

## **SEMINAR ON AMERICAN POLITICS (POLS 569) : LEGISLATURES, LEGISLATION, AND PUBLIC POLICY**

**Instructor:** Barry Rundquist  
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**Office:** 1122C BSB  
**Hours:** By appointment  
**And Th 3-4.**

The purpose of POLS 569 is to introduce graduate students to the literature on legislative institutions and policy making and to areas that merit additional research. Course readings include many of the recent and older books in the field. Many of the readings are on the list for the American Politics preliminary exam in the Political Science Department's PhD program, so the course should help prepare students for this exam. The course also welcomes students from other disciplines who would like exposure to this field.

Legislatures and policy making exist outside of American national politics. Some of our readings will introduce work on legislatures and policy making in other countries and at the sub-national level. A list of the topics and some of the authors and to be covered is provided below.

An important goal of this seminar is encourage students to identify problems in our current understanding of questions in this field and to began to design and carry out research to address them. Accordingly, in addition to reading the assigned material from recently published books and articles, students will write a seminar paper in three parts—the first will be a critique of our readings on a question; the second the identification of an hypothesis and research design to test it; and the third the acquiring and analysis of some data that implements the research design and concludes regarding the validity of the hypothesis and implications for the subject in question. The three parts of the research paper process will began on Nov or so.

In addition to the **research-paper-in-three-parts**, one's grade in POLS 569 will be based on **weekly response papers and reports reviewing work not in the assigned readings**, and a **final exam**. 40 per cent of the course grade will be based on the research paper; 30 percent on the weekly response papers, 25 percent on the final exam, 5 percent on participation and up to an extra 20 percent for extra credit (I know it doesn't add up—people who say nothing useful and don't do any of the extra things the seminar needs will be limited to 100 percent; those who chip in can get up to 120 per cent). Be sure to tell me if this doesn't make any sense). Students are expected to attend every seminar and to come prepared to participate.

## A Still Somewhat Tentative Syllabus— but enough to get us going

**Week 1. Introductions. Assign DOL. Weekly response paper—what aspects of the legislative politics that DOL describe would you say are essential to explaining why federal statutory law takes the form it does?**

**Week 2 The Case; the parts of legislating.**

Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee, *Congress and Its Members*, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2007.

**Week 3. Electoral Control Theory**

Mayhew review.

Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina, *Personal Vote (1986)* Report.

Arnold, *Logic of Collective Action (1990)* Report.

Everyone: Barbara Sinclair, *Unorthodox lawmaking*, 3rd edition, CQ Press 2007)

**Week 4: Distributive Politics: Cumulative Research**

Rundquist and Carsey, *Congress and Defense Spending (2002)* All who haven't read it before.

Frisch and Kelly "Whose Pork is it Anyway" Four

Finocchiaro, "Dynamics of Casework in Postbellum Congressional Politics" Four

Bickers, Evans, Stein, and Wrinkle, "The Election Effects of Credit Claiming for pork barrel Projects in Congress" Four

Berry, Burden, and Howell, "After Enactment: The Lives and Deaths of Federal Programs: 1971-2003" Four

Jeffrey Lazarus and Shauna Reilly, "Party, Electoral Vulnerability, and Pork, 98<sup>th</sup> to 107<sup>th</sup> Congresses" Four

Rebecca Thorpe's paper (All):

<http://www.bsos.umd.edu/gvpt/apworkshop/thorpe2007.pdf>

## Week 5 Party Theory

Diana Evans, *Greasing the Wheels*, 2004.

Review of David Rohde, *Parties and Leaders in the Post-Reform House*,

Review of John Aldrich, *Why Parties?*

## **Week 6. More on Legislative Parties.**

Gary Cox and Mathew D McCubbins, *Congressional Leviathan*, Berkeley 1993

Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, *Congress: A Political Economic History of Roll Call Voting*, Oxford 1997

## **Week 7) Information Theory**

Keith Krehbiel, *Information and Legislative Organization*, Michigan, 1991

Bernie Grofman and Rick Hall, *APSR*

## **Week 8. Inter-institutional Politics**

Review of Lee and Oppenheimer.

Keith Krehbiel, *Pivotal Politics*, Chicago 1998

D Roderick Kiewiet and Mathew D McCubbins, *The Logic of the Delegation Hypothesis*, Chicago 1991

## **Week 10 Legislative Development amd Institutionalization,**

Polsby “Institutionalization the U.S. House review.”

Hibbing’s Critique of Polsby

## **Week 11. Comparative Legislatures.**

G. Bingham Powell, *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*

Review of veto point theory *a la* George Tsebelis, *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* (Princeton 2002).

Richard Bensel and or some other American Political

**Development work—probably a report on it.**

**Weeks 12-15. Paper work and Rework—due dates still to be specified.**

**Week 16. Final.**