

Legislative Politics: Understanding Strategic Interaction in Law-Making

Proseminar

1 Description

Laws are one of the main outputs of politics. In order to understand why some laws come into being, and in which shape, one has to understand the processes of legislative politics. We will analyse the role of parliaments, parliamentary committees, governments, parties as well as other actors such as courts or interest groups in legislative politics. The main focus of this class is an analytical perspective highlighting the strategic interactions involved in legislative decision-making.

2 Time and Location

The seminar will take place on **Mondays, 15:15-16:45** in room **C 421** from *23 October 2017* to *12 February 2018*. There are *no classes* between 23 December and 07 January.

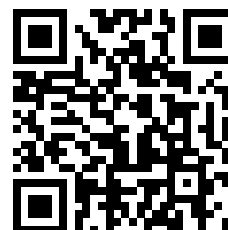
3 Office Hours and Contact

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Office hours

Office hours are on *Mondays, 17:00-18:00*. Please book an appointment on iLias anytime before noon on the day of the office hour.

4 Learning Goals

After successful completion of the class, students will

- be able to understand strategic perspectives on legislative politics.
- be able to understand the role of actors and institutions in the political process.
- be able to formulate a research question.
- be able to plan a term paper.
- be able to optimally structure the writing process.

5 Assessment

Summative

The final grade is a weighted average of the term paper (60%), a poster presentation (20%), an Exposé + bibliography (10%), and a Blog post (10%).

Term paper (60%)

The term paper is a written essay of 4000-5000 words. For this essay, you will pick a research question which can be answered by summarizing *and* synthesizing existing literature or by means of a small data analysis. The term paper is due on 31 March 2018, although you are strongly encouraged to submit early.

I will only accept term papers submitted as pdf via ilias by the deadline!

Poster presentation (20%)

In the last two weeks we will have two poster sessions. You will prepare a poster outlining your term paper and the findings. The purpose of the session is to help you clarify your topic. On top of this you will give feedback on the presentations of the others.

Exposé + bibliography (10%)

The Exposé is a 1-2 page outline of your term paper. It is due on 04 December 2017. Please make sure to address the following questions:

- What is the research question you intend to answer?

- What is your (preliminary) answer to the question?
- Which theoretical argument is the basis for the answer?
- Which empirical evidence will be provided?
- How do you intend to structure the term paper?

The exposé is not expected to be perfect. Writing is a process and your ideas and approach will likely change over the course of the term. You will receive feedback on your Exposé in class. The *bibliography* is a *well formatted* list of literature you intend to use for the term paper.

Please submit the Exposé with the bibliography attached as one pdf file in ilias by the deadline.

Blog Post/News Comment (10%)

You are expected to select a current legislative process of your choice and analyze it through the lense of one of the theoretical approaches we cover in class, Base the analysis on media information. Comment critically. Please upload the blog post/comment as a pdf in ilias no later than 17 February 2018.

Weekly writing assignments

There is only one way to learn how to write: Write! Therefore, you will find weekly writing assignments on ilias. They are due on Fridays, 23:59. The assignments are short problems you are supposed to work on. Please submit the solutions directly in ilias.

Submission of 90% of the exercises is a prerequisite for passing the class (i.e., you can miss at most one).

Formative

- Weekly readings
- Active participation in group work and discussions
- In-class writing exercises
- Peer feedback

6 ilias

Please register on ilias to get access to readings and other course materials. You can use the link https://ilias.uni-konstanz.de/ilias/goto.php?target=crs_702892_rcodeZYXJtEXw5n&client_id=ilias_uni (the link is active in the pdf version). The password required for registration is LegPołKN1718.

The class forum

Our course in ilias has a forum set up. You can use it to ask questions or discuss topics related to the content of the class, e.g. the readings. You can also use it to ask questions related to the workflow or post best practice examples of your work organization. Also, you can post interesting information related to the class contents which you think might be useful or interesting for your colleagues.

7 Zotero

Zotero is a powerful literature management programme. Unlike most others it is free software and independent of the operating system you use. It can work as a standalone product and/or a browser plugin. The latter allows you to directly import references into a database, which you can use to manage your literature. Zotero can easily be synced across several devices. It can be downloaded from <https://www.zotero.org/>. There exist plugins for the typical office applications. Zotero can also easily export to bibtex for use with \LaTeX .

8 \LaTeX

\LaTeX is a typesetting system. It allows to produce well designed documents with little effort. It has a steep learning curve, but it is particularly useful for writing long documents. So it may be worth the effort to learn \LaTeX . One particular good implementation is overleaf (<http://overleaf.com>) which is entirely web based and allows for easy collaboration. \LaTeX is fully platform independent and natively supports the creation of pdf files.

9 General Literature on Legislative Politics

- Epstein, Brian/O'Halloran, Sharyn. 2008. Delegating Powers: A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policy Making Under Separate Powers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1992. Information and Legislative Organization. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schofield, Norman. 2006. Multiparty Democracy: Elections and Legislative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. 2010. Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton.

- Shipan, Charles R., and John D. Huber. 2002. *Deliberate Discretion?: The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stewart, Charles III. 2010. *Analyzing Congress*. Revised. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Tsebelis, George. 2002. *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.

10 General Literature on Scientific Practice and Writing

- Adler, Mortimer J., and Charles van Doren. 2014. 'How to read a book (rev. ed.)'. New York: Touchstone.
- American Psychological Association. 2009. 'Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th. revised ed.)'. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. 2016. *The Craft of Research, Fourth Edition*. 4. Auflage. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Economist, The. 2015. *The Economist Style Guide*. (11 Rev ed.). London: Profile Books.
- Flesch, Rudolf. 1996. *The Classic Guide to Better Writing: Step-by-Step Techniques and Exercises to Write Simply, Clearly and Correctly*. Anniversay. New York: Collins Reference.
- Flesh, Rudolf and A. H. Lass. 1996. *The Classic Guide to Better Writing*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Plümper, Thomas. 2008. *Effizient Schreiben (2nd ed.)*. München: Oldenbourg.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors and Publishers*. 2017. 17th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Turabian, Kate L. 2013. 'Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (8th revised edition)'. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- William I. Strunk, and White, E. B. 1999. *The Elements of Style (4th ed)*. Longman York Press.
- Zinsser, William. 2006. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Useful Online Resources

- Turabian Quick Guide
- APA Style FAQ

11 Sessions

1. Introduction (23 October 2017)

2. Aggregation of Preferences & Group Choice (30 October 2017)

Readings:

- Ch. 3: Getting Started with Group Choice Analysis. In: Shepsle, Kenneth A. 2010. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. pp. 41-52.
- Ch. 4: Group Choice and Majority Rule. In: Shepsle, Kenneth A. 2010. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. pp. 53-89.

3. Spatial Models of Majority Rule (06 November 2017)

Readings:

- Ch. 5: Spatial Models of Majority Rule. In: Shepsle, Kenneth A. 2010. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. pp. 90-155.

Recommended Reading:

- Ch. 6: Strategic Behavior: Sophistication, Misrepresentation, and Manipulation. In: Shepsle, Kenneth A. 2010. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. pp. 156-190.

4. Veto Players and Policy Stability (13 November 2017)

Readings:

- Gehlbach, Scott, and Edmund J. Malesky. 2010. "The Contribution of Veto Players to Economic Reform." *Journal of Politics* 72 (4):957-75.

- Heller, William B. 1997. "Bicameralism and Budget Deficits: The Effect of Parliamentary Structure on Government Spending." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 22 (4):485–516.
- Tsebelis, George. 1995. "Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism." *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (3):289–325.

5. Pivotal Politics and Gridlock (20 November 2017)

Readings:

- Ch. 01: Basics. In: Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press. pp. 3-19.
- Ch. 02: A Theory. In: Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press. pp. 20-48.
- Gray, Thomas R., and Jeffery A. Jenkins. 2017. "Unpacking Pivotal Politics: Exploring the Differential Effects of the Filibuster and Veto Pivots." *Public Choice* 172 (3–4):359–76.

6. Legislative Bargaining (27 November 2017)

Readings:

- Baron, David P., and John A. Ferejohn. 1989. "Bargaining in Legislatures." *American Political Science Review* 83 (4):1181–1206.
- Frechette, Guillaume R., John H. Kagel, and Steven F. Lehrer. 2003. "Bargaining in Legislatures: An Experimental Investigation of Open versus Closed Amendment Rules." *American Political Science Review* 97(2):221–32.
- McCarty, Nolan. 2000. "Proposal Rights, Veto Rights, and Political Bargaining." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (3):506–22.

7. Committees (04 December 2017)

Readings:

- Shepsle, Kenneth A., and Barry R. Weingast. 1994. "Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19 (2):149–79.
- Gilligan, Thomas W., and Keith Krehbiel. 1990. "Organization of Informative Committees by a Rational Legislature." *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (2):531–64.

8. The Exposé and Beyond (11 December 2017)

Readings:

- Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. 2016. *The Craft of Research, Fourth Edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

I recommended to buy the book. It is affordable and will be of use also for your the rest of your studies, especially the B.A. thesis.

9. Presidents (18 December 2017)

Readings:

- McCarty, Nolan M. 2000. "Presidential Pork: Executive Veto Power and Distributive Politics." *American Political Science Review* 94 (1):117–29.
- Cameron, Charles, and Nolan McCarty. 2004. "Models of Vetoes and Veto Bargaining." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7 (1):409–35.

10. Political Delegation and Transaction Costs (08 January 2018)

Readings:

- Ch 2: Choosing How to Decide. In: Epstein, David, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1999. *Delegating Powers: A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policy Making under Separate Powers*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 14-34.
- Ch 3: Transaction Cost Politics. In: Epstein, David, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1999. *Delegating Powers: A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policy Making under Separate Powers*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 35-52.

- Ch 4: The Decision to Delegate. In: Epstein, David, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1999. *Delegating Powers: A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policy Making under Separate Powers*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 53-85.

11. Bureaucratic Discretion (15 January 2018)

Readings:

- Ch 3: STATUTES AS BLUEPRINTS FOR POLICYMAKING. In: Huber, John D., and Charles R. Shipan. 2002. *Deliberate Discretion?: The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 44-77.
- Ch 6: THE DESIGN OF LAWS ACROSS SEPARATION OF POWERS SYSTEMS. In: Huber, John D., and Charles R. Shipan. 2002. *Deliberate Discretion?: The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 78-109 139-170.
- Ch 7: THE DESIGN OF LAWS ACROSS PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEMS. In: Huber, John D., and Charles R. Shipan. 2002. *Deliberate Discretion?: The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 171-210.

12. Parliamentary Scrutiny (22 January 2017)

Readings:

- Martin, Lanny W., and Georg Vanberg. 2004. "Policing the Bargain: Coalition Government and Parliamentary Scrutiny." *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (1):13-27.
- Martin, Lanny W., and Georg Vanberg. 2005. "Coalition Policymaking and Legislative Review." *The American Political Science Review* 99 (1):93-106.

13. Judicial Oversight (29 January 2017)

Readings:

- Vanberg, Georg. 2001. "Legislative-Judicial Relations: A Game-Theoretic Approach to Constitutional Review." *American Journal of Political Science* 45 (2):346-61.
- Vanberg, Georg. 2015. "Constitutional Courts in Comparative Perspective: A Theoretical Assessment." *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (1):167-85.

14. Poster Presentations (05 February 2018)

15. Poster Presentations (12 February 2018)