Course Description: The subject of this class is collective choice. We take up four topics. First is social choice theory, an approach with a long tradition in political science and economics. This topic is likely to take the first four weeks of the course. I will be lecturing from


which unfortunately cannot be purchased until later this year. Below, I refer to this book as simply “ASB.” I will distribute the material needed from ASB.

We then take up game-theoretic analyses of collective choice, as presented in assorted published papers. The format of this part of the course will be student (and professor) presentations of papers. Our second topic, after social choice theory, is the candidate competition game (or “Downsian model”) of policy formation. In the one-dimensional model, we have the well known median voter theorem; in higher dimensions, however, we encounter a difficult equilibrium existence problem. Some authors overcome this by maintaining the assumption of probabilistic voting.

Our third topic is models of bargaining, particularly pertaining to decision-making in legislatures and committees. Thus, we move from Rubinstein’s model of two-person bargaining under unanimity rule to models with multiple bargainers and more interesting voting rules.

Our fourth and last topic is models of elections repeated through time. In addition to the dynamic aspects of elections, these models also capture various types of incomplete information.

Course Requirements: Homeworks will be required of all students in the first part of the course, during which time I will be lecturing on social choice theory. After that, paper presentations will be required of all students on a voluntary basis.
Students who are taking the course for credit will also be required to produce a term paper — I will explain more about this in class.

Readings: The following list contains readings on social choice theory and papers that I think are interesting or otherwise valuable. We will most likely select from these papers, though deviations from the list are possible.

Social Choice

- preference rationalizable choice – ASB, Chapter 1.
- impossibility theorems – ASB, Sections 2.1-2.3.
- acyclicity and simple rules – ASB, Sections 3.1-3.3.
- single-peakedness – ASB, Sections 4.1-4.4.
- acyclicity and multiple dimensions – ASB, Sections 5.1-5.3.
- core instability – ASB, Section 5.4.
- chaos

Two-candidate Competition

- uncovered set
- probabilistic voting


**Bargaining**


**Repeated Elections**
