1 Course Objectives

This course will review the major approaches to political representation: different ways of conceptualizing representation and measuring it, and different mechanisms for delivering it, from political parties to political institutions. It draws upon literature from both the American and comparative sub-fields. Accordingly, the course will help to prepare students for the political parties and representation section of the comparative politics comprehensive exam, as well as for the American politics comprehensive exam. The course also aims to help students further their research interests in the realm of political representation.

2 Course Requirements

First and most obviously, students should come to class prepared to discuss the readings. That means having read the readings both carefully and critically.

Second, students are required to serve as a moderator for two topics (i.e., for two weeks’ readings). The moderator’s main job is to come to class prepared enough to keep everyone else (including the instructor!) on their toes. That means that moderators are expected to play an active role in leading class discussion. Moreover, with the goal of spurring discussion, moderators will prepare a short (circa 2 page) critical review of the readings that contains some questions for discussion to be shared with the class. To elaborate, these ‘critical reviews’ might identify (in your opinion) issues for discussion such as the key debates, points of controversy, any perceived theoretical or empirical (methodological) problems, and/or open questions. Critical reviews should be posted on the course Gaucho Space website (under the appropriate forum) by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday before the class meeting so as to allow everyone time to read and reflect upon them prior to class. Additionally, to ensure that we are all on the same page about what makes for a good critical review, everyone will write one for Week 2 (our first real meeting). We will spend some time during that class talking about what people found to be the most useful approaches to the assignment. Please send me your top three choices of topics (ranked from first to third) for Weeks 3 through 10 by the end of the first day of class, and I will assign students to topics, doing my best to take everyone’s preferences into account.

Third, students will write a brief (approximately three to four page) research prospectus. The prospectus will identify a research question and testable hypothesis drawn from one or more readings for empirical investigation, and then identify a research design for testing this hypothesis. Be creative—this is your chance to draw attention to what you see as an overlooked claim or observable
implication of someone’s argument. The best prospectuses will either identify existing data for testing their hypothesis, or make the case that the appropriate data does not exist and describe a methodology for gathering it, from a survey to elite interviews to a comparative case study. Links to data websites, codebooks, and bibliographic resources, etc. are welcome. The goal is to provide students practice with constructing empirical research proposals, a skill that is obviously required of doctoral students. The short prospectus may be turned in any time up to Tuesday, May 19 (our class meeting in Week 8).

Fourth and finally, students may choose either to write a longer (approximately fifteen to twenty page) research prospectus, or to write a conventional seminar paper (approximately fifteen to twenty pages) on an topic related to political representation. For the long research prospectus, you may (and in fact are encouraged) to build upon the short prospectus, taking into account the feedback that you have received from me. The paper or prospectus will be due by 10:00 a.m. on Monday, 15 June. This assignment requires you to go beyond the assigned readings. I strongly recommend that you consult with me about your topic. My hope is that both of these assignments will help you to further develop your own research interests, and perhaps to even start you down the road to a doctoral prospectus. Every week after the first few weeks, we will devote some class time to talking about your ideas for your prospectuses or papers; this time will be a chance for you to brainstorm and to receive feedback from your colleagues and me.

3 Grading

Grades for the course will be calculated as follows.

- Class participation. (20%)
- Service as moderator, including critical response. (20%)
- Short research prospectus. (20%)
- Research paper or long research prospectus. (40%)

4 Required Reading Materials

Readings for the course are available in one of three ways. Books for which we will be reading more than three chapters are available on reserve from the library; these readings are labeled [LIB] in the schedule below. There are only four such books. You are of course also welcome to purchase copies of these books. Because they can be obtained from so many online vendors nowadays, often used (and hence inexpensively), I have not asked the university bookstore to stock them. Accordingly, if you are interested in building your personal library, which I recommend, go shopping with your fingers for these modern classics! Articles available online are labeled [EJ] in the schedule. Note, however, that you will either need to be on a university computer or to have your home computer configured for off campus access to access these readings. I have provided links to these articles on the course Gaucho Space website. Finally, all other readings (such as shorter book excerpts) are available as PDF files from the course Gaucho Space website. These are labeled [GS] in the schedule. Note that all of Week 2’s readings will also be available from GauchoSpace, given the library’s inability to make those books available via the library reserve system in time.
5 Syllabus

Organizational Session (Week 1)

Part I: Representation in Theoretical and Empirical Perspective

What Is Representation? An Overview of the Debates (Week 2)

Pitkin, Hanna. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. Chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, and 10. [LIB/GS]


Models of and Problems with Representation (Week 3)


Does Representation Matter? Empirical Evidence (Week 4)


Lublin, David. 1997. The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress. Chapters 6 (all) and 7 (p. 120-24 and 132-33 only). [GS]


Part II: Delivering Representation

Political Parties (Week 5)


Programmatic and Sectarian Parties: Consequences and Representational Dilemmas (Week 6)


Strom, Kaare and Wolfgang Muller. 1999. “Political Parties and Hard Choices.” In Kaare Strom and Wolfgang Muller, eds., Policy, Office, or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions. [GS]

The Declining Party Thesis and Non-Party Channels (Week 7)


**Political Institutions I: The Big Picture (Week 8)**


**Political Institutions II: The Devil Is In the Details (Week 9)**


Handley, Lisa and Bernard Grofman, eds. Redistricting in Comparative Perspective. Introduction and Chapter 18. [GS]


Political Institutions III: Quotas, Political Party Organization, and Other Institutional and Contextual Mechanisms (Week 10)


