

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Department of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University
AS.190.632

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Wednesdays, 10:00 AM

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This course explores institutional development in American national politics, from the Founding until the present. It traces parties, Congress, the presidency, bureaucracy, and courts, and also examines how those institutions have interacted with one another, and shaped and been shaped by the mass public, across American history. Throughout the course, we will consider how ideas, interests, procedures, and sequence together shape institutions as they collide and abrade over time. Finally, although it hardly covers the entire corpus across the subfield, the course is also designed to prepare students to sit for comprehensive examinations in American politics.

While the authors come from a variety of theoretical vantage points, combining classic and newer readings, this course is, in a sense, a very traditional one. We examine the formal sites where power is exercised, and the political elites who exercise it. By the end of the semester, you should have a better sense of the virtues – and limits – of such an approach.

For three classes, you will write short (up to 5 pages) papers, succinctly bringing together the reading for a particular week. Avoid summary. Instead, specify the core theoretical, methodological, or interpretive issues at stake, and make clear how the various authors have approached them. Papers should be circulated via e-mail to the entire class by noon on Tuesday. Sign-ups will take place the first week. The presenters will also offer a short joint presentation at the beginning of each class, highlighting important questions and specifying topics for us to discuss.

To synthesize the material and move you toward the comp, you will take a 36-hour exam, on a date to be determined later in the semester.

For each class, we have also included recommended readings. They should form the basis of a comprehensive exam list in American politics. You will also be expected to cite work from the recommended list on your final exam for the class.

January 25: INTRODUCTION

No Readings Assigned

February 1: THE FOUNDING

Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 93-140.

Robert A. Dahl, *How Democratic Is the American Constitution*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 7-72, 141-157, 164-167, 175-183.

The Federalist 1, 10, 23, 39, 48, 51, 70, 78.

Recommended:

The Federalist 35, 47, 48, 51, 57, 63, 85.

Herbert Storing, *The Anti-Federalist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 73-79, 201-223, 234-235, 244-246, 332-359.

Robert A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

Jack Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (New York: Knopf, 1996).

David Brian Robertson, *The Original Compromise: What the Constitution's Framers Were Thinking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3-19.

James Sterling Young, *The Washington Community, 1800-1828* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966), 65-83.

Elizabeth Beaumont, *The Civic Constitution: Civic Visions and Struggles in the Path toward Constitutional Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

February 8: THE PARTY PERIOD AND BEYOND

Daniel Schlozman and Sam Rosenfeld, *The Hollow Parties: The Many Pasts and Disordered Present of American Party Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming), chs. 2 and 3.

Eric Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 3-84.

Jamie L. Carson and Jeffery A. Jenkins, "Examining the Electoral Connection across Time," *Annual Review of Political Science* 14 (2011): 25-46.

Recommended:

Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

Joel Silbey, *The American Political Nation, 1838-1993* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

Amy Bridges, "Rethinking the Origins of Machine Politics," in *Power, Culture, and Place: Essays on New York City*, ed. John Hull Mollenkopf (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1989), 53-73.

Richard L. McCormick, "The Party Period and Public Policy: An Exploratory Hypothesis," *Journal of American History* 66 (1979): 279-298.

- Erik J. Engstrom and Samuel Kernell, *Party Ballots, Reform, and the Transformation of America's Electoral System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1-57, 185-200.
- Richard Oestreicher, "Urban Working-Class Political Behavior and Theories of American Electoral Politics," *Journal of American History* 74 (1988): 1257-1286.
- Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2009).
- Harold Gosnell, "Thomas C. Platt—Political Manager," *Political Science Quarterly* 38 (1923): 443-469.
- Elizabeth Sanders, *The Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
- Joseph Cooper and David Brady, "Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn," *American Political Science Review* 75 (1981): 411-425.

February 15: IDEOLOGY AND OPINION

- Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter (New York: Free Press, 1964), 206-61.
- Shanto Iyengar, Yphtach Lelkes, Matthew Levendusky, Neil Malhotra, and Sean J. Westwood, "The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States," *Annual Review of Political Science* 22 (2019): 129-146.
- Lilliana Mason, *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 1-16, 78-101.
- Christopher H. Achen and Larry M. Bartels, *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 116-145, 267-296, 311-328.

Recommended:

- John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- Robert S. Erikson, Michael B. MacKuen, and James A. Stimson, *The Macro Polity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
- Arthur Lupia, *Uninformed: Why People Know so Little about Politics and What We Can Do about It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).
- Richard L. Lau and David P. Redlawsk, "Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making," *American Journal of Political Science* 45 (2001): 951-71.

February 22: PARTIES

- John H. Aldrich, *Why Parties: A Second Look* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 3-35, 43-50, 60-64, 255-292.
- Kathleen Bawn, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Maskett, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, "A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (2012): 571-597.

Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (Boston: Addison Wesley, 1957), 114-141.

Schlozman and Rosenfeld, *The Hollow Parties*, ch. 1 and appendices 1 and 2.

Recommended:

Nolan McCarty and Eric Schickler, "On the Theory of Parties," *Annual Review of Political Science* 21 (2018): 175-193.

Gregory Koger, Seth Masket, and Hans Noel, "Partisan Webs: Information Exchange and Party Networks," *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (2009): 633-653.

Martin Cohen, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller, *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

David Karol, *Party Position Change in American Politics: Coalition Management* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 6-34, 56-102.

Hans Noel, "The Coalition Merchants: The Ideological Roots of the Civil Rights Realignment," *Journal of Politics* 74 (2012): 156-173.

James L. Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States*, rev. ed. (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1983).

V.O. Key, Jr., "A Theory of Critical Elections," *Journal of Politics* 17 (1955): 3-18.

V.O. Key, Jr., "Secular Realignment and the Party System," *Journal of Politics* 21 (1959): 198-210.

David R. Mayhew, *Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

March 1: CONGRESS

Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 17-49.

Keith Krehbiel, *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 20-50.

Frances E. Lee, *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 1-70, 112-141.

Sarah Binder, "The Dysfunctional Congress," *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (2015): 85-101.

Recommended:

David Mayhew, *Congress the Electoral Connection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

Richard Fenno, *Homestyle: House Members in their Districts* (Boston: Little Brown, 1978).

Frances Lee, *Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles, and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 1-23, 74-102.

Nelson Polsby, *How Congress Evolves: Social Bases of Institutional Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1-108.

Steven S. Smith, *The Senate Syndrome: The Evolution of Procedural Warfare in the Modern U.S. Senate* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2014), 163-249.

March 8: PRESIDENCY

Stephen Skowronek, *Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997), 1-58, 407-466.

Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 29-90.

Terry M. Moe and William G. Howell, "Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29 (1999): 850-873.

George C. Edwards, III, *Changing Their Minds? Donald Trump and Presidential Leadership* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 1-10, 307-314.

Recommended:

George C. Edwards III, *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

Samuel Kernell, *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, 4th ed. (Washington: CQ Press, 2007).

Joseph Cooper, "From Congressional to Presidential Preeminence: Power and Politics in Late Nineteenth-Century America and Today," in *Congress Reconsidered*, 9th ed., ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (Washington: CQ Press, 2009), 361-92.

Aaron Wildavsky, "The Two Presidencies," *Trans-action* 4 (1966): 7-14.

Brandice Canes-Wrone, William G. Howell, and David E. Lewis, "Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Reevaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis," *Journal of Politics* 70 (2008): 1-16.

March 15: BUREAUCRACY

Daniel Carpenter, *Reputation and Power: Organizational Image and Pharmaceutical Regulation at the FDA* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 33-72, 228-297.

David Lewis, "Presidential Appointments and Personnel," *Annual Review of Political Science* 14 (2011): 47-66.

Terry Moe, "The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure" in *Can the Government Govern?*, ed. John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1989), 267-329.

Donald P. Moynihan, "Public Management for Populists: Trump's Schedule F Executive Order and the Future of the Civil Service." *Public Administration Review* 82 (2021): 174-178.

Recommended:

John D. Huber and Charles R. Shipan, *Deliberate Discretion?: The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

David Epstein and Sharyn O'Halloran, *Delegating Powers: A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policy Making Under Separate Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

- Herbert Kaufman, *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1960).
- Keith E. Whittington and Daniel P. Carpenter, "Executive Power in American Institutional Development," *Perspectives on Politics* 1 (2003): 495-513.
- James Q. Wilson, "The Bureaucracy Problem," *The Public Interest*, Winter 1967, 3-9.
- Mathew McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz, "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms," *American Journal of Political Science* 28 (1984): 165-179.
- Daniel Carpenter, "Evolution of National Bureaucracy in the United States," in *The Executive Branch*, ed. Joel D. Aberbach and Mark A. Peterson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 41-71.
- Barry R. Weingast, "The President, Congress, and the Political-Bureaucratic System," in *The Executive Branch*, ed. Joel D. Aberbach and Mark A. Peterson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 312-343.
- David E. Lewis, *The Politics of Presidential Appointments: Political Control and Bureaucratic Performance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

March 29: LAW & COURTS

- Robert Dahl, "Decision Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as a National Policy Maker," *Journal of Public Law* 6 (1957): 279-295.
- Mark Graber, "The Nonmajoritarian Difficulty: Legislative Deference to the Judiciary," *Studies in American Political Development* 7 (1993): 35-73.
- Howard Gillman, "How Political Parties Can Use the Courts to Advance Their Agendas: Federal Courts in the United States, 1875-1891," *American Political Science Review* 96 (2002): 511-524.
- Keith E. Whittington, "Interpose Your Friendly Hand: Political Supports for the Exercise of Judicial Review by the United States Supreme Court," *American Political Science Review* 99 (2005): 583-596.
- Robert Kagan, *Adversarial Legalism: The American Way of Law*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 3-21, 53-70, 208-238, 261-286.

Recommended:

- Justin Crowe, *Building the Judiciary: Law, Courts, and the Politics of Institutional Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 1-22, 197-269.
- Sarah Binder and Forrest Maltzman, *Advice and Dissent: The Struggle to Shape the Federal Judiciary* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2009).
- Keith E. Whittington, *Political Foundations of Judicial Supremacy: the Presidency, the Supreme Court, and Constitutional Leadership in U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).
- George I. Lovell, *Legislative Deferrals: Statutory Ambiguity, Judicial Power, and American Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Gerald Rosenberg, *The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring about Social Change*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- Thomas M. Keck, "Beyond Backlash," *Law & Society Review* 43 (2009): 151-186.

April 5: POLICYMAKING AND INTEREST GROUPS

- Bryan D. Jones, Sean M. Theriault, and Michelle Whyman. *The Great Broadening: How the Vast Expansion of the Policymaking Agenda Transformed American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 1-50, 227-244.
- John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1995), 116-144.
- Leah Stokes, *Short Circuiting Policy: Interest Groups and the Battle Over Clean Energy and Climate Policy in the American States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 1-67.
- Adam Sheingate, "Policy Regime Decay," *Policy Studies Journal* 50 (2022): 65-89.

Recommended:

- E.E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960).
- Peter Bacharach and Morton S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review* 56 (1962): 947-952.
- Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).
- Theodore J. Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: The Second Republic of the United States*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979).
- Hugh Heclo, "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment," in *The New American Political System*, ed. Anthony King (Washington American Enterprise Institute, 1978).
- Paul Sabatier and Christopher Weible, "The Advocacy Coalition Framework: Innovations and Clarifications," in *Theories of the Policy Process*, 3rd edition, ed. Paul A. Sabatier and Christopher Weible (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 2014).
- Eric M. Patashnik, *Reforms at Risk: What Happens After Major Policy Reforms are Enacted* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
- Deva Woodly, *The Politics of Common Sense: How Social Movements Use Public Discourse to Change Politics and Win Acceptance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
- Timothy M. LaPira and Herschel F. Thomas, *Revolving Door Lobbying: Public Service, Private Influence, and the Unequal Representation of Interests* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2017).

April 12: UNEQUAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

- Larry M. Bartels, *Unequal Democracy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 74-104, 233-308.
- Benjamin I. Page, Larry M. Bartels, and Jason Seawright, "Democracy and the Policy Preferences of Wealthy Americans," *Perspectives on Politics* 11 (2013): 51-73.
- Jacob S. Hacker, Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Paul Pierson, and Kathleen Thelen, "The American Political Economy: A Framework and Agenda for Research," in *The American Political Economy: Politics, Markets, and Power*, ed. Jacob S. Hacker, Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Paul Pierson, and Kathleen Thelen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 1-49.

Chloe Thurston, "Racial Inequality, Market Inequality, and the American Political Economy," in *The American Political Economy: Politics, Markets, and Power*, 133-157.

Recommended:

Alfred Stepan and Juan J. Linz, "Comparative Perspectives on Inequality and the Quality of Democracy in the United States," *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (2011): 841-856.

Martin Gilens and Benjamin Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," *Perspectives on Politics* 12 (2014): 564-581.

Morris P. Fiorina, *Unstable Majorities: Polarization, Party Sorting, and Political Stalemate* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2017).

Alan I. Abramowitz, *The Disappearing Center: Engaged Citizens, Polarization, and American Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, "Winner-Take-All Politics: Public Policy, Political Organization, and the Precipitous Rise of Top Incomes in the United States," *Politics and Society* 38 (2010): 152-204.

Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, *American Amnesia: How the War on Government Led Us to Forget What Made America Prosper* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016).

April 19: CITIZENS & GOVERNMENTS

Suzanne Mettler, *The Citizen-Government Disconnect* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2018), 55-139.

Jamila Michener, Mallory SoRelle and Chloe Thurston, "From the Margins to the Center: A Bottom-Up Approach to Welfare State Scholarship," *Perspectives on Politics* 20 (2022): 154-169.

Jamila Michener, *Fragmented Democracy: Medicaid, Federalism, and Unequal Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 19-83.

Hahrie Han, Andrew Louise Campbell, and Elizabeth McKenna, "Civic Feedbacks: Linking Collective Action, Organizational Strategy, and Influence Over Public Policy," *Perspectives on Politics* 2022: 1-15.

Recommended:

Joe Soss, "Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action," *American Political Science Review* 93 (1999): 363-380.

Joe Soss, Richard C. Fording, and Sanford Schram, *Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Suzanne Mettler, *The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Andrea Louise Campbell, *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism and the American Welfare State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

Jamila Michener, "Policy Feedback in a Racialized Polity," *Policy Studies Journal* 47 (2019): 423-450.

Chloe N. Thurston, *At the Boundaries of Homeownership: Credit, Discrimination, and the American State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Amy E. Lerman and Vesla M. Weaver, *Arresting Citizenship: The Democratic Consequences of American Crime Control* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

April 27: REGIME BREAKDOWN?

Juan J. Linz, "The Perils of Presidentialism," *Journal of Democracy* 1 (1990): 51-69.

Dan Slater, "Democratic Careening," *World Politics* 65 (2013): 729-763.

Kenneth M. Roberts, "Parties, Populism, and Democratic Decay: A Comparative Perspective on Political Polarization in the United States," in *When Democracy Trumps Populism: European and Latin American Lessons for the United States*, eds. Kurt Weyland, Raúl L. Madrid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 132-153.

Paul Pierson and Eric Schickler, "Madison's Constitution Under Stress: A Developmental Analysis of Political Polarization," *Annual Review of Political Science* 23 (2020): 37-58.

David A. Bateman, "Elections, Polarization, and Democratic Resilience," in *Democratic Resilience: Can the United States Withstand Rising Polarization?*, eds. Robert C. Lieberman, Suzanne Mettler, and Kenneth M. Roberts (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 343-368.

Jacob M. Grumbach, *Laboratories against Democracy: How National Parties Transformed State Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022), 151-194.

Recommended:

Julia Azari and Jennifer Smith, "Unwritten Rules: Informal Institutions in Established Democracies," *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (2012): 37-55.

Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky, "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda," *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (2004): 725-740.

Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt, "The Historical Turn in Democratization Studies: A New Research Agenda for Europe and Beyond," *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (2010): 931-968.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2002): 51-66.

Jan-Werner Müller, *What is Populism?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

Can Mudde, *On Extremism and Democracy in Europe* (Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge, 2016).

Dan Slater, "Democratic Careening," *World Politics* 65 (2013): 729-763.

Robert C. Lieberman, Suzanne Mettler, Thomas B. Pepinsky, Kenneth M. Roberts, and Richard Valelly, "The Trump Presidency and American Democracy: A Historical and Comparative Analysis," *Perspectives on Politics* 17 (2019): 463-479.

Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014), 455-557.