

Political Institutions and Behavior
PSCI 356/556

Spring 2023
Tuesday 2pm 4:40pm
329 Harkness

Professor Bonnie Meguid
306 Harkness Hall
Office Hours: Mondays 1-3pm
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This seminar will introduce you to classic as well as contemporary research on comparative institutions and behavior. The course will provide good grounding in an array of topics in these areas, while highlighting the range of methodological approaches employed in the field. This course is one of the four required courses in the comparative politics Ph.D. field sequence and will be open to any PhD student and advanced undergraduate, by instructor permission.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course is a seminar. Students are expected to actively contribute to the discussion each and every week. This necessitates a careful reading of each article/chapter prior to the class. In preparing for class, students should think carefully about both the substantive and methodological aspects of each reading individually and in comparison with each other. Students must attend every

class may, with prior permission, opt for a final exam instead of a research proposal and paper.

Late Policies

**Barring extraordinary circumstances, late response papers will be marked down a whole letter grade if turned in after midnight, but before Tuesday after 2pm on Tuesday, resulting in a zero for that paper. Late research proposals and final research papers will be marked down a third of a grade (for ex. A to A-) for each 24 hour period after they are due. Thus, if a research paper proposal or research paper is turned in any time during the first 24 hours after it is due, it is penalized a third of a grade. Any paper not turned in within a week of the assigned due date will automatically receive a zero.

REQUIRED READINGS

In this course, we read a combination of book chapters and journal articles. Links to articles and book chapters will be available through Blackboard. We read multiple chapters from a few books. They are:

Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Count*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Helmke, Gretchen. 2017. *Institutions on the Edge*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

You can either access them as e-copies from UR library or else purchase wherever you get new or used books.

Academic Honesty Policy

All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty

In this course, the following additional requirements are in effect: You are encouraged to discuss course readings with your fellow students. However, all written work—response papers, research proposal and research paper—must be done independently and not in collaboration with another.

Disability Resources

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: [http://disability@rochester.edu](mailto:disability@rochester.edu); (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Pandemic Policies

In light of the challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic, I encourage all students to communicate with me as promptly as possible any concerns they have about missing class for illness/quarantine

and for meeting class deadlines. The goal of this class is to remain as rigorous and fair as possible, while also allowing for enough flexibility for students to do their best work despite the difficult circumstances.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 17: Introduction: Democratic Concepts

Dahl, Robert. 1989. *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven: Yale UP, chs. 6-8, 15.

APSR 97: 515-528.

PART I: Comparative Democratic Institutions

Week 2: January 24: Political Parties

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Brothers.

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March 7 no class for Spring Break

Week 8: March 14: Parliamentary Government Survival and Termination

Lupia, Arthur and Kaare Strøm. 1995

American Political Science Review 89(3): 648-669.

BJPS. 33(3): 397-418.

Schleiter, P. and E. Morgan-

Week 11: April 4: Economic and Retrospective Voting

Electoral Studies.

American Political Science Review 98(3): 425-436.

Kayser, Mark and Michael Peress. 2012. Benchmarking across Borders: Electoral Accountability and the Necessity of Comparison *APSR* 106 (3): 661-84.

CPS. 1-32.

Week 12: April 11: Strategic and Expressive Voting

Cox, Gary. 1997. *Making Votes Count.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-7

American Political Science Review 99(2): 185-199.

Schuessler, Alexander A. 2000. Expressive Voting *Rationality and Society.* 12(1)

Week 13: April 18: Turnout and Vote Buying

[Aldrich, John](#)
246-278.

American Journal of Political Science 37(1):

Bendor
American Political Science Review 97(2): 261-280.

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AJPS 59 (3): 613 627.

Week 14: April 25: Representation, Responsiveness and Accountability

Powell, G. Bingham. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy.* New Haven: Yale University

Press. Chapters 1, 2 and 6.

Stokes, Susan. 2001. *Mandates and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch 1

American Journal of Political Science 61.3 (2017): 527-542.