American Political Institutions and Processes
Government 381J, Fall 2010
The University of Texas at Austin
Bartholomew Sparrow

Unique No. 38765
BAT 5.102
Class period: T: 3:30-6:30 pm

Office: Batts 3.142
Office Hours: MW 3-4:30 pm
bhs@mail.la.utexas.edu

This seminar introduces graduate students to the study of American politics and government. The course reviews both classic and more recent scholarship on issues in American political science. The readings address a range of topics, from questions of democracy, the political system, and political culture, to ones of particular aspects of American politics, such as public opinion, partisanship, Congress, the presidency, and the judiciary. Students read what political scientists have written (and argued) about the different topics related to political science on the United States. Of special concern are the controversies within the discipline: where do political scientists disagree, and why? What are the implications of how political scientists have worked as professionals?

Classes will be devoted to intensive reading and critical discussion of the literature (and related scholarship) of that week's topic. Discussion will be of the works read for that day as well as other approaches and scholarship on related issues. Each week, a designated student leader will provide critical overviews of the topic and direct the seminar discussion. All other students will be responsible for a question for one or more of that week's readings. Students' written assignments will consist of book reviews and a capstone review essay as part of students' professional training.

The last third of each class period will consist of exercises for devising appropriate research designs for the topic of that week. Students will work in small groups so as to devise ways of furthering quality scholarship in the subfield of American political science addressed in that week's reading.

Assessment

Grades will be based on student presentations and seminar leadership, class participation and reading question, book reviews (2), and review essay.

Student presentation/class leadership (2 ea.):	20%
Class discussion and weekly questions:	20%
Book Reviews (3), 1000 words each:	20%
Review Essay:	20%
Take-home Final:	20%

Guidelines

• Final grades will be on an A-F scale, with pluses and minuses. Paper, presentation, and other grades will be on a 100-point scale. Grades in the 83-86 range equal a B, for instance, grades from 87 to 89 equal a B+, and grades in the 80-82 range equal a B-. And so on.
• Assignments are due before class starts on Tuesday afternoon. Late papers will be subject to penalties, and, if sufficiently late, may not be accepted. All work must be your own (of course!) though you are welcome—in fact, encouraged—to discuss the readings and have others review your writing.
• Regular class participation and attendance is expected. More than one unexcused absence may deduct from a student's class-participation grade. A student who knows he or she has to leave class early or miss a class one needs to let the instructor know in advance or as soon as possible.
• You may list your two preferred dates for presenting on a sign-up sheet outside the instructor's door.
• A question (at least one per week) is required for each set of readings and to be posted on Blackboard the evening before Tuesday's class. *This assignment does not apply to that week's presenter*.
• Book reviews (3). These are to be *formal book reviews* of publishable quality, 1000 words in length. To see examples, please consult *Perspectives on Politics* or other relevant political science journals. Each review counts for 7 percent of the course grade, so students get an additional point extra. Due dates will be arranged in the second week of classes.
• Review essay. This is to be a formal book review essay, of the kind written for scholarly journals and general interest intellectual publications. It should constitute a balanced, professional, polished appraisal of a body of subject-related scholarly books. For examples of review essays, see *Perspectives on Politics*, *World Politics*, the *New York Review of Books*, and other sources. The student will discuss with the instructor which topic and which three books to write about in the review essay.
• The take-home final will be constitute a mock-comprehensive exam, though with only one exam question. Students will have a choice of essay questions to answer (one of two) and the paper will be due in 48 hours.
• You are expected to demonstrate the following values in this course: respect for your fellow students and teacher; self-reflection and on-going assessment of your own learning; honesty, responsibility, and hard work; intellectual engagement in the subject of the course.
• I am available at times outside office hours, by appointment. I shall also arrange individual meetings to discuss your class performance in mid-semester. If you have any questions or have special concerns, please see me as your earliest convenient.

Texts

Aldrich, John, *Why Parties?* Chicago, 1996. IBSN: 978-0226012728

Baumgartner, Frank and Bryan Jones, *Agenda and Instability in American Politics*, 2nd Ed. Chicago, 2009. IBSN: 978-0226039398

Eliasoph, Nina, *Avoiding Politics,* Cambridge, 1998. ISBN: 978-0521587594

Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Robert Y. Shapiro, *Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness,* Chicago, 2000. ISBN: 978-0226389837

Lukes, Stephen, *Power: A Radical View*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd ed., 2004. ISBN: 978-0333420928

McCloskey, Robert G., *The American Supreme Court*, revised by Sanford Levinson, Chicago, 2010. ISBN: 978-0226556864

Ricci, David M., *The Tragedy of Political Science: Politics, Scholarship, and Democracy*, Yale, 1987. ISBN: 978-0300037609

Segal, Jeffrey A. and Harold J. Spaeth, *The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited*, Cambridge, 2002. ISBN: 978-0521789714

Skowronek, Stephen, *Building a New American State*, Cambridge, 1982. IBSN: 978-0521288651

Weisberg, Herbert F. and Richard G Niemi, *Controversies In Voting Behavior*, 4th ed., CQ Press, 2001. ISBN: 978-1568023342

Zaller, John, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion,* Cambridge, 1993. ISBN: 9780521407861

All texts are available at the UT Cooperative Bookstore.

Required readings that are not listed among the above texts are the responsibility of the student (available through UT Library databases). I shall posted chapters in edited volumes on the Blackboard site for this class.

Course Schedule

1. August 31 American Political Science: *What Are We Doing?*

• David Ricci, *The Tragedy of Political Science*. Yale, 1987.
• Rogers Smith, "Should We Make Political Science More of a Science or More about Politics," *PS,* June 2002, 199-201.
• Robert Vitalis, "Birth of a Discipline," Ch. 7, in Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations, D. Long and B. C. Schmidt, eds. Albany: SUNY Press, 2005.
• John Gerring and Joshua Yesnowitz, "A Normative Turn in Political Science?" *Polity* 38, No. 1, January 2006.

2. September 7 Democratic Theory and the United States: *Do Elites Rule?*

• Dahl, Robert A. *Who Governs?* Yale, 1951. Especially "Preface," Ch. 1, 7-9, 14-16, 19-28.
• Dahl, Robert A. "Further Reflections on "The Elitist Theory of Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 60 (June 1966): 296-305.
• Walker, Jack, "A Critique of the 'Elitist Theory of Democracy'" *American Political Science Review* 60 (June 1966): 285-95.
• Walker, Jack, "A Reply to 'Further Reflections on 'The Elitist Theory of Democracy,'" *American Political Science Review* 60 (June 1966): 391-92.
• G. William Domhoff, "Who Really Ruled in Dahl's New Haven?" http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/local/new_haven.html OR Domhoff, "Community Studies," in *Who Rules America Now?* Touchstone, 1983, pp. 180-202.

3. September 14 Understanding Power: *What Role Does "Power" Have in Political Science?*

• Bachrach, Peter and Morton Baratz, "The Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review* 56 (December 1962): 947-52.
• Riker, William H. "Some Ambiguities in the Notion of Power," *American Political Science Review* 58 (June 1964): 341-49.
• Stephen Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* 2nd ed., Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
• Jane E. Mansbridge, "Politics as Persuasion," in L.C. Dodd and Calvin Jillson, *The Dynamics of American Politics*, Westview, 1994.

4. September 21 American Political Culture: *What Do Americans Believe?*

- Conover, Pamela Johnston, and Stanley Feldman, "The Origins and Meaning of Liberal-Conservative Self-Identifications," *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (1981): 617-45
- Rogers Smith, "Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz," *American Political Science Review* 87 No. 3 (1993): 549-67
- Jacqueline Stevens and Rogers Smith, "Beyond Tocqueville, Please!" *The American Political Science Review* 89, No. 4 (1995): 987-995
- Rodney Hero, "Multiple Theoretical Traditions in American Politics and Racial Policy Inequality," *Political Research Quarterly* 56, No. 4 (2003): 401-8
- Nina Eliasoph, *Avoiding Politics,* Cambridge, 1998

5. September 28 Interest Groups and Pluralism: *What Influence Do Interest Groups Have on Democratic Government?*

- *Federalist Papers*, 10, 47, 48, 51
- Mancur Olson, Ch. 2 "The Logic," Ch. 3, "Implications," in *The Rise and Fall of Nations,* Yale, 1982
- Robert Salisbury, "An Exchange Model Theory of Interest Groups," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 13 No. 1 (1969): 1-32
- John Mark Hansen, "The Political Economy of Group Membership," *American Political Science Review* 79 (1985): 79-96
- Jack Walker, "Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America," *American Political Science Review* 77 (1983): 390-406

6. October 5 Political Parties and Organized Politics: *Why Parties?*

- John Aldrich, *Why Parties?* Chicago, 1996, Ch. 1-3, 6-9
- Morris Fiorina, "Parties, Participation, and Representation in America: Old Theories Face New Realities," in I. Katznelson and H. Milner eds. *Political Science*, Norton, 2003
- Richard G. Niemi and Herbert F. Weisberg, *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, 4th Ed. CQ Press, 2001. Ch. 17-20, pp. 322-70

7. October 12 American Politics Through Time: *Why Study the American Polity through History?*

- Walter D. Burnham, "The Changing Shape of the American Political Universe," 59 *American Political Science Review* (1965), pp. 7-28
- Calvin Jillson, "Paterns and Periodicity in American National Politics," in L.C. Dodd and C. Jillson, eds., *The Dynamics of American Politics*, Boulder: Westview 1994, pp. 24-58.
- Elaine K. Swift and David W. Brady, "Common Ground: History and Theories of American Politics," in in L.C. Dodd and C. Jillson, eds., *The Dynamics of American Politics*, Boulder: Westview 1994, pp. 83-105
- Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones, *Agenda and Instability in American Politics*, 2nd Ed, Chicago, 2009

8. October 19 <u>The American State: *Why Bring in the State*?</u>

• J.P. Nettl, "The State as a Conceptual Variable," *World Politics* 20 (1968): 559-92
• Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, Cambridge, 1982
• Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In,* Cambridge, 1985
• Gabriel Almond, "The Return to the State," and Eric Nordlinger and Theodore Lowi, "Critiques," *American Political Science Review* 88 (1988): 853-91
• John Bendix; Bertell Ollman; Bartholomew H. Sparrow; Timothy Mitchell; "Going Beyond the State," *American Political Science Review* 86 No. 4 (1992): 1007-21
• Robert Adcock, Mark Bevir, and Shannon C. Stimson, "Historicizing the New Institutionalism(s)," in R. Adcock, M. Bevir, and S. C. Stimson, *Modern Political Science.* Princeton, 2007, pp. 259-89.

9. October 26 <u>Race & Gender: *How Significant Are Ascriptive Qualities*?</u>

• Lawrence Bobo and Franklin D. Gilliam, "Race, Sociopolitical Participation, and Black Empowerment, *American Political Science Review* 84 (1990): 377-393.
• Martin Gilens, "Race Coding and White Opposition to Welfare," *American Political Science Review* 90 (1996): 594-604
• Paul Frymer, "Racism Revised: Courts, Labor Law, and the Institutional Construction of Racial Animus," *American Political Science Review* 99 No. 3 (2005): 373-86
• Sue Thomas, "The Impact of Women on State Legislative Politics," *Journal of Politics,* 53 (1991): 958-76
• Donald R. Songer, Sue Davis, and Susan Haire, "A Reappraisl of Diversification in the Federal Courts," *Journal of Politics* 56 (1994): 425-39
• Karen Kaufman and John Petrocik, *American Journal of Political Science*, 43, No. 3 (1999): 864-87

10. November 2 <u>Public Opinion: *What Are the Origins and Uses of Public Opinion?*</u>

• John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion.* Cambridge, 1993.
• Lawrence R. Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, *Politicians Don't Pander.* Chicago, 2000

11. November 9 Voting: *Who Votes and Why?*

• Richard G. Niemi and Herbert F. Weisberg, ed., *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, 4th Ed. CQ Press, 2001, Ch. 1, 2, 6, 10
• Robert D. Putnam, "Tuning In, Tuning Out," in R. G. Niemi and H. F. Weisberg, eds., *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, Ch. 3, pp. 38-68
• Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, "Solving the Puzzle of Participation in Electoral Politics," in R. G. Niemi and H. F. Weisberg, eds., *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, Ch. 4, pp. 69-82
• Mark N. Franklin, "Electoral Participation," in R. G. Niemi and H. F. Weisberg, eds., *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, Ch. 4, pp. 83-99
• Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, "Rational Public Opinion," in R. G. Niemi and H. F. Weisberg, eds., *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, Ch. 9, pp. 164-179
• Henry E. Brady, Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman, "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation," *American Political Science Review* 39 (1995): 271-94

12. November 16 Congress: *In What Ways Are Members Representative*?

• Richard Fenno, "U.S. Members in their Constituencies," *American Political Science Review* 71 (1977): 883-917
• David Mayhew, "Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals," *Polity* 6 (1974): 295-317
• Gary C. Jacobson, "The Marginals Never Vanished," *American Political Science Review* 81 (1987): 126-41
• Gary C. Jacobson, "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-1986," *American Political Science Review* 83 (1989): 733-93
• Eric Shickler and Andrew Rich, "Controlling the Floor," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (1997): 1340-75.
• Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, "Toward a Theory of Legislative Rule Changes: Assessing Schickler's and Rich's Evidence," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (1997): 1376-86.
• Eric Shickler and Andrew Rich, "Party Government in the House Reconsidered: A Response to Cox and McCubbins," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (1997): 1387-94

13. November 23 The Presidency: *How Can Presidents Govern Effectively?*

• Richard Neustadt, "The Power to Persuade," in Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, *American Politics* 2nd ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 1992)
• Stephen Skowronek, "Presidential Leadership in Political Time," in M. Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System,* 8th ed. CQ Press, 2006
• John P. Burke, "The Institutional Presidency," in M. Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System,* 8th ed.: CQ Press, 2006
• David E. Lewis, " Presidents and the Bureaucracy" in M. Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System,* 8th ed. CQ Press, 2006
• B. Dan Wood and Richard Waterman, "The Dynamic of Political Control of the Bureaucracy," *American Political Science Review* 85 (1991): 801-28

14. November 30 The Courts: *How Autonomous*?

• Robert A. Dahl, "Decision-Making in a Democracy," *Journal of Public Law* 6 (1957): 279-95
• Robert G. McCloskey, The American Supreme Court, rev. ed. by Sanford Levinson, Chicago, 2010
• Jeffrey A. Sigal and Harold Spaeth, *The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited* New York: Cambridge, 2002 (selections tba)

Take-Home Final Exam