

POL 596A: Research Seminar in American Politics
Congress and Representation
Spring 2004

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Course Overview

This course is an intensive readings and research course in American politics. I assume students have completed the American politics “field” seminar (595A) and as such, are familiar with the major works and subfields in American politics. Because the aim of this course is to promote substantive, sophisticated research in a subfield of American politics, the scope of this course will necessarily be less broad than the field seminar. In this seminar, we will examine questions pertinent to legislative representation and responsiveness. Our primary venue of concern will be the United States Congress. The “big questions” of this seminar include: What does representation mean? What does it look like? What is the quality of representation afforded groups by elected politicians? How responsive are politicians to constituencies as well as the macro political environment? These are the kinds of questions we will want to ask and hopefully answer over the course of the seminar. As we will discover, there is a vast literature on these kinds of questions; we will try and make sense of it all while at the same time, identify problems or interesting gaps in the literature that may motivate further research.

Objectives

The primary objective of the course is for the student to identify important questions in the literature and then address them in their own research. Each student will complete a research paper that is naturally (and interestingly) embedded in the research we cover.

Requirements

Students are expected to come to class prepared. This means the readings should be completed in advance of class and students should be prepared to meaningfully (as opposed to superficially!) discuss the important issues stemming from the readings. In order to facilitate discussion and enhance the overall intellectual environment of the course, each student will prepare and distribute via e-mail to me a one-page seminar memorandum that should (1) raise questions about the readings for the week, (2) criticize the readings, or (3) posit directions for future research. *These memoranda should not be summaries of the readings.* I will use these memoranda as a basis for the seminar discussion and they will be distributed to each of you in advance of class. To make them useful, they need to be completed no later than 24 hours before the class begins. Your memoranda along with seminar participation will account for 15 percent of your grade.

In addition to seminar participation, there is a paper requirement. In all, the paper will account for 85 percent of your grade. You are to complete a single-authored paper (i.e. no working in

groups). This paper should address a novel and interesting research question using pertinent and appropriate political methodological tools. The paper assignment will proceed in four phases.

Phase 1: Students are to have a preliminary paper topic (i.e. research questions(s)) by the 8th week of the semester (March 17). Please note that we will *not* have completed all of the reading assignments by this date; consequently, if your research interests are in the “camp” of some readings we have not yet completed, you will need to independently get a head start on these readings. In this initial statement, you need to provide a one-page (or greater) justification for the research topic and discuss how it is embedded in the extant literature. This phase of the assignment will account for 5 percent of your grade.

Phase 2: By week 11, students should have done enough background/preliminary research on their paper topic that they can: 1) turn in a working bibliography of research pertinent to the research paper; 2) competently discuss the data/methods to be used for the analysis; and 3) present to the class, an outline of their research topic. After this presentation, students will critique the student’s topic and provide constructive criticism. This phase of the assignment will account for 5 percent of your grade (note that this 5 percent includes your critique of others’ topics).

Phase 3: By week 14, students should have completed all research and analysis pertinent to the paper and be prepared to present their results to the class. Presentations should last no more than 20 minutes. This phase of the assignment will account for 10 percent of your grade.

Phase 4: By Thursday, May 13, students should turn in their completed papers to me. This phase of the assignment will account for 65 percent of your grade.

Readings

This is both a research-intensive and readings-intensive class. In addition to several journal articles, you will be asked to read several books relevant to Congress and representation. With the exception of Mayhew’s book, all of these have been ordered through the UA Bookstore. These books are:

- Adler, E. Scott. 2002. *Why Congressional Reforms Fail: Reelection and the House Committee System*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Bianco, William T. 1994. *Trust: Representatives and Constituencies*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 2004. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. New York: Longman.
- Lublin, David. 1999. *The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress*.
- Mayhew, David R. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Yale University Press.

Apart from these required books, I have ordered several recommended books. These books are works I think are important and warrant being a part of your library on Congress and American politics. Further, these books raise issues that we may not discuss in full detail due to time constraints or due to the direction with which I want the class to take. These books are:

- Cox, Gay and Matthew McCubbins. 1994. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fenno, Richard. 2003. *Coming Home: Black Representatives and their Constituents*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Krehbiel, Keith. 1991. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Topics and Assigned Readings

The following is the itinerary of topics for the semester. There are 11 topics (or 11 weeks worth of seminar discussion). The remaining weeks of the class will be devoted to student presentation and/or time for research on their paper. It is essential that you come to class prepared for discussion.

Topic 1: Basic Principles, Institutional Arrangements and Institutional Constraints

- Mayhew, David R. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Yale University Press.
- Aldrich, John H. and David W. Rohde. 2001. "The Logic of Conditional Party Government: Revisiting the Electoral Connection." in Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (eds.) *Congress Reconsidered*, 7th ed. Washington: CQ Press.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1985. "Obstruction and Representativeness in Legislatures." *American Journal of Political Science*. 29: 643–659.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1988. "Spatial Models of Legislative Choice." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 13: 259–319. (Read preliminaries and skim the rest.)
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1999. "Paradoxes of Parties in Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 24: 31–62.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1989. "Studying Institutions: Some Lessons from the Rational Choice Approach." *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. 1:131–47.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. and John H. Aldrich. 2000. "Explaining Institutional Change: Soaking, Poking, and Modeling in the U.S. Congress." in William Bianco (ed.) *Congress on Display, Congress at Work*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Topic 2: Foundations of Representation

- Miller, Warren E. and Donald E. Stokes. 1963. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *American Political Science Review*. 57: 45–56.
- Erickson, Robert S. 1978. "Constituency Opinion and Congressional Behavior." *American Journal of Political Science*. 22: 511–535.
- Weissberg, Robert. 1978. "Collective vs. Dyadic Representation in Congress." *American Political Science Review*. 72: 535–47.
- Kim Quaile Hill and Patricia A. Hurley. 1999. "Dyadic Representation Reappraised." *American Journal of Political Science*. 43: 109–137.
- Fiorina, Morris P. 1977. "The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did It." *American Political Science Review*. 71: 177–181.
- Fiorina, Morris P. 2001. "Keystone Reconsidered." in Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer (eds.) in Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (eds.) *Congress Reconsidered*, 7th ed. Washington: CQ Press.
- Rothenberg, Lawrence S. and Mitchell S. Sanders. 2000. "Severing the Electoral Connection: Shirking in the Contemporary Congress." *American Journal of Political Science*. 44: 316–325.

Topic 3: The Strategic Advantage of the Incumbent

- Jacobson, Gary C. 2004. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. New York: Longman. Chapters 1–5.
- Cox, Gary W. and Jonathan Katz. 1996. “Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?” *American Journal of Political Science*. 40: 478–497.
- Franklin, Charles H. “Eschewing Obfuscation? Campaigns and the Perception of U.S. Senate Incumbents.” *American Political Science Review*. 85: 1193–1214.

Topic 4: Measuring Preferences

- Poole, Keith T. and Howard Rosenthal. 1991. “Patterns of Congressional Voting.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 35: 228–278.
- Jackson, John E. and John W. Kingdon. 1992. “Ideology, Interest Group Scores, and Legislative Votes.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 36: 805–823.
- Hill, Kim Quaile, Stephen Hanna, and Sahar Shafqat. 1997. “The Liberal-Conservative Ideology of U.S. Senators: A New Measure.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 41: 1395–1413.
- Groseclose, Tim, Steven D. Levitt, and James M. Snyder. 1999. “Comparing Interest Group Scores Across Time and Chambers: Adjusted ADA Scores for the U.S. Congress.” *American Political Science Review*. 93: 33–50.
- Vandoren, Peter M. 1990. “Can We Learn the Causes of Congressional Decisions from Roll-Call Data?” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 15: 311–340.

Topic 5: Congressional Behavior and Representation: Bianco and Arnold.

- Bianco, William T. 1994. *Trust: Representatives and Constituencies*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Topic 6: Institutional Implications of Representation: Congressional Committees

- Adler, E. Scott. 2000. “Constituency Characteristics and the “Guardian” Model of Appropriations Subcommittees, 1959–1998.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 44: 104–114.
- Adler, E. Scott. 2002. *Why Congressional Reforms Fail: Reelection and the House Committee System*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Read Chapters 1–3).
- Adler, E. Scott and John S. Lapinski. 1997. “Demand-Side Theory and Congressional Committee Composition: A Constituency Characteristics Approach.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 41: 895–918.
- Groseclose, Tim. 1994. “The Committee Outlier Debate: A Review and a Reexamination of Some of the Evidence.” *Public Choice*. 80: 265–273.
- Groseclose, Tim. 1994. “Testing Committee Composition Hypotheses for the U.S. Congress.” *Journal of Politics*. 56: 440–458.
- Kanthak, Kristin. “Exclusive Committee Assignments and Party Pressure in the U.S. House of Representatives.” (forthcoming). *Public Choice*. (I will have copies available).
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1990. “Are Congressional Committees Composed of Preference Outliers?” *American Political Science Review*. 84: 149–163.
- Stewart, Charles and Tim Groseclose. 1999. “The Value of Committee Seats in the United States Senate.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 43: 963–973.

Topic 7: Cosponsorship and Position Taking

- Krehbiel, Keith. 1995. "Cosponsors and Wafflers from A to Z." *American Journal of Political Science*. 39: 906–923.
- Shiller, Wendy J. 1995. "Senators as Political Entrepreneurs: Bill Sponsorship to Shape Legislative Agendas." *American Journal of Political Science*. 39: 186–203.
- Young, Cheryl D. and Rick K. Wilson. 1997. "Cosponsorship in the United States Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 22: 25–43.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, Jr., and Charles Stewart III. 2001. "Candidate Positioning in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science*. 45: 136–159.
- Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M., Laura W. Arnold, and Christopher J.W. Zorn. 1997. "The Strategic Timing of Position Taking in Congress: A Study of the North American Free Trade Agreement." *American Political Science Review*. 91: 324–338.

Topic 8: Distribution, Redistribution and Representation

- Adler, E. Scott. 2002. *Why Congressional Reforms Fail: Reelection and the House Committee System*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Read Chapters 4-6.)
- Balla, Steven J., Eric D. Lawrence, Forrest Maltzman, and Lee Sigelman. 2002. "Partisanship, Blame Avoidance, and the Distribution of Legislative Pork." *American Journal of Political Science*. 46: 515-525.
- Bickers, Kenneth N. and Robert M. Stein. 1996. "The Electoral Dynamics of the Federal Pork Barrel." *American Journal of Political Science*. 40: 1300–1326.
- Hurwitz, Mark, Roger Moiles, and David Rohde. 2001. "Distributive and Partisan Issues in Agriculture Policy in the 104th Congress." *American Political Science Review*. 95: 911–922.
- Lee, Frances E. 2003. "Geographic Politics in the U.S. House of Representatives: Coalition Building and Distribution of Benefits." *American Journal of Political Science*. 47: 714-728.
- Lee, Frances E. 2000. "Senate Representation and Coalition Building in Distributive Politics." *American Political Science Review*. 94: 59-72.
- Levitt, Steven D. and James M. Snyder, Jr. 1995. "Political Parties and the Distribution of Federal Outlays." *American Journal of Political Science*. 39: 958-980.
- Levitt, Steven D. and James M. Snyder, Jr. 1995. "The Impact of Federal Spending on House Election Outcomes." *Journal of Political Economy*. 105: 30-53.

Topic 9: Redistricting and Representation

The Issue of Race

- Cameron, Charles, David Epstein, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1996. "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?" *American Political Science Review*. 90: 794-812.
- Lublin, David. 1999. *The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress*. (Entire Book).
- Epstein, David and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1999. "A Social Science Approach to Race, Redistricting, and Representation." *American Political Science Review*. 93: 187-191.
- Petrocik, John R. and Scott W. Desposato. 1998. "The Partisan Effects of Majority-Minority Redistricting." *Journal of Politics*. 60: 613–633.

Redistricting and Elections

- Bruce Cain. 1985. "Assessing the Partisan Effects of Redistricting." *American Political Science Review*. 79:320-333
- Cox, Gary W. and Jonathan Katz. 1999. "The Reapportionment Revolution and Bias in U.S. Congressional Elections." *American Journal of Political Science*. 43: 812-840.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, Jr., and Charles Stewart III. 2001. "Old Voters, New Voters, and the Personal Vote: Using Redistricting to Measure the Incumbency Advantage." *American Journal of Political Science*. 44: 17-34.
- Desposato, Scott W. and John R. Petrocik. 2003. "The Variable Incumbency Advantage: New Voters, Redistricting, and the Personal Vote." *American Journal of Political Science*. 47: 18-32.

Topic 10: Descriptive and Substantive Representation

- Dovi, Suzanne. 2002. "Preferable Descriptive Representatives: Will Just Any Woman, Black or Latino Do?" *American Political Science Review*. 96: 729-743.
- Gay, Claudine. 2001. "The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation." *American Political Science Review*. 95: 589-602.
- Hero, Rodney, and Caroline J. Tolbert. 1995. "Latinos and Substantive Representation in the U.S. House of Representatives: Direct, Indirect, or Nonexistent?" *American Journal of Political Science*. 39: 640-52.
- Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent 'Yes'." *Journal of Politics*. 61: 628-657.
- Tate, Katherine. 2001. "The Political Representation of Blacks in Congress: Does Race Matter?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 26: 623-38.

Topic 11: Macro Conditions, District Attributes and Representation

- Jacobson, Gary C. 2004. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*. New York: Longman. Chapters 6-7.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of House Elections, 1946-86." *American Political Science Review*. 83: 773-793.
- Peterson, David A.M., Lawrence J. Grossback, James A. Stimson, and Amy Gangl. 2003. "Congressional Responsiveness to Mandate Elections." *American Journal of Political Science*. 47: 411-426.
- De Boef, Suzanna and James A. Stimson. 1995. "The Dynamic Structure of Congressional Elections." *Journal of Politics*. 57: 630-648.
- Stimson, James A., Michael B. MacKuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review*. 89: 543-565.
- Branton, Regina P. and Bradford S. Jones. n.d. "Some Implications of Racial and Ethnic Diversity on Competition in U.S. House Elections." Unpublished Manuscript.
- Koetzle, William. "The Impact of Constituency Diversity Upon the Competitiveness of U.S. House Elections, 1962-96." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 23: 561-573.