Course information:
Course Number: CPO 5934 / POS 5698
Time: Monday 9:00 - 11:45 am
Place: Bellamy Building 113

Contact information for Professor:
E-mail: dsiegel@fsu.edu
Tel: 850-645-0083
Office: 541 Bellamy Building
Office Hours: Monday 2:00 - 3:00 pm or by appointment.

Course Description
What falls under the rubric of political institutions varies widely by who is doing the categorization. The so-called old institutionalism focused on the formal rules, administrative procedures, and legislative, executive, and judicial bodies that scripted how political behavior functioned. The intent here was primarily to describe how rules operated. A strong reform tradition operated alongside this, seeking to match these rules better to normative issues associated with democracy and governmental accountability. This perspective dominated political science for decades, until a strong focus on individual behavior overtook the field. This new school of behavioralism centered on the actions and political knowledge and beliefs of individuals, observing and theorizing about this directly, rather than inferring aggregate outcomes as functions of formal rules. This was a significant advance in that now scholars could formulate and test theories as to the reasons people partook in various political behaviors, and strict behavioralism also took its turn as the dominant paradigm.

Yet gradually political scientists began to turn back to the role of institutions. Not as rules that in and of themselves determined political outcomes, but rather as sets of incentives—either exogenously set or endogenously ar-
rived at—which structure the behavior of political actors influenced by them. Institutions are in some sense the “rules of the game” in political life, in that individual behavior is constrained by these institutions. Yet institutions do not arise from some primeval soup; they are created in turn by individuals, sometimes unconsciously, but often quite deliberately to solve political problems. This view, dubbed the new institutionalism, treats both formal rules and structures and informal rules and norms as institutions, which may be exogenously set or endogenously determined.

It is here that this course begins. The first two weeks go into the difference between old and new institutionalism in more depth, and expand upon the general concepts discussed in the previous paragraph. With this background established, we then try to understand in sequence the role of institutions in contributing to and solving problems of preference aggregation, information aggregation, cooperation and coordination, agenda-setting, and finally delegation and agency.

Many of the readings use game-theoretic models and/or statistical analyses. It is assumed that all of the students have had introductory classes in both game theory and econometrics, and these are prerequisites for the course. One objective of this course is to familiarize the students with some of the models that are often used in the institutions literature, as well as some of the econometric techniques and choices frequently applied when testing institutional theories. As part of your preparation for class, you are expected to spend a significant amount of time working your way though the models in the readings. We will also devote time in class to discuss both the formal and statistical models used in this literature. The second objective of the course is to give students an array of theoretical approaches for use in their own research. The general theories as well as the specific applications are designed to be relevant across political science subfields, and you are explicitly encouraged to explore the ways in which models traditionally used in one subfield might be useful in others.

**Required Texts:**

The following books are available at the university bookstore.

In addition to the books listed above, we will read a number of articles and unpublished manuscripts. These will be available on the web or on the door to my office. Students are responsible for locating the assigned readings. Some additional recommended readings are listed below each topic on the schedule. These are included as a preliminary (and non-exhaustive) guide for further reading.

Grading

- Participation: 20%. All students are required to have completed the readings for each week before class begins, and everyone should be prepared to discuss the readings during class. Intelligent participation in departmental talks and at conferences will be highly valued throughout your professional career and you should practice this ability now. I expect you to provide evidence that you have done the readings in a thoughtful and careful manner.

- Discussion leadership: 20%. Each student will be assigned one or more seminars to lead. Students should prepare a list of discussion questions,
and e-mail them to the rest of the class by 5 pm of the Friday before the class they lead. The depth of and preparation evidenced in these questions, along with the leading of the seminar itself, will determine the student’s grade.

- Final exam: 60%. The exam will be take-home and is due on April 21, 2007. The exam questions are attached to this syllabus.

Tentative Schedule:

**Approaches to the Study of Institutions**

**Week 1: January 7 — From Old to New Institutionalism**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


**Week 2: January 14 — Institutions as Rules of the Game**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


**Aggregating Preferences**

**Week 3: January 21 (MLK Jr. Day; may be rescheduled) — Aggregation in the Absence of Institutions: Why Institutions are Needed**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


**Week 4: January 28 — Elections and Voting Rules: Spatial Location**

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


Jay K. Dow. 2001. “A Comparative Spatial Analysis of Majoritarian and


**REQUIRED READING:**


**RECOMMENDED READING:**


**INFORMATION AGGREGATION**

**Week 6: February 11 — Committees, Elections, and Parties**

**REQUIRED READING:**


**RECOMMENDED READING:**


**Week 7: February 18 — Identity**

**REQUIRED READING:**


**RECOMMENDED READING:**


**Week 8: February 25 — Party Formation**

**REQUIRED READING:**


**RECOMMENDED READING:**


Week 9: March 3 - Constitutions, Path Dependence, and Coordination Failure

Required reading:


Recommended reading:


Weeks 10-11: March 17 and 24 — Setting the Agenda.

Required reading:


Recommended reading:

See the comparative studies of legislatures from Cox & McCubbins on their “Setting the Agenda” webpage, [http://mccubbins.ucsd.edu/settingtheagenda/index.html](http://mccubbins.ucsd.edu/settingtheagenda/index.html).


**DELEGATION AND AGENCY**

**Weeks 12-13: March 31 and April 7** — Legislative Delegation and Electoral Control.

**REQUIRED READING:**


**RECOMMENDED READING:**


Week 14: April 14 — International Institutions and Domestic Judiciaries

REQUIRED READING:


RECOMMENDED READING:


**Final exam due Monday, April 21.**
Additional Information

Students with Disabilities
Instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students with physical, mental or learning disabilities. Students with disabilities which may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements are to inform the instructor (after class or during the instructor’s office hours) so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Students should register with the Student Disability Resource Center and bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating the required accommodations in the first week of class.

Department/Collegiate Complaint Procedures
A student who has a complaint against any member of the college’s teaching staff is responsible for following the procedures described in the Student Handbook at the following website: www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/. The student should attempt to resolve the issue with the faculty member or teaching assistant involved. Lacking a satisfactory outcome, the student can turn to the department chair. If a satisfactory outcome still is not obtained, the student can turn to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Complaints may concern inappropriate faculty conduct (including inappropriate course materials), incompetence in oral communications, inequities in assignments, scheduling of examinations at other than authorized and published times, failure to provide disability accommodations, or grading grievances. FSU has a specific policy regarding sexual harassment - this can be found at http://www.auditservices.fsu.edu/.

Plagiarism and Cheating
All students are bound by the Academic Honor Policy (http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/academics.htm). You are expected to be honest and honorable in your fulfillment of assignments and in test-taking situations. Plagiarism and cheating are serious forms of academic misconduct. Examples of them are given in the Student Handbook: http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/2003codes/honor.html. The department of Political Science works with individual instructors to detect plagiarism and cheating and to ensure that appropriately serious punishments are applied. Instructors who detect cheating or plagiarism may decide to reduce the student’s grade on the assignment or course, even to assign an F. The instructor will discuss the matter with the student, put any agreement regarding academic penalty in writing signed by both the instructor and the student, and report the infraction to the Chair and the University judicial office. If no agreement can be reached, the instructor refers the matter to the Academic Honor system Hearing Panel.
Your Responsibilities
Your responsibilities to this class - and to your education as a whole - include attendance and participation. This syllabus details specific expectations the instructor may have about attendance and participation. You have a responsibility to help create a classroom environment where all may learn. At the most basic level, this means you will respect the other members of the class and the instructor and treat them with the courtesy you hope to receive in turn.

Plus-Minus Grading
All the department’s instructors can append plus or minus grades to the letter grades they assign for the course. If the instructor does not specifically indicate in the syllabus that he or she will not assign plusses or minuses, students should assume that this form of grading will be used.

Please visit the Political Science Department’s website: http://www.fsu.edu/~polisci/. It is frequently updated with new events and procedures in our department.