posting a short (1 to 2 paragraph) reply to the initial post by 9:00 AM on the Monday of class. In this reply, you can offer a response to a question posed in the initial post, a new insight, a disagreement, an alternative research idea, or anything else that furthers the conversation.
3. Replies to the replies of other students are welcome and encouraged.
4. After the class on Monday, the lead student(s) are responsible for updating the forum with material and insights from the class discussion, or any other material that the discussion has inspired the designated student to pursue. These updates might include a summary of key questions raised during the class, possible research questions or strategies, resources valuable for researching the question (e.g. data, primary sources, etc), and other valuable scholarly sources that were not on the syllabus. Links to relevant current political discourse are also welcome. Updates should be posted to the forum by 5 PM on the Wednesday following class. If more than one student is responsible for a given week's Forum, they should work together to produce this update.

Each student is responsible for leading the forum on at least one week, and probably two. Weeks will be assigned on a first-come, first-choose basis.

Final Paper

A longer paper, no more than 20 double-spaced pages, is due by December 17, 2012. Its purpose is to identify a research question and propose research designs to address the question. The paper should identify some aspect of American politics or government which you would like to investigate, justify its importance and interest to readers, review and interpret the relevant literature, and develop a significant hypothesis related to your topic. You should indicate the kind of data and evidence you would use – the more precise, the better.

Your paper should then include two research designs: the first would be undertaken by a researcher with unlimited financial resources (but staying within the bounds of ethical research); the second is a practicable design that could be undertaken by a graduate student with the usual limited financial

resources and time. *The emphasis of this paper should not be the literature review but should instead be the research designs.* (The language in these paragraphs assumes standard hypothesis-testing modes of research; if you prefer a different mode, such as a more conceptual or historical style of analysis, consult with us about how to frame this project.)

If you are writing a research paper for another course, you may combine the assignment with this one if you first clear the plan with us and the professor in the other course. If you combine the assignments, you will ordinarily be expected to actually carry out the research project.

You should plan to submit a preliminary memo about your paper to us, or to both instructors if the paper is for two courses, by December 3, 2012. Late submissions of proposals and final papers are not permitted.

Evaluation

The weekly forum, contributions to class discussion, and the final research paper will be given equal weight in your grade for this seminar.

Collaboration

Graduate school and research generally are collaborative processes and you are encouraged to actively discuss and interact with your classmates. Ultimately, all written work, including weekly assignments, should be your own and must conform to the standards of academic integrity for original work.

Syllabus

September 10: Introduction, and Constitutional design and structure

Federalist Papers, Nos. 10, 11, 23, 39, 51.

Ackerman, *We the People: Transformations* chaps. 1, 2, 4, 10.

September 17: Political parties

Anthony Downs, 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Harper and Row, chaps. 1, 2, 3, 8.

Aldrich. *Why Parties?* chaps. 1, 2.

Marty Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. University of Chicago Press, chaps. 2, 5.

V. O. Key, 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Knopf, chaps. 1, 15, 24.

September 24: Public opinion and media

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*:

Vol. I, part 2, chap. 5, "The People's Choice...", "Elements Which May Provide..."

Vol. I, part 2, chap. 7, "Tyranny of the Majority," "The Power Exercised by the Majority...", "The Greatest Danger to..."

Zaller, *Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*, chaps. 1-5, 9.

Markus Prior 2005. "News v. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science*, 49 (3): 594-609.

Matthew Baum 2002. "Sex, Lies, and War..." *American Political Science Review*, 96 (1): 91-109.

October 1: Partisanship and ideology

Phillip Converse. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David Apter. Free Press.

Jennifer Hochschild. 1981. *What's Fair: American Beliefs about Distributive Justice*. Harvard University Press, chaps. 6, 7.

Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, chaps. 1-3.

Robert Erikson et al. 2002. *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge University Press, chaps. 1, 4, 5

Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal. 2007. *Ideology and Congress*. Transaction Publishers, chaps. 1-3.

October 15: Elections and voting behavior

Federalist, No. 14.

Vavreck. *The Message Matters*, chaps. 1-3, 5.

Andrew Gelman and Gary King, 1993. "Why Are American Presidential Election Campaign Polls So Variable When Votes Are So Predictable?" *British Journal of Political Science*. 23 (4): 409-451.

Andrew Gelman, 2009. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State*, Expanded Edition. Princeton University Press, chaps 1, 2, 4-6, 10.

October 22: Identity in politics – race, ethnicity, and immigration

Paul Frymer, 2003. "Racism Revised: Courts, Labor Law, and the Institutional Construction of Racial Animus." *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 373-387.

Michael Tesler, 2012. "The Spillover of Racialization into Health Care: How President Obama Polarized Public Opinion by Race and Racial Attitudes." *American Journal of Political Science*, 56 (3): 690-704.

Jennifer Hochschild et al., 2012. *Creating a New Racial Order*. Princeton University Press, chaps. 2, 5, 6.

Daniel Hopkins. 2010. "Politicized Places: Explaining Where and When Immigrants Provoke Local Opposition." *American Political Science Review* 104 (1): 40-60.

S. Karthick Ramakrishnan and Tom Wong, 2010. "Partisanship, Not Spanish: Explaining Municipal Ordinances Affecting Undocumented Immigrants," in Monica Varsanyi, ed. *Taking Local Control: Immigrant Policy Activism in U.S. Cities and States*. Stanford University Press, 73-96

October 29: Identity in politics – gender and sexuality

Michael Pisapia, 2010. "The Authority of Women in the Political Development of American Public Education, 1860-1930," *Studies in American Political Development* 24 (1): 24-56.

Jeffrey Lax and Justin Phillips, 2009. "Gay Rights in the States: Public Opinion and Policy Responsiveness," *APSR* 103 (3): 367-386.

Ebonya Washington 2008. "Female Socialization: How Daughters Affect Their Legislator Fathers' Voting on Women's Issues," *American Economic Review*. 98 (1): 311-332.

Jane Mansbridge, 1986. *Why We Lost the ERA*. University of Chicago Press, chaps. 10, 11

November 5: The role of the president and bureaucracies

Federalist Papers, Nos. 70, 73.

Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, chaps. 2, 3, 7

Carpenter, *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy*, chaps. 1, 8, Conclusion

Terry Moe, 1989. "The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure" in *Can the Government Govern?* John Chubb and Paul Peterson, eds. Brookings Institution Press.

Michael Lipsky, 2010. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Service*. Russell Sage Foundation, chaps. 1, 2, 14.

November 12: Congressional lawmaking

Federalist Nos. 52, 54, 62, 63.

David Mayhew, 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, chap. 1.

Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, chaps. 1, 6, Epilogue.

Keith Krehbiel, 1998. *Pivotal Politics*, University of Chicago Press, chaps. 2 and 4.

TBA: *New York Times* superchart on election outcome, Nov. 2012

November 19: Courts and separation of powers

Federalist, No.78

Whittington, *Political Foundations of Judicial Supremacy*, chaps. 1, 6.

Bailey and Maltzman, *The Constrained Court*, chaps. 1, 3, 4, 6 (if you want the methodological background, look at chapter 2).

James Gibson and Gregory Caldeira, 2009. "Confirmation Politics and the Legitimacy of the U.S. Supreme Court," *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (1): 139-155.

November 26: States, localities, and federalism

Nathan Kelly and Christopher Witko. 2012. "Federalism and American Inequality." *Journal of Politics* 74 (2):

James Snyder and D Primo, 2010. "Party Strength and State Government Spending," *American Journal of Political Science*. 54(2): 354-370.

Eric Oliver, 2001. *Democracy in Suburbia*. Princeton University Press, chaps. 1, 2, 7, 8.

William Fischel, 2005. *The Homevoter Hypothesis: How Home Values Influence Local Government Taxation, School Finance, and Land-Use Policies* Harvard University Press, chaps. 3-4.

December 3: Civic participation in institutional contexts

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

Vol. I, part 2:

chap. 4

chap. 9, "How the Enlightenment, Habits..."

Vol. II, part 2

chaps. 1, 2, 5, 8

Vol. II, part 4

chaps. 2, 6

Verba, Scholzman, and Brady, *Voice and Equality*, chaps. 12, 13, 14, 16.

Andrea Campbell, 2003. *How Policies Make Citizens*, Princeton University Press, chaps. 6, 7.

Martin Gilens, 2012. *Affluence and Influence*. Princeton University Press, chaps. 3, 4, 6

Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?*, chaps. 8, 12, 16, 24, 27, 28.