

**Prof. Tasos Kalandrakis**  
109C Harkness Hall  
Office Hours: W 9:30-11:30am  
[kalandrakis@rochester.edu](mailto:kalandrakis@rochester.edu)

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 advise 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 summarising 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 14 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 Wednesday, December 16. 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 16. An annotated bibliography is due no later than October 30. A draft should be submitted by the end of November. The final paper is due on December 13.

## **READING MATERIALS**

Most of the reading consists of published research articles that are available online through University available repositories and/or will be distributed through Blackboard.

## **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 (9/2): Organizational meeting.**

Course overview.

### **Week 2 (9/9): 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.

### **Week 3 (9/16): 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.
- Benoit, K. 2007. "Electoral Laws As Political Consequences: Explaining The Origins And Change Of Electoral Institutions," *Annual Review of Political Science*, (10): 363-90.
- 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 (9/23): 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 (9/30): 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.

### **Weeks 6 (10/7): 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.

### **Weeks 7 (10/14): Midterm**

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: ONE PAGE SUMMARY OF PAPER DUE 10/16 \*\*\***

**Weeks 8 (10/21): Coalition formation**

- Laver, Michael and Norman Schofield. 1990. *Multiparty Government*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 4 and 5.
- Notes to be distributed in class.

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE 10/30 \*\*\***

**Weeks 9 (10/28): 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 (11/4): Government survival and termination**

- 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 Parliaments," *British Journal of Political Science*, 33(3): 397-418.
- Schleiter, P. and E. Morgan-Jones. 2009. "Constitutional Power and Competing Risks: Monarchs, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and the Termination of East and West European Cabinets," *American Political Science Review*, 103(3): 496-512.

**Weeks 11 (11/11): 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. 1987. "Administrative Procedures as instruments of Political Control," *Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization*, 3(2): 243-277.
- Ramseyer, J. 1994. "The Puzzling (In)dependence of courts - A comparative approach" *Journal of Legal Studies*, 23(2): 721-747.
- Santoni, M. and F. Zucchini. 2004. "Does Policy Stability Increase the Constitutional Court's Independence? The Case of Italy During the First Republic (1956-1992)," *Public Choice*, 120(3): 439-461.

### **Weeks 12 (11/18): 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 11/30 \*\*\***

### **Weeks 13 (12/2): 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. 2014. "Shades of Brown and Green: Party Effects In Proportional Election Systems," *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 12(5): 1361–1395.

### **Weeks 14 (12/9): 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.
- Bawn, Kathleen. 1999. "Money and Majorities in the Federal Republic of Germany: Evidence for a Veto Players Model of Government Spending" *American Journal of Political Science*, 43(3): 707-736.

**\*\*\* W REQUIREMENT: PAPER DUE ON 12/13 \*\*\***

**\*\*\* FINAL EXAM SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16 \*\*\***