

American Political Development

POLS 4990 and 6810

Fall 2017

Old Main 318

Tuesdays 1:30pm-4:20pm

Robert Ross: robert.ross@usu.edu

Old Main 328B

Office Hours: Tues. and Thurs. 12:00pm-1:00pm, or by appointment

“If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it.”

Abraham Lincoln

“People always feel [the effects] of their origins. The circumstances that accompanied their birth and served to develop them influence the entire course of the rest of their lives.”

Alexis de Tocqueville

Course Synopsis

American Political Development (APD) is a subfield of American Politics focusing on the study of changes to the American political system. To do so, APD scholars take a longitudinal, or “macro” approach to understanding American politics, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This means taking a wide-angle lens in our analysis and looking at the historical evolution of the relationship between institutions—the rules and procedures that structure behavior and provide incentives, norms, and resources that shape it—and organizations. In other words, APD scholarship “captures...the contingent evolution of institutions, tracing the struggles of actors inside institutions and organizations to perpetuate them, to reconstitute how they work, or to adapt them to new challenges” (Mettler and Valelly 2016, 5). In sum, institutions, ideas, and history matter.

At the end of the course, students should have an understanding of APD as a subfield in American politics and the questions that drive this field. Students should also develop their research skills, gain the ability to critically evaluate the ideas and research of others, and produce significant research of their own.

Required Texts

Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development* (Cambridge University Press, 2004)

John H. Aldrich, *Why Parties?: A Second Look* (The University of Chicago Press, 2011)

Eric Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress* (Princeton University Press, 2001)

Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton* (Harvard University Press, 2000)

The Supreme Court & American Political Development, ed. Ronald Kahn and Ken I. Kersch (University Press of Kansas, 2006)

Course Format

This class is discussion based because it is a senior research seminar and graduate course. This means that students will do the majority of speaking and will move the discussion forward. APD is primarily a book discipline, meaning there will be a lot of reading. But, some weeks, the readings will be divided to help manage the reading load. Every effort should be made to complete the assigned reading before the beginning of class. If I perceive that large portions of students are neglecting the reading, I may assign graded assignments to further incentivize reading.

To begin each class, we will dedicate time to discussing the readings. We will focus on the question asked, the theory developed, the methodology used, and the conclusions made. The bulk of the class will be dedicated to critically assessing the readings and discussing strengths, weaknesses, and potential alternatives to the author's research design.

There is no attendance requirement for the class. However, with meeting once a week, missing one class is the equivalent of missing an entire week.

Course Goals

This course aims to:

1. Learn fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
 - a. American Political Development offers a distinct approach to understanding American politics. We will focus on the general principles, generalizations, and theories grounding the subfield and the unique approaches taken in the individual readings.
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
 - a. The reading list for this course is diverse, both methodologically and theoretically. Each reading will provide a particular way of thinking about politics and the interaction between ideas and institutions. Meaningfully engaging with these readings can provide different perspectives on how we think about, and potentially answer, political questions.
3. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
 - a. Critically engaging with these readings and evaluate the ideas of others is a major goal of this course. This is different than simply being critical. We will move beyond conclusions like, "I just don't buy/like the argument" to actually evaluate 1) the question being asked, 2) the theoretical foundation for answering the question, 3) the methodology used to answer the questions, and 4) the support for political prescriptions and conclusions. Once these four aspects are sufficiently addressed, we are in a position to critically assess an argument and provide viable alternatives.

Assignments and Grading

Discussion Leader and Response Paper (50 Points)

A group of students will be responsible for leading class discussion each week. Discussion leaders should develop a set of questions and discussion topics to ask the class. In addition, the students leading the discussion will submit a reading response paper that provides a brief overview of all the readings for the week and assesses the questions being asked, the theories developed, the methodology used, and the conclusions reached. The response paper should not exceed 4 double-spaced pages (12 point font with 1 inch margins). Each student will lead class discussion and submit

a response paper twice (25 points each). The first will be of a week of your choosing and the second will be during weeks 11 and 12 and focus on one chapter of the assigned reading.

Research Paper (150 Points)

The research paper will be written in three stages. The first stage (20 points) will include constructing your research question and preliminary thesis as well as finding academic sources to help address your question (preliminary bibliography). For the second stage (30 points), you will be required to submit a prospectus for your paper. The prospectus will include your revised research question and thesis, a summary of the main points/arguments you will make in your paper, and a summary of the sources you will use to help substantiate your claims. The final stage will consist of writing your paper. The required length for 4900 students is 12 pages, doubled spaced; for 6810 students, the required length is 15 pages, doubled spaced. 4900 students will need to include 10 academic sources and 6810 students will need to include 15 academic sources. Please note, things like Wikipedia, blogs, news articles, or YouTube clips are NOT academic sources. Academic sources must be peer reviewed and published in either an academic journal or as a book.

Substance: Choose one of the institutions we cover (political parties, Congress, the presidency, or the Supreme Court) and develop a theory and research design addressing a particular aspect of its development.

For submission, I will place a class box in the Political Science office. The final paper is due Wednesday, Dec. 13th in Old Main 320 by 4:30 pm. You may submit them early if needs be.

Research Presentation (50 Points)

The final two weeks of class will be dedicated to presenting your research paper. These presentations will be similar to conference presentations in that about 10 minutes per student will be given, with time for comments and questions. A rough draft of your paper should be completed prior to the class presentation. Ideally, comments from the presentation will help improve the paper before final submission.

Grading Scale

A	100-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D+	69-67
D	66-64
D-	63-60
F	59-0

Tentative Reading Schedule

Week 1

08/29: Introduction to course

Week 2: What is American Political Development?

09/05:

Orren and Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development*, cpt. 1, 3, and 5 (pgs. 1-32; 78-119; 172-201)

George Thomas, "What is Political Development? A Constitutional Perspective" *Review of Politics* 73 (2011): 275-294 (Canvas)

Suggested Readings:

Week 3: Political Parties

09/12:

James Madison, *Federalist No. 10* (Canvas)

American Political Science Association Committee on Political Parties, "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System" (Canvas)

Aldrich, *Why Parties?* Part One (pgs. 3-64)

Suggested Readings:

Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties* (Wiley 1951)

V.O. Key, *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups* (Thomas Y. Crowell, 1964)

Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System* (University of California Press, 1969)

Leon D. Epstein, *Political Parties in the American Mold* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1986)

David R. Mayhew, *Placing Parties in American Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1986)

Sidney M. Milkis, *Political Parties and Constitutional Government: Remaking American Democracy* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999)

Daniel Klinghard, *The Nationalization of American Political Parties, 1880-1896* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Seth Maskett, *No Middle Ground: How Informal Party Organizations Control Nominations and Polarize Legislatures* (University of Michigan Press, 2011)

Week 4: Political Parties

09/19:

4990: Aldrich, *Why Parties?* Part 2 (pgs. 67-159)

6810: Aldrich, *Why Parties?* Part 3 (pgs. 163-292)

All: Aldrich, *Why Parties?* Part 4 (pgs. 295-323)

Week 5: Congress

09/26:

Ira Katznelson and John Lapinski, "At the Crossroads: Congress and American Political Development" *Perspectives on Politics* 4 (2006): 243-260 (Canvas)

Eric Schickler and Ruth Bloch Rubin, "Congress and American Political Development" in *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Development*, ed. Richard M. Valelly, Suzanne Mettler, and Robert C. Lieberman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) (Canvas)

Ira Katznelson and Quinn Mulroy, "Was the South Pivotal? Situated Partisanship and Policy Coalitions during the New Deal and Fair Deal" *Journal of Politics* 74, no. 2 (2012): 604-620 (Canvas)

Suggested Readings:

Woodrow Wilson, *Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics* (1885)

Barabara Sinclair, *Majority Leadership in the US House and the Transformation of the US Senate* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990)

Sarah H. Binder and Steven S. Smith, *Politics or Principle? Filibustering in the United States Senate* (Brookings, 1996)

Sarah H. Binder, *Minority Rights, Majority Rule: Partisanship and the Development of Congress* (Cambridge University Press, 1997)

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

David W. Brady and Craig Volden, *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Carter to Clinton* (Westview Press, 1998)

Eric Schickler, "Institutional Change in the House of Representatives, 1867-1998: A Test of Partisan and Ideological Power Balance Models," *American Political Science Review* 94 (2000): 269-88

Peter H. Argersinger, *Representation and Inequality in Late Nineteenth-Century American: The Politics of Apportionment* (Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Wendy J. Schiller and Charles Stewart III, *Electing the Senate: Indirect Democracy before the Seventeenth Amendment* (Princeton University Press, 2015)

Week 6: Congress

10/03:

All: Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, cpt. 1

4990: Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, cpt. 2

6810: Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, cpt. 3

Week 7: Congress

10/10:

4990: Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, cpt. 4

6810: Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, cpt. 5

All: Schickler, *Disjointed Pluralism*, cpt. 6 and Epilogue

*STAGE ONE DUE IN CLASS

Week 8: The Presidency

10/17:

Terry M. Moe, "The Revolution in Presidential Studies," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* vol. 39, 4, (2009): 701-724 (Canvas)

Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), cpt 1 (Canvas)

Stephen Skowronek, "The Conservative Insurgency and Presidential Power: A Developmental Perspective on the Unitary Executive," *Harvard Law Review* vol. 122, 8 (2009): 2070-2103 (Canvas)

Suggested Readings:

Charles C. Thach, Jr., *The Creation of the Presidency, 1775-1789: A Study in Constitutional History* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969)

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency* (Houghton Mifflin, 1973)

Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents* (Free Press, 1991)
Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton University Press, 1988)
Marc Landy and Sidney M. Milkis, *Presidential Greatness* (University Press of Kansas, 2000)
Stephen G. Calabresi and Christopher S. Yoo, *The Unitary Executive: Presidential Power from Washington to Bush* (Yale University Press, 2008)
B. Dan Wood, *The Myth of Presidential Representation* (Cambridge University Press, 2009)
Daniel J. Galvin, *Presidential Party Building: Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush* (Princeton University Press, 2010)
J. David Alvis, Jeremy D. Bailey, and F. Flag Taylor IV, *Contested Removal Power, 1789-2010* (University Press of Kansas, 2013)
Louis Fisher, *Constitutional Conflicts between Congress and the President* (University Press of Kansas, 2014)

Week 9: The Presidency

10/24:

All: Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, cpts. 1-3
4990: Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, cpt. 4, Part One, pgs. 61--85
6810: Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, cpt. 4, Part Two-Three, pgs. 86-127

Week 10: The Presidency

10/31:

4990: Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, cpt. 5, pgs. 129-196
6810: Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, cpt. 6, pgs. 197-285
All: Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, cpt. 8, pgs. 409-446

*STAGE TWO DUE IN CLASS

Week 11: The Supreme Court

11/07:

Pamela Brandwein, "Law and American Political Development," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, vol. 7 (2011): 187-216 (Canvas)
Robert A. Dahl, "Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as a National Policy Maker," *Journal of Public Law* 6 (1957): 279-295 (Canvas)
Keith E. Whittington, "'Interpose Your Friendly Hand': Political Supports for the Exercise of Judicial Review by the United States Supreme Court," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 99, 4 (2005): 583-596 (Canvas)

*Sign ups for presentations on *The Supreme Court and American Political Development* cpts. 1-10

Suggested Readings:

Karen Orren, *Belated Feudalism: Labor, the Law, and Liberal Development in the United States* (Cambridge University Press, 1992)
Howard Gillman, *The Constitution Besieged: The Rise and Demise of Lochner Era Police Powers Jurisprudence* (Duke University Press, 1995)
Keith E. Whittington, *Constitutional Construction: Divided Powers and Constitutional Meaning* (Harvard University Press, 1999)
Ken I. Kersch, *Constructing Civil Liberties: Discontinuities in the Development of American Constitutional Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Thomas M. Keck, *The Most Activist Supreme Court in History: The Road to Modern Judicial Conservatism* (University of Chicago Press, 2004)

Keith E. Whittington, *Political Foundations of Judicial Supremacy: The Presidency, the Supreme Court, and Constitutional Leadership in U.S. History* (Princeton University Press, 2007)

Sean Farhang, *The Litigation State: Public Regulation and Private Lawsuits in the United States* (Princeton University Press, 2010)

Week 12: The Supreme Court

11/14:

All: Ronald Kahn and Ken I Kersch, "Introduction" in *The Supreme Court and American Political Development*, pgs. 1-30

Presentations on cpts. 1-5

*Second response paper

Week 13: The Supreme Court

11/21:

Presentations on cpts. 6-10 in *The Supreme Court and American Political Development*

All: Ronald Kahn and Ken I. Kersch, "Conclusion" in *The Supreme Court and American Political Development*, pgs. 443-463

*Second response paper

Week 14: Research Presentations

11/28:

Presentations:

4990: A-H

6810: A-M

Week 15: Research Presentations

12/05:

Presentations:

4990: J-Z

6810: N-Z

**Final paper is due Wednesday, Dec. 13th in Old Main 320 by 4:30 pm.