

POLS 494 – POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS FALL 2019

Instructors: Alex Bolton and Danielle Jung

Class Information: Tuesday, 2:30–5:30pm, Tarbutton 120A

Office: Tarbutton 332 (Bolton) and Tarbutton 319 (Jung)

Office Hours: By appointment (Jung singsups: <https://calendly.com/dfjung>)

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Course Overview

Organizations are everywhere in politics. Government bureaucracies routinely make policy decisions with enormous economic and social consequences. Campaigns make allocation decisions that tip elections one way or the other, setting policy courses with long-lasting ramifications. Terrorist groups decide on strategies that have life and death consequences for their members and larger populations. Understanding how organizations operate is at the heart of understanding politics and policy more generally.

In this class, we will look inside political organizations to understand how they're managed, how they interact with their environments, how decisions are made, what makes them effective (or not), and ultimately, how they affect the outcomes that impact people all over the world. The scope of organizations that we will examine is broad, including (but not limited to) government bureaucracies, terrorist groups, organized crime syndicates, political parties, and campaigns. The course will emphasize the theoretical and empirical commonalities among these diverse types of organizations while also considering how the unique contexts in which they exist impact their operations.

This course fulfills the department's research requirement. Students will be expected to produce a major research paper over the course of the semester.

Course Objectives:

- Students will understand major theoretical issues in the study of political organizations, including organizational emergence; principal-agent problems; organizational identities and cultures and their implications for performance; how institutional design structures the incentives of organizational actors; monitoring of organizational members; and hiring and exit decisions.
- Students will analyze cases in a range of contexts using the theoretical tools developed throughout the course.
- Students will gain a greater understanding of the process of producing research, including the development of a well-defined research question, conducting a literature review, developing a sound theoretical argument, selecting appropriate cases, empirically evaluating the implications of theoretical arguments, and coming to well-supported conclusions.
- Students will create an original research paper related to the topics of the course.

Course Requirements:

- Participation (30%): Attendance will not be taken, but this is an upper division research seminar so students are expected to be active participants in class every week.
- Analysis Assignment (10%): Students will be required to write a short memo (2–3 pages) describing the dynamics of a principal-agent problem in an organizational context of their choosing. More information on this assignment will be forthcoming. Due October 1, 2019, at noon.
- Presentation of Research (15%): In the final two weeks of class, each student will give a brief presentation on their research project and get feedback from the instructors and peers. Students should incorporate this feedback into the final draft of their research paper.
- Research Paper (40%): The major graded component of the course is an original research paper related to the topic of political organizations. Students are encouraged to think broadly and creatively about the research question, design, and context for their study. There are a number of check-in assignments along the way to provide feedback on progress toward the final draft:
 - Research question and ten scholarly citations related to it (5%) – due September 24 at noon
 - Outline and annotated bibliography (5%) – due October 22 at noon
 - Rough draft of paper (5%) – due November 27 at noon
 - Final paper (25%) – due December 18 at noon

Grading Scale:

A	93–100
A–	90–92
B+	88–89
B	83–87
B–	80–82
C+	78–79
C	73–77
C–	70–72
D	60–69
F	below 60

N.B.: all scores will be rounded to the nearest integer before a final grade is assigned.

Required Readings

This class is heavily discussion-based, so students are expected to attend seminars having already completed the assigned readings for the day. Reading assignments are expected to take *on average* four to six hours per class. The reading load may vary from class to class, so be sure to plan ahead to ensure that you are able to benefit as much as possible from and

contribute to our class discussions.

Academic Integrity The honor code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher’s instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the teacher is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Emory University is committed under the Americans with Disabilities Act and its Amendments and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to providing appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, provide the instructor(s) with an accommodation notification letter from Access, Disabilities Services and Resources office. Students are expected to give two weeks-notice of the need for accommodations. If you need immediate accommodations or physical access, please arrange to meet with the instructor as soon as your accommodations have been finalized if not before.

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

September 3, 2019: Course Introduction

September 10, 2019: The Emergence of Organizational Forms and their Evolution

- Ouchi, William G. 1980. “Markets, Bureaucracies, and Clans.” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 25(1): 129–141.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. and Walter W. Powell. 1983. “The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields.” *American Sociological Review* 48(2): 147–160.
- Padgett, John F. and Christopher K. Ansell. 1993. “Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400–1434.” *American Journal of Sociology* 98(6): 1259–1319.
- Spruyt, Hendrik. 1994. “Institutional Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order.” *International Organization* 48(4): 527–557.

September 17, 2019: Principal-Agent Problems and Organizations

- Sappington, David E. M. 1991. “Incentives in Principal-Agent Relationships.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5(2): 45–66.
- McCubbins, Mathew D. 1999. “Abdication or Delegation? Congress, the Bureaucracy, and the Delegation Dilemma.” *Regulation* 22: 30–37.

- Nielsen, Rasmus Kleis. 2012. *Ground Wars: Personalized Communication in Political Campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [chapters 3–4]
- Leeson, Peter T. 2007. “An-*arrgh*-chy: The Law and Economics of Pirate Organization.” *Journal of Political Economy* 115(6): 1049–1094.

September 24, 2019: NO CLASS

- In lieu of class, write a short memo that describes the dynamics of an organizational principal-agent problem in a context of their choice. You can draw on news accounts or academic research to write the memo. This might be a good time to begin exploring a topic area related to your research paper. The memo (3–5 pages¹ in length), in addition to giving appropriate context, should address the following:
 - Who is the principal and who is the agent?
 - Why does the principal delegate power or authority to the agent in this context?
 - Does the agent have any power over the principal?
 - How does the principal attempt to mitigate the problem? Are these attempts successful? How would we know?

The essay is due at noon on October 1.

October 1, 2019: Indoctrination

- Akerlof, George A. and Rachel E. Kranton. 2005. “Identity and the Economics of Organization.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19(1): 9–32.
- Kaufman, Herbert. 1960. *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior*. Washington, DC: RFF Press. [chapter 6]
- Iannaccone, Laurence R. and Eli Berman. 2006. “Religious Extremism: The Good, the Bad, and the Deadly.” *Public Choice* 128(1–2): 109–129.
- Wedeen, Lisa. 1999. *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. [chapters 1–2]
- Skarbek, David. 2011. “Governance and Prison Gangs” *American Political Science Review* 105(4):702–716

October 8, 2019: Organizational Culture

- Kreps, David M. 1990. “Corporate Culture and Economic Theory.” In *Perspectives on Positive Political Economy*, James E. Alt and Kenneth A. Shepsle, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilson, James Q. 1989. *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*. New York, NY: Basic Books. [chapter 6].

¹Double-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman, 1in margins.

- Kramer, Roderick M. 2001. “Organizational Paranoia: Origins and Dynamics.” *Research in Organizational Behavior* 23: 1-42.
- Kantor, Jodi and David Streitfeld. 2018. “Inside Amazon: Wrestling Big Ideas in a Bruising Workplace” *New York Times*. URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/16/technology/inside-amazon-wrestling-big-ideas-in-a-bruising-workplace.html>
- Cohen, Dara Kay. 2013. “Explaining Rape during Civil War: Cross-National Evidence” *American Political Science Review* 107(3):461–477

October 15, 2019: NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

October 22, 2019: Structuring Incentives I

- Levitt, Steven D. and Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh. 2000. “An Economic Analysis of a Drug-Selling Gang’s Finances.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115(3): 755–789.
- Dal Bó, Ernesto, Frederico Finan, and Martín Rossi. 2013. “Strengthening State Capabilities: The Role of Financial Incentives in the Call to Public Service.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128(3): 1169-1218.
- Johnston, Patrick B. et al. 2016. *Foundations of the Islamic State: Management, Money, and Terror in Iraq, 2005–2010*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. [chapters 3–4]
- “Pay Flexibility and Government Performance: A multicountry study” *The World Bank* June 2014. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/203401468330901538/pdf/884860WP0PayF100Box385241B00PUBLIC0.pdf>

October 22, 2019: Structuring Incentives II

- Ashraf, Nava, Oriana Bandiera, and B. Kelsey Jack. 2014. “No Margin, No Mission? A Field Experiment on Incentives for Public Service Delivery.” *Journal of Public Economics* 120: 1-17.
- Perry, James L. and Lois Recascino Wise. 1990. “The Motivational Bases of Public Service.” *Public Administration Review* 50(3): 367-373.
- Gailmard, Sean and John W. Patty. 2013. *Learning While Governing: Expertise and Accountability in the Executive Branch*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. [chapter 2]
- Peters, Gretchen. 2012. “Haqqani Network Financing: The Evolution of an Industry.” URL: https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2012/07/CTC_Haqqani_Network_Financing-Report_Final.pdf [only pages 1–31 required]

November 5, 2019: Monitoring and Oversight

- Enos, Ryan D. and Eitan D. Hersh. 2015. “Party Activists as Campaign Advertisers: The Ground Campaign as a Principal-Agent Problem.” *American Political Science Review* 109(2): 252–278.
- Shapiro, Jacob N. 2013. *The Terrorist’s Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [chapters 2–4]
- Brehm and Gates. 1993. “Donut Shops and Speed Traps: Evaluating Models of Supervision on Police Behavior.” *American Journal of Political Science* 37(2): 555–581.
- McCubbins, Mathew D., Roger G. Noll, and Barry R. Weingast. 1987. “Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Control.” *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 3(2): 243–277. 3(2): 243-277.

November 12, 2019: Screening, Hiring, and Exit

- Golden, Marissa M. 2000. *What Motivates Bureaucrats? Politics and Administration During the Reagan Years*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press. [Chapters 2, 6]
- Tabor, Nick. 2017. “Federal Employees Ask, What Would Make Me Quit?” *New York Magazine* URL: <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/08/career-federal-employees-ask-what-would-make-me-quit.html>
- Berman, Eli *Radical, Religious, and Violent* Chapters 2, 3, 4

November 19, 2019: Application: The Bureaucracy in the Trump Administration

- Lewis, Michael. 2018 *The Fifth Risk*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. [on reserve at Woodruff Library]

November 26, 2019: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

December 3, 2019: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

December 10, 2019: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS