

**Prof. Tasos Kalandrakis**

109C Harkness Hall

Office Hours: T 10:00-11:50am

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This seminar focuses on the study of modern democratic institutions and their political consequences. We will emphasize both theoretical ideas and empirical research on political institutions and consider some of the core topics of inquiry in the comparative study of institutions. These include: electoral systems and party systems, legislatures, parliamentary and presidential institutions, coalition formation, courts and judicial power, federalism, etc. Added emphasis will be placed on ideas that can or have been subjected to empirical scrutiny, and a good part of the seminar will be devoted on assessing the strength of certain theories in light of empirical evidence. The ability to interpret statistical evidence is a prerequisite for mastery of course material and all participants are expected to have completed at least one course in data analysis. A review of background concepts and nomenclature will be presented in the first class meeting.

Assigned reading consists primarily of journal articles, book chapters, and occasional notes that I will hand out in class. Unless otherwise indicated, reading should be completed before class meetings and students are expected to participate in discussion. While the amount of required reading is relatively small, some readings are likely to prove challenging at the beginning of the course. You are advised to start reading early in the week and to seek my advice in office hours should any questions arise. I will request written summaries of specific readings ahead of class meetings. During each meeting, I will expect you to contribute significantly in summarizing and discussing assigned readings. Your overall contribution in class discussions will form a significant component of your final grade.

### **EVALUATION**

Your grade will be based on:

- class participation (20%),
- written summaries (5%),
- midterm exam (30%), and
- final exam (45%).

If you are taking the 'W' version of the course, then grading is based on:

- class participation (15%),

- written summaries (5%),
- midterm exam (20%),
- term paper (30%), and
- final exam (30%).

## **EXAMS**

The midterm exam will take place in class on October 18 and will consist of identification terms and essay questions. I will make a list of possible identification terms available ahead of time. The final exam is scheduled for Monday, December 19. It is going to have the same format as the midterm.

## **EXTRA WRITING REQUIREMENT**

Students that opt for the ‘W’ version of the course, are required to complete a term paper. The paper should be ten to twelve (10-12) pages long (excluding annotated bibliography) and focus on one of the topics covered in class. It should contain a succinct statement of the question you are trying to answer, a literature review, and a presentation of the evidence brought to bear on the question. You may choose from a set of sample paper topics that I will make available in class. You are requested to submit a one-page summary of your paper by October 15. An annotated bibliography is due no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>. A draft should be submitted by the end of November. The final paper is due on December 15.

## **MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES**

I expect all deadlines to be met. Extensions are granted rarely and only under serious extenuating circumstances. There are no extra credit provisions.

## **OUTLINE OF THE COURSE**

### **Week 1 (9/6): Organizational meeting.**

A refresher on reading and interpreting regression analysis. The spatial model. Agenda setting and veto power. Course overview.

### **Week 2 (9/13): Electoral systems I**

- Riker, William. 1982. “The Two-Party System and Duverger’s Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science.” *American Political Science Review* 76: 753-766.
- Ordeshook, P. and Shvetsova, O. 1994. "Ethnic heterogeneity, district magnitude, and the number of parties." *AJPS*, 38 (Feb.): 100-123.
- Cox, G. W. and Neto, O. A. 1997. “Electoral institutions, cleavage structures, and the number of parties” *AJPS*, 41(1): 149-174.

### **Week 3 (9/20): Electoral systems II**

- Carles Boix, "Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies." *APSR* 93, 3 (September 1999), 609-24.
- Baqir, R. 2002. "Districting and government overspending," *Journal of Political Economy*, 110(6): 1318-1354.
- Eric C.C. Chang and Miriam Golden. 2007. "Electoral Systems, District Magnitude and Corruption." *British Journal of Political Science*, 37(1): 115-137.

### **Weeks 4 (9/27): Legislative Procedures**

- Huber, John D. 1992. "Restrictive Legislative Procedures in France and the United States." *APSR* 86(3): 675-687.
- Döring, Herbert. 2001. "Parliamentary Agenda Control and Legislative Outcomes in Western Europe." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* XXVI: 145-166.
- Tsebelis and Money. 1997. *Bicameralism*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 2.

### **Weeks 5 (10/4): Veto players**

- Tsebelis, George. 1995. "Decision Making In Political Systems: Veto Players In Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism." *British Journal of Political Science* 25:289-325.
- Notes to be distributed in class.

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: ONE PAGE SUMMARY OF PAPER DUE 10/15 \*\*\***

### **Weeks 6 (10/18): Midterm**

### **Weeks 7 (10/25): Presidential systems**

- Elgie, Robert. 2005. "From Linz to Tsebelis: three waves of presidential/parliamentary studies?" *Democratization*, 12 (1): 106-122.
- Mainwaring, S. 1993. "Presidentialism, Multipartyism, and Democracy – The difficult combination," *Comparative Political Studies*, 26(2): 198-228.
- Cheibub, JA. 2002. "Minority governments, deadlock situations, and the survival of presidential democracies," *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(3): 284-312.

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE 10/31 \*\*\***

### **Weeks 8 (11/1): Coalition formation**

- Laver, Michael and Norman Schofield. 1990. *Multiparty Government*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 4 and 5.

- Notes to be distributed in class.

### **Weeks 9 (11/8): Cabinet allocation**

- Warwick PV, Druckman JN. 2006. "The portfolio allocation paradox: An investigation into the nature of a very strong but puzzling relationship," *EJPR*, 45(4): 635-65.
- Martin, Lanny W. and Randolph T. Stevenson. 2001. "Government formation in parliamentary democracies." *AJPS* 45(1) January: 33-50.
- Baeck Hanna, Debus Marc, and Dumont Patrick. 2011. "Who gets what in coalition governments? Predictors of portfolio allocation in parliamentary democracies," *European Journal of Political Research*, 50(4): 441-478.

### **Weeks 10 (11/15): Government survival**

- Warwick P. 1992. "Economic-Trends and Government Survival In West European Parliamentary Democracies," *American Political Science Review*, 86(4): 875-887.
- Smith A. 2003. "Election Timing In Majoritarian," *British Journal of Political Science*, 33(3): 397-418
- Diermeier D. and Stevenson R. 1999. "Cabinet Survival and Competing Risks," *American Journal of Political Science*, 43(4): 1051-1068.

### **Weeks 11 (11/22): Courts and Bureaucracy**

- Huber JD, Shipan CR, Pfahler M. 2001. "Legislatures and statutory control of bureaucracy," *American Journal of Political Science*, 45(2): 330-345.
- McCubbins M., Noll R., and Weingast B. 1989. "Structure and Process, Politics and Policy - Administrative Arrangements and The Political Control of Agencies," *Virginia Law Review*, 75(2): 431-482.
- Ramseyer, J. 1994. "The Puzzling (In)dependence of courts - A comparative approach" *Journal of Legal Studies*, 23(2): 721-747.
- Spiller and Gely. 1992. "Congressional Control Or Judicial Independence - The Determinants of United-States Supreme-Court Labor-Relations Decisions, 1949-1988," *Rand Journal of Economics*, 23(4): 463-492.

### **Weeks 12 (11/29): Federalism and Decentralization**

- Qian Y. and Weingast, B. 1997. "Federalism as a commitment to preserving market incentives," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 11(4): 83-92.
- Gerring, J. and Strom C. Thacker. 2004. "Political Institutions and Corruption: The Role of Unitarism and Parliamentarism," *British Journal of Political Science*, 34: 295-330.
- Arzaghi, M. and Henderson V. 2005. "Why countries are fiscally decentralizing?" *Journal of Public Economics*, 89(7): 1157-1189.

- Brancati, D. 2006. “Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism?” *International Organization*, 60(3): 651-685

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: DRAFT OF PAPER DUE ON 11/29 \*\*\***

**Weeks 13 (12/6): Policy Outcomes I**

- Blais, A., Blake, D., and Dion, S. 1993. “Do Parties Make A Difference?” *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(1): 40-62.
- Blais, A., Blake, D., and Dion, S. 1996. “Do Parties Make A Difference? A Reappraisal,” *American Journal of Political Science*, 40(2): 514-520.
- Pettersson-Lidbom, P. 2008. “Do Parties Matter For Economic Outcomes? A Regression-Discontinuity Approach” *Journal of The European Economic Association* 6(5): 1037-1056.
- Folke, O. 2010. “Shades of Brown and Green: Party Effects In Proportional Election Systems,” Working Paper, Columbia University.

**Weeks 14 (12/13): Policy Outcomes II**

- Huber, J. D., and Powell G. B. 1994. “Congruence Between Citizens and Policy-Makers In Two Visions of Liberal Democracy.” *World Politics*. 46: (3) 291-326.
- Tsebelis, G . 1999. “Veto Players and Law Production In Parliamentary Democracies: An Empirical Analysis,” *American Political Science Review*, 93(3): 591-608.
- Chang, Eric C. C. 2008. “Electoral Incentives and Budgetary Spending: Rethinking The Role of Political Institutions,” *Journal of Politics*, 70(4): 1086-1097.
- Tsebelis G. and Chang Ecc. 2004. “Veto Players and The Structure of Budgets In Advanced Industrialized Countries,” *European Journal of Political Research*, 43(3): 449-476.

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: PAPER DUE ON 12/15 \*\*\***

**\*\*\* FINAL EXAM SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 19 \*\*\***