When examining democratic regimes, we are often willing to accept the vague notion that representation involves a congruence between the preferences of citizens and policy outcomes. On closer inspection, it is clear that there is a complex chain of institutions that link citizens to actual government action. Those institutions both shape the choices that actors make and aggregate their eventual choices to produce decisions. Our goals in this course include exploring, in detail, many of those institutional linkages and how variations in them leads to differences in representation across democratic regimes. Specific topics and readings are detailed below. The readings we will discuss jointly are not sufficient to motivate a piece of original research, and, thus, as you begin to define a research topic, you will need to do additional readings on your own. I can help identify appropriate readings if you find you need assistance.

Assignments

**Participation.** You must come to class every week fully prepared and you must participate extensively in class discussions. Of course, useful participation requires a thorough understanding of the readings. To help you focus on the appropriate theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues, I have prepared a note-taking template that you should complete for each reading. Make two copies of your note-taking templates, one to keep for yourself and one to turn in. I have put an asterisk by the readings for which you must turn in your notes, but I encourage you to complete one for each reading.

Though I have no expectation that discussion will ever wane, you should fully expect to be called on whether you are volunteering or not. We may experiment with other techniques of generating participation as well. For example, after arriving at class you may be assigned to present a work as if we were at a professional conference or to critique a work as if you were an anonymous reviewer for a refereed journal.

Each week a team of three students will be assigned to lead discussion. I strongly encourage the teams to plan carefully how they will motivate discussion. Credit will be given for any innovation that evokes thoughtful discussion of how the week’s readings are related to one another and to the rest of the course.

Not being part of the week’s leadership team does not mean that you have the week off. To the contrary, in evaluating your participation I will place relatively more weight on your note-taking and oral participation when you are *not* leading the discussion.

These aspects of participation combined account for 30% of your final grade.
Research Design. Each of you will prepare a Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (as if) for submission to the National Science Foundation. A research design is a systematic plan that motivates and puts in context your research question, makes clear your hypotheses and the logic behind them, and details the scientific process you will use to address them, including how you will collect and analyze the appropriate data. It can only be completed once you are intimately engaged with the material. In other words, do not consider the research design as a starting point. Think of the proposal as a highly detailed overview of a major research project, perhaps without the detailed data analysis (though preliminary empirical analysis can often serve to prove the a project is worthwhile and manageable). A completed draft of your DDRIG is due Friday, March 9, and it will account for 15% of your grade. I will provide you examples of successful DDRIG’s recently submitted by WashU graduate students.

I will play the part of the National Science Foundation’s Political Science Program Director, and you will serve as my external reviewers. You will each receive three DDRIGs which you will evaluate for intellectual merit. A single-blind review process is actually used by the NSF, but we probably won’t be able to manage that. Still, I encourage the external reviewers to be frank (and courteous) as the primary investigator submitting the proposal can benefit from your suggestions (and my grading of your evaluations will be based on their quality). Your external reviews may be loosely based on the note-taking guide you use weekly to evaluate works. Your evaluations will account for 20% of your grade, and they are due Friday, April 6.
The National Science Foundation does not invite primary investigators to revise and resubmit. Still, an encouraging and constructive set of reviews may lead the scholar in question to make changes to the proposal and submit it again in a future round. You will have the opportunity to revise your DDRIG based on the initial round of external reviews. Your revised DDRIG is due Monday, April 30, and it will account for 15% of your final grade. Please include a memo detailing how you responded to the initial reviews.

A compelling grant proposal must be motivated by a review of a coherent literature that justifies the project being proposed. Thus, to aid you in completing the final proposal an annotated bibliography will be due on Friday, February 17. You should provide a brief review of at least six works related to your research question. Again, the individual reviews might take the form of the note-taking template you use weekly. Works that are required readings can be included in addition to the original six. The bibliography should be fronted by two or three paragraphs defining what makes this a coherent literature, stating explicitly your research question, and explaining how the works reviewed serve to motivate your question. The annotated bibliography will account for 20% of your grade.

Recommended Book Purchases:
COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 17, 2012:
The Chain of Responsiveness

Tuesday, January 24, 2012:
How to Design a Major Research Project

Tuesday, January 31, 2012:
Theories of Representation
Tuesday, February 7, 2012:
Citizens’ Preferences and Mass Opinion

Tuesday, February 14, 2012:
From Preferences to Votes
Read chapters 3-7.

Friday, February 17:
Annotated Bibliographies Due

Tuesday, February 21, 2012:
From Preferences to the Menu of Choices
Read chapters 8-12.
Tuesday, February 28, 2012:
The “Spatial” Distribution of Votes

Tuesday, March 6, 2012:
From Votes to Seats

Friday, March 9:
Initial Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants Due

Tuesday, March 13: Spring Break

Tuesday, March 20, 2012:
Pivotal Players by Regime Types
Tuesday, March 27, 2012:
Measures of Representatives’ Ideal Points

Tuesday, April 3, 2012:
Alternate Measures of Representatives’ Ideal Points

Friday, April 6:
External Reviews of Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants Due

Tuesday April 10, 2012:
Policy Outcomes
Tuesday April 17, 2012:

Congruence

Powell Jr., G. Bingham, 2000. Elections as Instruments of Democracy. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT. (Read Chapters 1, 10, 7, Skim Chapters 8-9.)


Tuesday April 24, 2012:

Retrospective Accountability


Monday, April 30:

Revised Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants Due