

17.202
Graduate Seminar in American Politics II
MIT
Spring 2010
T11-1
4-144

Charles Stewart III
E53-473
x3-3127
e-mail: cstewart@mit.edu
url: <http://web.mit.edu/cstewart/www>

Introduction

This is the second in a sequence of two fields seminars in American politics intended for graduate students in political science, in preparation for taking the general examination in American politics. The material covered in this semester focuses on American political institutions. (17.200, the first semester, covers political behavior.) The readings covered here are not comprehensive, but it is sufficiently broad to give students an introduction to major empirical questions and theoretical approaches that guide the study of American political institutions these days.

Requirements

Weekly attendance and class participation are mandatory.

Depending on enrollments, everyone will lead the seminar discussion at least once, and perhaps twice or thrice.

Weekly one-page memos are required, summarizing an important theme raised in the preceding week's readings and proposing a question or line of discussion to be pursued during the seminar. The one-page memos are due the day before class at 5:00 p.m. and must be distributed to all seminar participants beforehand. (I need to figure out how to do this through Stellar, but if that fails, it will be via e-mail.)

Four longer, four-page essays are also required at various times throughout the semester. The assignment is as follows: You will take a week's reading and pose a general exam-like question that pertains to the reading. You will then write an answer to your question. I will grade the essay and return it to you for your revision, which you will complete by the end of the term. The schedule for these assignments is as follows:

Congress, due February 26
Presidency, due March 19
Courts/Bureaucracy, due April 30
Parties and groups, due May 14

Book Purchases

The following books are available for purchase at the Coop. Each belongs on the shelf of any student of American politics, and so you should own all of them:

1. Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, *Legislative leviathan*, University of California Press.
2. Keith Krehbiel, *Pivotal politics*, University of Chicago Press.
3. David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The electoral connection*, Yale University Press.
4. Poole and Rosenthal, *Ideology and Congress*, 2nd revised edition, Transaction Publishers
5. Richard Neustadt, *Presidential power and the modern presidents*, Free Press
6. Stephen Skowronek, *The politics presidents make*, Harvard University Press
7. Sam Kernell, *Going public*, CQ Press.
8. Charles M. Cameron, *Veto bargaining and the politics of negative power*, Cambridge University Press
9. Gerald Rosenberg, *The hollow hope*, University of Chicago Press.
10. Jeffrey A. Segal and Harold J. Spaeth, *The Supreme Court and the attitudinal model revisited*, Cambridge University Press.
11. James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What government agencies do and why they do it*, Basic Books.
12. John Aldrich, *Why parties? The origin and transformation of political parties in America*. University of Chicago Press.
13. Mancur Olson, *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups*, Harvard University Press.
14. E. E. Schattschneider, *The semi-sovereign people*, Wadsworth Publishing.

Most of these books are in multiple editions. Buy the most recent one for use in class, but we will generally only be reading chapters from the original editions.

Everything that's not at the Coop is available at Dewey or on Stellar.

Reading Schedule

February 2. Introduction

February 9. Congress — representation and institutionalization

Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, "Constituency influence in Congress," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 57 (1963), pp. 45–56

Richard F. Fenno, "The House Appropriations Committee as a political system: The problem of integration." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 56 (1962), pp.310–324.

Nelson W. Polsby, "The institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 62 (1968), pp. 144–68.

David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The electoral connection*, 2nd ed., Yale University Press, [1974] 2004.

Elisabeth R. Gerber, "Legislative response to the threat of popular initiatives," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 40 (1996), pp. 99–128.

John M. Carey, Gary Moncrief, Richard G. Niemi, and Lynda W. Powell, "The effects of term limits on state legislatures," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, vol. 31 (2005), pp. 105–134.

February 16. MONDAY CLASSES. 17.202 doesn't meet

February 23. Congress — party, polarization, and ideology

Keith Krehbiel, *Pivotal politics*, University of Chicago Press, 1998, chap. 1–6, 8.

Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, *Legislative leviathan*, University of California Press, 1993

Poole and Rosenthal, *Ideology and Congress*, 2nd revised edition, Transaction Publishers, 2007, excerpts TBA.

March 2. President I

Richard Neustadt, *Presidential power and the modern presidents*, 1991, chapters 1–8 (original chapters).

Terry M. Moe and William G. Howell, 1999, "Unilateral action and presidential power: A theory," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, vol. 29, pp. 850–872. (23 pp.)

March 9. No class meeting

March 16. President II

Stephen Skowronek, *The politics presidents make*, Harvard University Press, 1997, pp. 3–58, 287–446, skim the rest of part II.

Sam Kernell, *Going public*, 4th ed., CQ Press, 2007, chapter 1–6.

Brandice Canes-Wrone, "The president's legislative influence from public appeals," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 45 (2001), pp. 313–329.

Charles M. Cameron, 2000, *Veto bargaining and the politics of negative power*, Cambridge University Press (ch. 1, 3, 5, 6)

March 23. Spring break

April 6. Courts I — The Supreme Court as an institution

Robert A. Dahl, “Decision making in a democracy: The supreme court as a national policy maker,” *Journal of Public Law*, vol. 6 (1958), pp. 279–95.

Jonathan Casper, “The Supreme Court and national policy making,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 68 (1976), pp. 973–988.

Gerald Rosenberg, *The hollow hope*, chap. 1, part I.

Keith Whittington, “‘Interpose your friendly hand’: Political supports for the exercise of judicial review by the United States Supreme Court,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 99 (2005), pp. 583–596.

April 13. Courts II — Judicial behavior

Jeffrey A. Segal and Harold J. Spaeth, *The Supreme Court and the attitudinal model revisited*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, excerpts TBA.

Jeffrey A. Segal, “Separation of powers games in the positive theory of law and the courts,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 91 (1997), pp. 28–44.

Jeffrey A. Segal, and Harold J. Spaeth, “The influence of *stare decisis* on the votes of United States Supreme Court justices,” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 40 (1996), pp. 971–1003.

Jack Knight and Lee Epstein, “The norm of *stare decisis*,” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 40 (1996), pp. 1018–1035.

April 20. Patriots Day break — no class meeting

April 27. Bureaucracy

James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What government agencies do and why they do it*, Basic Books, 1991 chapters 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 [these are chapters from the original edition; need to double-check with 1991 edition.]

William Niskanen, *Bureaucy and representative democracy*, Aldine-Atherton, 1971, chapters 1, 7, 17, 21.

Terry M. Moe, “Control and feedback in economic regulation: The case of the NLRB,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 79 (1985), pp. 1094–1116.

Graham T. Allison, “Conceptual models and the Cuban missile crisis,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 63, pp. 689–718.

- Mathew McCubbins, Roger Noll, and Barry Weingast, "Administrative procedures as instruments of political control," *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization*, vol. 3, pp. 243–77.
- Daniel Carpenter, "The evolution of national bureaucracy in the United States," in *Institutions of American democracy: The executive branch*, Joel D. Aberbach and Mark A. Peterson, eds., Oxford University Press, 2006, chap. 2.
- Daniel Carpenter, *The forging of bureaucratic autonomy: Reputations, networks, and policy innovation in executive agencies, 1862-1928*, Princeton University Press, 2001, introduction, chap. 1, conclusion.

May 4. Political parties

- V.O. Key, *Southern politics in state and nation*, chap. 3.
- John Aldrich, *Why parties? The origin and transformation of political parties in America*. University of Chicago Press, 1995, chapters 1–6.
- James L. Gibson, Cornelius P. Cotter, John F. Bibby, and Robert J. Huckshorn. "Whither the local parties? A cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of the strength of party organizations," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 29, pp. 139–160.
- Richard Hofstadter, *The idea of a party system: The rise of legitimate opposition in the United States, 1780–1840*, chapter 1.
- Larry M. Bartels, "Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952-1996," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 44 (2000), pp. 35–50.

May 11. Interest groups

- Mancur Olson, *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups*, Harvard University Press [1965] 1971, chapters 1, 2, 5, 6.
- E. E. Schattschneider, *The semi-sovereign people*, Wadsworth Publishing, 1975, chapters 1–2.
- Andrea L. Campbell, "Self-interest, social security, and the distinctive participation patterns of senior citizens," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 96 (2002), pp. 565–74.
- Jack L. Walker, "The origin and maintenance of interest groups in america," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 77 (1983), pp. 390–406.
- David Lowery and Virginia Gray, "The population ecology of Guggi Gulch, or the national regulation of interest group numbers in the American states," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 39 (1995), pp. 1–29.
- Hall, Richard, & Frank Wayman, "Buying time: Moneyed interests and the mobilization of bias in congressional committees." *American Political Science Review*, vol. 84 (1990), pp. 797–820.