

POL SCI 749
Seminar in American Political Institutions

Spring 2022

4:30pm – 7:10pm Wednesday
Bolton Hall 657

Professor Hong Min Park
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Bolton Hall 666

Course Description

This course is a graduate seminar to study American political institutions. It is structured as a “survey” course, providing both an overview of classic works and coverage of important new research in and across the major subfields of American political institutions. Given finite time and vast literatures, breadth will be emphasized over depth, so that, once the seminar is completed, students should have a basic working knowledge of the important literature in and across each field. This will provide a solid framework for further graduate courses (such as Seminars on Congress, the Presidency, Judiciary, etc.) and a subsequent comprehensive exam in American politics.

Course Requirements and Grading

Required Books to consider purchasing for the purpose of this seminar include:

- David R. Mayhew. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press. [more recent edition is also available]
- Samuel Kernell. 1997. *Going Public*. 3rd ed. Washington D.C.: CQ Press. [more recent edition is also available]
- Matt Grossmann and David A. Hopkins. 2016. *Asymmetric Politics: Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Before we meet in the seminar room, it is extremely important for everyone to be familiar with reading for the week. In order to help this process, each student will be required to write a short (1-2 pages) weekly memo, which should include:

- Main theoretical arguments(s) of each reading;
- Data and methods (if it’s an empirical work); and
- Contribution(s) to the literature.

During our seminar, we will first review several important concepts and themes. While each individual reading would be the first step, we would like to focus particularly on how to improve our research on a given topic. In order for an effective use of seminar time, we will aim at answering the following questions:

- Can we make a theoretical argument that is different from the existing literature but is equally convincing enough to explain empirical puzzles?
- Is there a better way to empirically test our theoretical claims?
- How can we understand a given topic (and, more broadly, American politics) in a more systematic way?

Throughout the semester, seminar participants are required to submit three essays for either critical understanding or constructive critique about a set of reading assignments (i.e. existing literature). This is to prepare you for writing “literature review” in your own research. Depending on specific instructions for each essay assignment, I will value the two sets of focus that are explicitly listed in the previous paragraphs of the syllabus. If you are entirely new to political “science” or do not have strong feeling about what and how to do the assignment, then you better see me as soon as possible!

Ultimately, the final course grading will be based upon three parts:

- 1) Weekly Memo (50% = 10 × 5%): Each seminar participant should email their weekly memo (1-2 pages) to me by 8am each Wednesday.
- 2) Literature review essay (15% = 3 × 5%): Three essays (3-5 pages) are required. Instructions and deadlines are listed in the tentative schedule section below.
- 3) Research design (35%): All seminar participants are required to make a short presentation on their research idea (15%). Then, a final written report of research design is due on the last day of the semester (20%).

In general, make-ups for any course requirements will not be given. Seminar participants who miss any requirements because of scheduled activities of an official University student organization, a religious holiday, or a verifiable illness should contact me *in advance* so that alternative arrangements can be made.

If there is a dispute regarding a grade, re-grading is possible under two conditions:

- We will have a “cooling” period of at least *two* business days. Any complaints or disputes will NOT be accepted in this period.
- Then, all complaints must be *typed* and must clearly express specific concerns. These written statements must be accompanied by citations of support from course materials, i.e. readings, and/or class discussion, in order to ensure accuracy.

Additional Statement for Graduate Students

We have to realize that graduate study is far different from undergraduate study in many ways. Among others, I want to emphasize that it should be considered as a “vocation” not a “hobby”; thus we all should be professional. Do NOT ever think yourself as a “student”!!! You are right now being trained to “work”!!!

- 1) I do not check attendance. No serious graduate seminar does, in fact. Every seminar participant is responsible for what is discussed in each meeting. Do NOT send me an email to ask, “Is there anything important I missed?” Of course, you missed a lot!
- 2) Meeting the deadlines is an extremely important “skill” for your future. The real world is not “patiently” waiting for you. No one blames your lateness. Instead, they will just stop working with (or fire) you.
- 3) We will no longer enjoy a “student-friendly” college classroom. Instead let’s be “consumer-friendly”! Keep in mind that consumers in the academic world are the readers of your written work. So, please consider me and your classmates as potential “consumers” when submitting your written assignments.
- 4) I am particularly interested in conducting research with graduate students. If possible, develop an original research idea and come to see me.

To summarize, BE PROFESSIONAL!

Classroom Policies

I am intolerant of disruptive behavior in the seminar room, including talking during seminars, reading newspapers, and especially the ringing of cell phones or pagers. Laptops may be used for professional purposes, but not for playing games, or surfing the Internet. Seminar participants engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the seminar room in order to preserve the learning environment for other participants. Seminar discussions are expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of others’ opinions. Please do not intimidate, patronize, or ridicule anyone else during the course of seminar activities.

No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has detailed its policies on academic integrity (http://www3.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm). Seminar participants should acquaint themselves with policies concerning cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and academic interference. Any submission of work by a seminar participant in this seminar constitutes a certificate that the work complies with university policies on academic integrity.

Any seminar participants with disabilities of any kind (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, systemic, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact Professor Park and the Student Accessibility Center (Mitchell 112, 414-229-6287, <http://www4.uwm.edu/sac>) at the beginning of the semester.

In addition, seminar participants can refer to <https://uwm.edu/secu/syllabus-links/> for more detailed information on university-wide policies.

Instructor Availability

Feel free to stop by my office during regularly scheduled office hours (Bolton 666, Wednesdays 1:00pm – 2:30pm). If you are unable to attend office hours, contact me via email to arrange an appointment. I, unfortunately, cannot guarantee that I will be able to meet with people who come to my office without first scheduling a time to see me.

Covid-19 Statement

I understand that Covid-19 can affect people in various ways. We can protect ourselves only when we follow appropriate procedures recommended by specialists—let’s make sure that we are all familiar with essential information on Covid-19 (for example, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>). In addition, UWM closely monitors Covid-19 situations around the campus, so seminar participants should also check the UWM Covid-19 website regularly (<https://uwm.edu/coronavirus/students/>).

Whenever seminar participants are negatively affected by Covid-19 or related issues, please contact me immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made in a timely manner. I will work hard on this but cannot always guarantee that all the requests be accommodated, in order to be fair to everybody in class.

Tentative Schedule and Reading

You should complete the required reading prior to coming to the seminar. Recommended readings will be available upon request. Professor Park reserves the rights to alter the reading assignments and discussion schedule in a timely fashion according to the progress of the seminar.

1/26 – Introduction

- Discuss syllabus

2/2 – How to Research American Political Institutions

Required:

- Anthony Downs. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: HarperCollins. Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6.
- *David R. Mayhew. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor. 1996. “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms.” MPIFG Discussion Paper. (https://www.mpifg.de/pu/mpifg_dp/dp96-6.pdf)

Recommended:

- S. M. Amadae and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. 1999. "The Rochester School: The Origin of Positive Political Theory." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 269-295.
- James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. 2006. "Elaborating the "New Institutionalism"." In R. A. W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder, and Bert A. Rockman. Eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kenneth A. Shepsle. 2006. "Rational Choice Institutionalism." *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*.
- Elizabeth Sanders. 2006. "Historical Institutionalism." *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*.

2/9 – Congress, Representation

Required:

- Joseph Bafumi and Michael C. Herron. 2010. "Leapfrog Representation and Extremism: A Study of American Voters and Their Members in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 104(3): 519-542.
- Jamie L. Carson, Gregory Koger, Matthew J. Lebo and Everett Young. 2010. "The Electoral Costs of Party Loyalty in Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(3): 598-616.
- Justin Grimmer. 2013. "Appropriators not Position Takers: The Distorting Effects of Electoral Incentives on Congressional Representation." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 624-642.
- Christian R. Gross, Neil Malhotra and Robert Parks Van Houweling. 2015. "Explaining Explanations: How Legislators Explain their Policy Positions and How Citizens React." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 724-743.
- Daniel M. Butler and Adam M. Dynes. 2016. "How Politicians Discount the Opinions of Constituents with Whom They Disagree." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(4): 975-989.
- Mia Costa. 2021. "Ideology, Not Affect: What Americans Want from Political Representation." *American Journal of Political Science* 65(2): 342-358.
- Ruth Dassonneville, Andre Blais, Semra Sevi, and Jean-Francois Daoust. 2021. "How Citizens Want Their Legislator to Vote." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 46(2): 297-321.

Recommended:

- Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1963. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *American Political Science Review*. 57: 45-56.
- Richard Fenno. 1977. "U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies." *American Political Science Review*. 71: 883-916.

- James A. Stimson, Michael B. Mackuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 543-565.
- Justin Grimmer. 2013. *Representational Style in Congress: What Legislators Say and Why It Matters*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2/16 – Congress, Theoretical Perspectives

Required:

- Barry R. Weingast and William Marshall. 1987. "The Industrial Organization of Congress." *Journal of Political Economy* 96: 132-163.
- Keith Krehbiel. 1991. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 3.
- David W. Rohde. 1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1-2.
- Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 4-5.

Recommended:

- Joseph Cooper and David W. Brady. 1981. "Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn." *American Political Science Review* 75: 411-425.
- David W. Rohde. 1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Entire book.
- Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2. [An extremely nice summary of their 1993 book.]
- Steven S. Smith. 2007. *Party Influence in Congress*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5.

Literature Review Essay #1: Write an essay about three theoretical perspectives of congressional organizations: distributive, informational and partisan perspectives. In doing so, focus on assumptions and theoretical arguments to vividly contrast the three perspectives. (Due on end of February)

2/23 – Presidency, Traditional Approach

Required:

- Richard E. Neustadt. 1990. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York: Free Press. Chapter 3.
- *Samuel Kernell. 1997. *Going Public*. 3rd ed. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- Brandice Canes-Wrone. 2001. "The President's Legislative Influence from Public Appeals." *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 313-329.

Recommended:

- Stephen Skowronek. 1993. *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Richard J. Powell. 1999. "Going Public Revisited: Presidential Speechmaking and the Bargain Setting in Congress." *Congress and the Presidency* 26: 171-191.
- Brandice Canes-Wrone. 2006. *Who Leads Whom? Presidents, Policy, and the Public*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

3/2 – Presidency, Unilateral Actions

Required:

- Terry M. Moe and William H. Howell. 1999. "Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29(4): 850-873.
- Kenneth R. Mayer. 1999. "Executive Orders and Presidential Power." *Journal of Politics* 61(2): 445-466.
- Alexander Bolton and Sharece Thrower. 2016. "Legislative Capacity and Executive Unilateralism." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(3): 649-663.
- Dino P. Christenson and Douglas L. Kriner. 2017. "Constitutional Qualms or Politics as Usual? The Factors Shaping Public Support for Unilateral Action." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2): 335-349.
- Sharece Thrower. 2017. "To Revoke or Not Revoke? The Political Determinants of Executive Order Longevity." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(3): 642-656.
- Andrew Reeves and Jon C. Rogowski. 2018. "The Political Cost of Unilateral Action." *American Journal of Political Science* 62(2): 424-440.

Recommended:

- Ian Ostrander and Joel Sievert. 2013. "The Logic of Presidential Signing Statements." *Political Research Quarterly* 66(1): 140-152.
- Ian Ostrander and Joel Sievert. 2013. "What's So Sinister about Presidential Signing Statements?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43(1): 58-80.
- Dino P. Christenson and Douglas L. Kriner. 2017. "Mobilizing the Public Against the President: Congress and the Political Costs of Unilateral Action." *American Journal of Political Science* 61(4): 769-785.

Literature Review Essay #2: Write an essay about how the modern American presidency has exercised unilateral power? In doing so, focus on both theoretical and empirical aspects. (Due on end of March)

3/9 – Bureaucracy

Required:

- Mathew D. McCubbins, and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. “Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols Versus Fire Alarms.” *American Journal of Political Science* 28: 165-79.
- Mathew D. McCubbins, Roger Noll, and Barry Weingast. 1987. “Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control,” *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 3: 243-77.
- Joshua D. Clinton, David E. Lewis and Jennifer L. Selin. 2014. “Influencing the Bureaucracy: The Irony of Congressional Oversight.” *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2): 387-401.
- Jennifer L. Selin. 2015. “What Makes an Agency Independent?” *American Journal of Political Science* 59(4): 971-987.
- Christina M. Kinane. 2021. “Control without Confirmation: The Politics of Vacancies in Presidential Appointments.” *American Political Science Review* 115(2): 599-614.
- Kenneth Lowande and Rachel Augustin Potter. 2021. “Congressional Oversight Revisited: Politics and Procedure in Agency Rulemaking.” *Journal of Politics* 83(1): 401-408.

Recommended:

- Terry Moe. 1987. “An Assessment of the Positive Theory of Congressional Dominance.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 12: 475-520.
- Dan Wood, and Richard W. Waterman. 1991. “The Dynamics of Political Control of Bureaucracy.” *American Political Science Review* 85: 801-828.
- Andrew Whitford. 2005. “The Pursuit of Political Control by Multiple Principals.” *Journal of Politics* 67: 29-49.
- Sean Gailmard. 2009. “Multiple Principals and Oversight of Bureaucratic Policy-Making.” *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 21: 161-186.

3/16 – Supreme Court

Required:

- Tracey E. George and Lee Epstein. 1992. “On the Nature of Supreme Court Decision Making.” *American Political Science Review* 86(2): 323-337.
- Jack Knight and Lee Epstein. 1996. “Norm of Stare Decisis.” *American Journal of Political Science* 40(4): 1018-1035.
- Black, Ryan C., and Ryan J. Owens. 2009. “Agenda Setting in the Supreme Court: The Collision of Policy and Jurisprudence.” *Journal of Politics* 71(3): 1062-1075.
- Clifford J. Carrubba, Barry Friedman, Andrew D. Martin, and Georg Vanberg. 2012. “Who Controls the Content of Supreme Court Opinions?” *American Journal of Political Science* 56: 400-412.

- Brandon L. Bartels and Christopher D. Johnston. 2013. "On the Ideological Foundations of Supreme Court Legitimacy in the American Public." *American Journal of Political Science*. 57(1): 184-199.
- Stephen P. Nicholson and Thomas G. Hansford. 2014. "Partisans in Robes: Party Cues and Public Acceptance of Supreme Court Decisions." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(3): 620-636.

Recommended:

- Jeffrey A. Segal, and Harold J. Spaeth. 2002. *The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee Epstein, and Jack Knight. 1997. *The Choices Justices Make*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- Forrest Maltzman, James F. Spriggs II, and Paul J. Wahlbeck. 2000. *Crafting Law on the Supreme Court: The Collegial Game*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- James L. Gibson and Michael J. Nelson. 2015. "Is the U.S. Supreme Court's Legitimacy Grounded in Performance Satisfaction and Ideology?" *American Journal of Political Science* 59(1): 162-174.

3/30 – Political Parties, Theoretical Approach

Required:

- Keith Krehbiel. 1993. "Where's the Party?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23: 235-266.
- John H. Aldrich. 1995. *Why Parties?* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1-2.
- Gary W. Cox and Matthew D. McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 and 5.

Recommended:

- James L. Sundquist. 1983. *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States*, Revised Edition. Brookings Institution Press.
- Sarah A. Binder, Eric D. Lawrence, and Forrest Maltzman. 1999. "Uncovering the Hidden Effect of Party." *Journal of Politics* 61: 815-831.
- James Snyder, Jr. and Tim Groseclose. 2000. "Estimating Party Influence in Congressional Roll- Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 193-211.
- Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2001. "The Hunt for Party Discipline in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 95: 673-687.

4/6 – Political Parties in the 21st Century

Required:

- Bawn, Kathleen, Martin Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2012. “A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands, and Nominations in American Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 10(3): 571–597.
- *Matt Grossmann and David A. Hopkins. 2016. *Asymmetric Politics: Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Recommended:

- Cass R. Sunstein. 2009. *Going to Extremes: How Like Minds Unite and Divide*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jonathan Haidt. 2012. *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Thomas Frank. 2012. *Pity the Billionaire*. New York: Picador.
- Thomas Frank. 2016. *Listen, Liberal*. New York: Picador.

4/13 – Party polarization

Required:

- Marc J. Hetherington. 2001. “Resurgent Mass Partisanship: The Role of Elite Polarization.” *American Political Science Review* 95: 619-632.
- Geoffrey Layman and Thomas Carsey. 2002. “Party Polarization and ‘Conflict Extension’ in the American Electorate.” *American Journal of Political Science* 46(4): 786-802.
- Jamie L. Carson, Michael Crespín, Charles Finocchiaro, and David Rohde. 2007. “Redistricting, Constituency Influence, and Party Polarization in Congress.” *American Politics Research* 35: 878-904.
- Matthew S. Levendusky. 2013. “Why Do Partisan Media Polarize Viewers?” *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 611-623.
- James N. Druckman, Erik Peterson and Rune Slothuus. 2013. “How Elite Partisan Polarization Affects Public Opinion Formation.” *American Political Science Review* 107(1): 57-79.
- Danielle M. Thomsen. 2014. “Ideological Moderates Won’t Run: How Party Fit Matters for Partisan Polarization in Congress.” *Journal of Politics* 76(3): 786-797.
- Shanto Iyengar and Sean J. Westwood. 2015. “Fear and Loathing across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization.” *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3): 690-707.
- Christopher McConnell, Yotam Margalit, Neil Malhotra and Matthew Levendusky. 2018. “The Economic Consequences of Partisanship in a Polarized Era.” *American Journal of Political Science* 62(1): 5-18.

- Eli J. Finkel, Christopher A. Bail, Mina Cikara, Peter H. Ditto, Shanto Iyengar, Samara Klar, Lilliana Mason, Mary C. McGrath, Brendan Nyhan, David G. Rand, Linda J. Skitka, Joshua A. Tucker, Jay J. Van Bravel, Cynthia S. Wang and James N. Druckman. 2020. “Political Sectarianism in America.” *Science* 370(6516): 533-536. (also read Supplementary Materials)

Recommended:

- Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2006. *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. Cambridge: MIT Press. [https://legacy.voteview.com/political_polarization_2015.htm.]
- Barbara Sinclair. 2006. *Party Wars: Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Daniel J. Hopkins and John Sides, eds. 2015. *Political Polarization in American Politics*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. Ch. 1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 [Note that this book came from the *Monkey Cage* discussion. Each chapter will be fairly short in length, but it has “suggested” readings. Whenever needed, you are encouraged to read these additional materials.]

Literature Review Essay #3: Write an essay about how party polarization in the United States has evolved over time. In doing so, make sure to discuss time period starting from the 1950s. (Due on end of April)

4/20 – Veto

Required:

- Cameron, Charles. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 4.
- Gilmour, John B. 2011. “Political Theater or Bargaining Failure: Why Presidents Veto.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41: 471-487.

Recommended:

- Cameron, Charles. 2009. “The Presidential Veto.” In George C. Edwards and William G. Howell. Eds. *The Oxford Handbook of the American Presidency*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McCarty, Nolan. 2000. “Presidential Pork: Executive Veto Power and Distributive Politics.” *American Political Science Review* 94: 117-131.
- Groseclose, Tim, and Nolan McCarty. 2001. “The Politics of Blame: Bargaining before and Audience.” *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 100-19.

4/27 – Studying American political institutions, Part 1

Instead of regular meeting in the seminar room, we will have individual meeting to discuss progress of research design project. Everyone should email me to make 30-minute appointment in my office.

5/4 – Studying American political institutions, Part 2

Each seminar participant will make a short presentation (up to 15 minutes) about how to conduct his or her original research. All the other seminar participants are required to provide helpful comments and/or critique.

5/11 – Studying American political institutions, Part 3

We will read and discuss most recently published scholarly work, preferably from APSR, AJPS, and JOP. Reading list TBD.