

Syllabus, PSC 335/535 "Bureaucratic Politics"

Instructor:

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Fall 2006
University of Rochester
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Time and Place:

Wednesdays 12:30 to 3:15 in Harkness 113

Prerequisites:

Much of the material we cover relies on game-theoretic argument and statistical evidence. You should have taken at least one course in Positive Theory and one course in Statistics.

Overview:

This course covers a selection of work in Political Science, Political Economy, and Economics on government bureaucracies. The works we examine are grouped into 5 topics: (1) Delegation of policy authority from politicians to bureaucrats, (2) the operation of patronage systems and explanations for the emergence of "merit systems", (3) the extent of "autonomous" bureaucratic influence in policy-making, (4) concerns over the "capture" of regulatory agencies by the firms they regulate, and (5) the role of bureaucrats' motivations and policy preferences in the performance and design of bureaucratic institutions; Because my expertise is almost totally confined to U.S. politics, almost all the work reviewed addresses bureaucratic politics in the U.S.

Requirements:

This course is a seminar. Although I will spend some time during each meeting introducing the material and (when needed) clarifying the technical aspects of the readings, the primary purpose of our meetings is student-lead critique and discussion of the readings. As such, I require all students to show up to class having read the readings for that week carefully, and ready to contribute critiques and questions for discussion. I'll give some suggestions during our first meeting on how each of you should prepare for these discussions.

The one graded assignment for the course is a research paper that each student must submit by the end of the semester (I'll specify a due date during our first meeting). I will grade this paper on the extent to which it amounts to a good start towards a fully-developed piece of original research on a topic in bureaucratic politics. At a minimum, the paper should address a well-defined question or set of questions, and include a theoretical argument along with a detailed plan for the empirical assessment of that argument. Preliminary empirical results regarding that argument will be rewarded, but are not required.

Finally, I require that each student meet with me individually by November 1 to establish the primary question(s) his/her final paper will address and to discuss his/her "plan of attack" for the paper.

Schedule:

Almost all of these readings are available electronically. Those that are can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink. Excerpts from books (the un-linked readings) will be posted on [EReserves](#).

Week 1 (Sep 6). Delegation from Politicians to Bureaucrats: Overview and some Normative Motivation

- Useful, but not required, survey: Bendor, Glazer, and Hammond (2001) ["Theories of delegation."](#) Annual Review

of Political Science. 4: 235.

- Chs. 1 and 2 of Huber and Shipan (2002) *Deliberate Discretion*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lowi (1987) "[Two Roads to Serfdom.](#)" *American University Law Review* 36: 295
- Mashaw (1985) "[Prodelegation: why administrators should make political decisions.](#)" *JLEO* 1(1): 81.

Week 2 (Sep 13). Explanations for Delegation: Blame Shifting and Credit-Claiming.

- Chapters 5 and 7 of Fiorina (1982) *Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment*.
- Fiorina (1982) "[Legislative choice of regulatory form: legal process or administrative process?](#)" *Public Choice* 39(1): 233.
(Optional)
- Fiorina and Noll (1978) "[Voters, bureaucrats and legislators: a rational choice perspective on the growth of bureaucracy](#)" *Journal of Public Economics* 9(2): 239.
- Golden (2003) "[Electoral connections: the effects of the personal vote on political patronage, bureaucracy, and legislation in postwar Italy.](#)" *BJPS* 33(2): 189.

Week 3 (Sep 20). Explanations for Delegation: Politicians' Needs for Information

- Epstein and O'Halloran (1994) "[Administrative Procedures, Information, and Agency Discretion.](#)" *AJPS* 38(3): 697
- Bendor and Meirowitz (2004) "[Spatial Models of Delegation.](#)" *APSR* 98(2): 293.
- Gailmard (2002) "[Expertise, subversion, and bureaucratic discretion.](#)" *JLEO* 18(2): 536.
- Epstein and O'Halloran (1996) "[Divided government and the design of administrative procedures: a formal model and empirical test](#)" *JOP* 58(2): 373.
- Huber, Shipan, and Pfahler (2001) "[Legislatures and Statutory Control of the Bureaucracy.](#)" *AJPS* 45(2): 330
- Volden (2002) "[Delegating power to bureaucracies: evidence from the states.](#)" *JLEO* 18(1): 187

Week 4 (Sep 27). Control by the U.S. Congress? Part 1

- McCubbins and Schwarz (1985) "[Congressional oversight overlooked: police patrols versus fire alarms.](#)" *AJPS* 28(1): 165.
- Weingast and Moran (1983) "[Bureaucratic discretion or congressional control? Regulatory policymaking by the Federal Trade Commission.](#)" *JPE* 91(5): 765.
- Weingast (1984) "[The Congressional-bureaucratic system: A principal-agent perspective \(with applications to the SEC\).](#)" *Public Choice* 44(1): 147.

Week 5 (Oct 4). Control by the U.S. Congress? Part 2

- Moe (1987) "[An assessment of the positive theory of 'congressional dominance'.](#)" *LSQ* 12(4): 475.
- Ferejohn and Shipan (1990) "[Congressional influence on bureaucracy](#)" *JLEO*: 6(Special Issue): 1.
- Shipan (2004) "[Regulatory regimes, agency actions, and the conditional nature of congressional influence.](#)" *APSR* 98(3): 467.

Week 6 (Oct 11). Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control

- McNollGast (1987) "[Administrative procedures as instruments of political control](#)" *JLEO* 3(2): 242.
- de Figueiredo, Spiller, and Urbiztondo (1999) "[An informational perspective on administrative procedures.](#)" *JLEO* 15(1): 283.
- Balla (1998) "[Administrative procedures and political control of the bureaucracy.](#)" *APSR* 92(3): 663.
- Hamilton and Schroeder (1994) "[Strategic regulators and the choice of rulemaking procedures: the selection of formal vs. informal rules in regulating hazardous waste.](#)" *Law and Contemporary Problems* 57(2): 111.
- de Figueiredo and Vanden Bergh (2001) "[Protecting the weak: why and when states adopt an administrative procedure act.](#)" Working Paper.

Week 7 (Oct 25--Fall Break is the Previous Week). Patronage vs. Merit, Part 1: How and Why Patronage Work(s)ed

- Wilson (1961) "[The economy of patronage](#)" *JPE* 69(4): 369.

- Johnston (1979) ["Patrons and clients, jobs and machines: a case study of the uses of patronage"](#) APSR 73(2): 385.
- Troesken (1999) ["Patronage and public-sector wages in 1896"](#) Journal of Economic History 59(2): 424.
- James (2006) ["Patronage regimes and american party development from 'The Age of Jackson' to the progressive era"](#) BJPS 36(1): 39.

Week 8 (Nov 1). Patronage vs. Merit, Part 2: The Transition from Patronage to Merit

- Chapters 3 and 6 of Skowronek (1982) "Building a new American state: the expansion of national administrative capacities 1877 - 1920." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson and Libecap (1994) ["Patronage to merit and control of the federal government labor force."](#) Explorations in Economic History 31(1): 91.
- Theriault (2003) ["Patronage, the Pendleton Act, and the power of the people."](#) JOP 65(1): 50.
- Gimpel (1993) ["Reform-resistant and reform-adopting machines: the electoral foundations of urban politics 1910-1930"](#) Political Research Quarterly 46(2): 371.

Week 9 (Nov 8). "Bureaucratic Autonomy"?

- Kernell and McDonald (1999) ["Congress and America's political development: the transformation of the post office from patronage to service"](#) AJPS 43(3): 792.
- Carpenter (2000) ["State building through reputation building: coalitions of esteem and program innovation in the national postal system."](#) *Studies in American Political Development*. 14(2): 121--155
- Kernell (2001) ["Rural free delivery as a critical test of alternative models of American political development"](#) *Studies in American Political Development*. 15(1): 103--112
- Carpenter (2001) ["The political foundations of bureaucratic autonomy: a response to Kernell"](#) *Studies in American Political Development*. 15(1): 113--122

Week 10 (Nov 15). Capture and Collusion, Part 1.

- (Skim) Stigler (1971) ["The theory of economic regulation."](#) Bell Journal of Economics and Management Science 2(1): 3.
- (Skim) Peltzman (1976) ["Toward a more general theory of regulation"](#) Journal of Law and Economics 19(2): 211.
- Chapter 1 of Adams (1981) "The politics of defense contracting."
- Eckert (1981) ["The life cycle of regulatory commissioners"](#) Journal of Law and Economics 24(1): 113.
- Gormley (1979) ["A test of the revolving door hypothesis at the FCC"](#) AJPS 23(4): 665.
- Cohen (1986) ["The dynamics of the 'revolving door' on the FCC"](#) AJPS 30(4): 689.

Week 11 (Nov 29--Thanksgiving Break is the Previous Week). Capture and Collusion, Part 2.

- Spiller (1990) ["Politicians, interest groups, and regulators: a multiple-principals agency theory of regulation, or 'let them be bribed'"](#) Journal of Law and Economics 33(1): 65.
- Carpenter (2004) ["Protection without capture: product approval by a politically responsive, learning regulator."](#) APSR 98(4): 613.
- Gordon and Hafer (2005) ["Flexing muscle: corporate political expenditures as signals to the bureaucracy."](#) APSR 99(2): 245.
- Chapter 11 of Laffont and Tirole (1999) "A theory of incentives in procurement and regulation." 4th Edition, MIT Press.
- Martimort (1999) ["The life cycle of regulatory agencies: dynamic capture and transaction costs."](#) Review of Economic Studies 66(4): 929.

Week 12 (Dec 6). "Motivated" Bureaucrats, Part 1.

- Chapters 3 and 6 of Kaufmann (1960) "The forest ranger." As reprinted in 2006 by Resources for the Future Press.
- Chapter 6 of Lipsky (1980) "Street-Level Bureaucracy." Russell Sage Foundation.
- Chapter 4 ("Beliefs") of Wilson (1989) "Bureaucracy." Basic Books.
- Brehm and Gates (1993) ["Donut shops and speed traps: evaluating models of supervision on police behavior."](#) AJPS 37(2): 555.
- Gailmard and Patty (2006) ["Slackers and Zealots: Civil service, policy discretion, and bureaucratic expertise."](#)

Working Paper.

Week 13 (Dec 13). "Motivated" Bureaucrats, Part 2.

- Prendergast (2003) ["The Motivation and Bias of Bureaucrats."](#) Working Paper. (Forthcoming in the American Economic Review)
- Prendergast (2001) ["Selection and oversight in the public sector, with the Los Angeles Police Department as an Example."](#) NBER Working Paper 8664.
- Dewatripont and Tirole (1999) ["Advocates"](#) JPE 107(1): 1.