Syllabus, PSC 535 "Bureaucratic Politics" (Graduate)

Spring, 2010

Instructors:

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Time and Place:

Mondays 10:00 to 1:00 in Harkness 329

Description:

This course covers a selection of work in Political Science, Economics and Sociology on bureaucracy -- mostly in government but to some extent in the private sector as well. The goal of the course is to build familiarity with recent and important theoretical approaches, empirical strategies, and results regarding major questions about bureaucratic politics.

Requirements:

This course is a seminar. Although the instructors 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, the readings assigned for each week will be parceled out to students who will be expected to summarize their main approach and result in a 15 minute presentation. We will then hold a student-led discussion of the readings for that week. We 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.

There are two major assignments. First, there will be a midterm in which students must write a review of a published article on bureaucratic politics. Second, each student must develop a research proposal which must be submitted in writing, and be explained to the class in a 20 minute presentation at the end of the semester. The research proposal must be grounded in a review and critique of the readings covered in one of the topics on the syllabus below.

Books:
Unfortunately, there are 4 books that we're using too much of to legally or ethically provide copies to you. These books are listed below. They aren't available from the bookstore, so you'll need to order them online. In each case, we've provided the date on which you'll need to have them read so that you know when you need to get them ordered.


Most other readings are in journals accessible from a university computer. The few excerpts from books that we will scan in and put on e-reserves.

**Schedule:**

**Week 1 (Jan 25).** Introduction to the Course (no readings)

**Week 2 (Feb 1).** Organization Theory in Sociology

- Stinchcombe (1965) "Bureaucratic and Craft Administration of Production" *Administrative Science Quarterly* 4(2): 168

**Week 3 (Feb 8).** Organization Theory in Economics Part 1


**Week 4 (Feb 15).** Organization Theory in Economics Part 2

Introduction and Chapters 9 through 11

Week 5 (Feb 22). Organization Theory Applied by Political Scientists.


Week 6 (March 1). Determinants of Bureaucratic Discretion Part 1.

- Huber and Shipan (2002) Deliberate Discretion Chapters 1, 4, 6, and 7

Week 7 (March 8). Spring Break

Week 8 (March 15). Determinants of Bureaucratic Discretion Part 2


Week 9 (March 22). Allocation of Authority Within the Executive Part 1

- Zegart (1999) Flawed by Design Chapters 1, 4, and 5

Week 10 (March 29). Allocation of Authority Within the Executive Part 2


Week 11 (April 5). Judicial vs. Administrative Implementation

- Burke (2004) Lawsuits, Lawyers, and Legal Rights Chapters 1 and 3

Week 12 (April 12). Option 1: Patronage vs. Merit

- Sean Gailmard and John W. Patty (2007) "Slackers and Zealots: Civil Service, Policy

Week 12 (April 12). Option 2: Organizational Choice


Week 12 (April 12). Option 3: Inference about Bureaucratic Preferences


Weeks 14 and 15 (April 19 and 26) Student Presentations