2011 Senior Thesis Abstracts

Education and Trade
Wen Ting Cai

The primary goal of this thesis is to understand the relationship between opinions on international trade and the college experience; primarily whether an individual's college attendance and his economic course study influences how he formulates his trade preferences. Based upon modern literature on globalization, the source of opinion over trade resides less in social-economic status (class, occupation, level of employment) rather depending more on college enrollment. At least one year of college seems to make an individual significantly more likely to support trade than a person without any college education. Within this framework there is debate among competing theories as to the extent that college education influences trade preferences; whether this influence stems from uniqueness associated with general college life or an exposure to the study of economics. This thesis holds that it is the college culture which shapes students opinion to become more pro-trade. College is the first time students are exposed to international culture and interact with outside world at a time when their ideas about these issues are just being formed; whereas students who don’t attend college are less exposed to the international community and form more protectionist views. This research experiment is designed to test this theory using statistical analysis on specific data collected from college students. In the end, this project seeks to provide more insight into the influences on an individual's trade preferences and a better understanding of the reason behind to correlation between college exposure and pro-trade sentiments.

Mandatory Retirement on the Indian Supreme Court
Sheehan Hamid Band

What effects can institutional limitations have on judicial behavior? I explore this question with regards to the Supreme Court of the India. Specifically, I consider the effects of the mandatory retirement age of justices on their levels of participation in court. With the intention of painting a more accurate picture of judicial behavior on the Indian Supreme Court, I compare different groups of justices who were forced to retire by the mandatory limit with regards to level of participation in order to discover what relationships appear. I compare groups that differ on the basis of tenure length in order to determine whether proximity to retirement could be related to level of participation, and I will argue that such a relationship is in fact supported by the data. I then compare the justices on the basis of whether or not they ever because Chief Justice of India. I find that the differences in participation between these two are much smaller than the differences between justices grouped by length of tenure. Finally, I consider previous high court experiences and whether justices who are elevated from the oldest and most reputable courts as compared to those who were elevated from other state courts. I find that the differences between these two groups are small as well. Ultimately I argue that the strongest factor in determining whether or not a justice will participate more or less is proximity to retirement as measured by length of tenure.
American Polarization and the Impact of Southern Republican Voters
Alex Bensick

The purpose of this study is to evaluate competing explanations of the political polarization within the United States. This study uses data from the American National Election Studies to track partisan polarization in ideological attitudes in order to discern whether the rise of Southern representation and leadership in the House Republican Caucus signaled a change in Republican party values, and spread Southern conservative ideology to non-Southern Republicans.

Motivations for Proliferation: Iran’s Nuclear Ambitions
Alice Goldenberg

This paper will focus on the Iranian nuclear development program; describing the reasons why Iran continues to push the line between safely developing nuclear technology for peaceful civilian purposes and developing an active nuclear weapons program. This study will discuss a methodological explanation of why states are driven to develop nuclear weapons by reviewing existing theories on the subject. The contending theories are that states are motivated to proliferate based on a technological imperative, internal pressures of domestic turmoil and public opinion, or external pressures of status concerns and security threats. After discussing these theories, it will then provide a descriptive history of Iran and their nuclear development program in order to illuminate the reasoning behind Iran’s nuclear ambitions. This structure will allow for conclusions to be drawn about Iran’s specific motivations for turning their peaceful nuclear program into a threatening nuclear weapons program. This study claims that Iran is motivated to proliferate primarily by external pressures stemming from its aspiration to become a regional superpower.

A Collegiate Understanding: Economic Knowledge and Trade Opinions
Jennifer Halket

Education is one of the best indicators of a person’s trade preferences. Researchers have found that if a person went to college, he is more likely to be in favor of trade. Past research has found that a college education is a better predictor of trade preferences than sex, age or employment status. But why is this true? In this paper I explore the possible underlying factors of a college education that make a person more likely to be in favor of trade. I test this theory using an internet survey that was administered to a sample of students currently attending Washington University in Saint Louis. My findings prove that an economic understanding of trade is a predictor of a student’s trade preferences.

The Government’s Role in the Start Up Nation: A Case Study of Israel’s Hi-Tech Sector
Renée Kramer

Israel has gained increasing attention from the international community in regards to its rising economy and position on the global market. Most of the success has been associated with the dynamic hi tech sector that has Israel leading the world (only second to the United States) in launching innovation and new companies. Despite economical deterrence like Israel’s ostracized location in relation to its consumers and threats from neighboring enemies, Israel remains an attractive haven for multinational
enterprise expansion (like Intel and Microsoft) and foreign direct investment. Much of the hi-tech industry’s prosperity has been attributed to Israel’s talented human capital, noted by their skill set, motivation and maturity learned through their required military service in the Israeli Defense Force, along with educational experience in some of Israel’s top credited universities such as Technion and unique entrepreneurial spirit to continually foster start-ups. Other causal factors include the 1990s influx of Soviet immigrants with engineering backgrounds and the establishment of venture capital in Israel. While existing research has focused primarily on the cultural factors that are believed to have prompted the high tech sector’s rise, economic growth changes occurred following the implementation of new governmental programs enacted by Israel’s Office of the Chief Scientist. Analyzing these policies shows how the government has impacted the business environment, but beyond financial means. Furthermore, predicting how the government will help maintain Israel’s comparative edge is important to understand, as other countries compete as alternative hubs for research and development for international companies. Israel’s development sheds light on its future political and economical activity, while setting a model to what other countries may adopt or modify in their own economic policies.

**The Politics of Sport: Assessing the Political Impact of Mega-Events on Authoritarian Host Countries**

Corinne Mitchell

Authoritarian countries are increasingly being selected as hosts for international sporting events. Potential host countries actively pursue the opportunity to host these mega-events because of numerous purported economic and cultural benefits. Due to the scale of these events, they have become inherently political in nature, giving rise to a growing body of literature that analyzes their political effects. Among the more significant conclusions of this literature are hypotheses that assert that hosting a mega-event can have democratizing influence on an authoritarian host country. In this paper, I analyze these hypotheses using quantitative data of mega-event hosts throughout history. I find evidence to suggest that hosting a mega-event has an effect on the authoritarian nature of authoritarian states and that this effect tends to be towards greater liberalization. The evidence does not support any conclusions about whether the strength of the opposition has an effect on the propensity of an authoritarian host country to democratize, raising questions about the possible causal mechanisms behind this phenomenon. This research is significant as it is one of the first times that these hypotheses have been taken out of a case-study context and quantitatively tested in a cross-case analysis.

**Hezbollah’s Struggle at the Ballot Box: The Consequences of Electoral Laws in Multi-Confessional Lebanon**

Yuree Noh

Hezbollah has developed an international reputation as a dangerous, powerful organization, but its small share of seats in the parliament does not correspond to expectations. I attempt to explain the party’s domestic standing through examining Lebanon’s electoral system. This paper argues that the electoral system limits Hezbollah’s electoral prospects through a mechanical effect, which affects how votes are translated into seats, and a strategic effect, which affects how citizens vote for candidates. In order to test this argument, I conduct a statistical analysis with a focus on Lebanon’s post-civil war elections from 1992 to 2009 as well as simulations of Hezbollah’s potential performance under different
electoral systems in order to further explore the implications of the regression findings. The analysis shows that the Lebanese electoral system is a constraining factor to Hezbollah’s electoral success.

**Sovereignty and Territory**
Daniel Weltman

In this paper I examine the link between the concept of sovereignty and the concept of territory. I argue that the link between them is a contingent one: sovereignty can be described without territory in some cases, but not in others. I draw on examinations of the concept of sovereignty to argue that sovereignty can be thought of as non-absolute and as divisible, a claim that is in opposition to many classical and contemporary views. I then argue that absolute, Westphalian sovereignty requires the concept of territory as a means of delineating the bounds of the absolute sovereign power, but that alternative conceptions of sovereignty can be described without using territory.