

Princeton University
Department of Politics
Undergraduate Program
Fall 2012

**Junior Workshop: The Separation of Powers in the American
Political System**

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Time: Monday 10-11:50 a.m.
Room: Robertson 006
Office Hours: Tuesday 3-4:30, or by appointment

Introduction

The purpose of this workshop is to assist you in writing your first junior paper. For most of you, this will be the most intensive research effort you will have undertaken, and will result in the longest paper you have ever written. This process is not easy, but *producing* research—rather than simply *consuming* it, as you do in your classes—can ultimately be very rewarding. The skills you learn and apply in the workshop will assist you in your independent research in the Spring, in your senior thesis next year, and beyond.

The topic of this workshop is the separation of powers, one of the pillars of the American political system. A wide range of questions relating to the separation-of-powers system can be pursued in this workshop. Examples include: the role of the veto in legislative-executive bargaining; the use of presidential signing statements to influence the implementation of particular laws; whether divided government reduces legislative productivity; whether Supreme Court justices are constrained by the elected branches when they make decisions; and how much discretion members of Congress decide to give bureaucracies. Students can also explore changes in the separation-of-powers system over time, such as the rise of the modern presidency, the growth of the administrative state, and the increase of federal judicial power.

In the first few weeks of the semester, we will meet together to gain a basic understanding of what questions arise in thinking about the ways in which power is shared across the different branches of government. We will also discuss how to choose a research question, how to advance an argument, how to find evidence to support an argument, and how to analyze evidence and communicate the results of one's research endeavors. You will also attend a session at the library to gain hands-on knowledge of what sources and information are available to you, and how best to use them. The second half of the semester will be spent working on your papers; we will also schedule mandatory and optional individual meetings to assist you as you progress.

Because the workshop is not an actual course and because our time meeting as a class is limited, it is incumbent on you to be proactive in seeking a research question beginning

at the start of the semester, and to make steady progress. *Independent* research is exactly that, and it is necessarily less structured than what you are probably used to in your regular classes. That said, I am here to assist you throughout the process (as are the librarians you will meet).

Writing the Research Paper

We will only spend a limited amount of time in class discussing the process of actually *writing* the paper (as opposed to researching it), but it is important to remember that one's research can only be persuasive if it is successfully communicated to the writer's intended audience (this holds for professors as well as students). More generally, writing is the one skill that you are likely to use the most in your post-undergraduate careers, no matter what you do. To that end, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the university's Writing Center (<http://www.princeton.edu/writing/center/>) as you proceed with your paper, from the first draft to the last. Also, you cannot proofread a paper too many times—be sure to ask your friends and roommates to read your work.

I also recommend that you purchase a copy of a style guide such as Kate L. Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press) and a writing guide such as William Strunk & E. B. White, *The Elements of Style* (Allyn & Bacon). Both will serve you well for the next two years.

Using Data to Conduct Empirical Analyses

A large portion of modern political science is devoted to using quantitative methods to draw inferences based on the evaluation of empirical data. You will have the option of undertaking an empirical research paper. This option will likely be most feasible for students who have some background in statistics, or who are currently taking a statistics course (such as POL 345). However, even for students with no background in data analysis or statistics, much can be accomplished with even a rudimentary knowledge of Microsoft Excel.

For students who are interested, the Data & Statistical Services Department at Firestone offers a number of training sessions on statistics; you can also make appoints for individual sessions. See <http://dss.princeton.edu/dsslabs/> for more information.

I want to stress that the use of quantitative methods in your paper is *optional*: empirical papers and qualitative papers will be held to the same standards. There are no “bonus points” for using data, and even the fanciest statistical methods cannot mask a poor argument or a lack of evidence to support an argument.

Course Requirements

The majority of your grade will depend on your final paper. Both the requirements for the paper, including suggested page length (20 to 35 pages), and the guidelines for grading, can be found on the Department of Politics' website (<http://www.princeton.edu/politics/undergraduate/independent-work/junior-papers/>). Make sure you read these. You will also be evaluated based on your completions on various assignments over the course of the semester, as well as your participation and attendance in class. All students should be prepared to participate in discussions during class sessions.

- Assignments and drafts—10%
- Participation & attendance—10%
- Final paper—80%

All assignments (except the final paper) should be emailed to me by **5:00 p.m** on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a grade (e.g. an A becomes an A-) for every 24 hours of lateness. Please note the final paper must be submitted directly to the Department of Politics office, on the first floor of Corwin Hall. As stated by the department: “The Dean of the College sets the due date for the final Fall JP (**Jan. 8th, 2013**), which cannot be waived or modified by the instructor or the Department. All work submitted after this date must be approved by the students residential college dean in conjunction with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.”

Here are the list of assignments and their due dates. Further details on each can be found in the class schedule below.

- Assignment 1 due on Thursday 9/27 at 5 p.m.: Write one double-spaced page on what you are thinking about as a topic for your paper.
- Assignment 2 due on Thursday 10/11 by 5 p.m.: Write a 1-2 page preliminary proposal of your research topic.
- Assignment 3 due on Thursday 11/8 by 5 p.m.: Write a 3-6 page detailed proposal of your research paper.
- First draft due on Monday, November 26th, by 5 p.m
- Final paper due on January 8, 2013

Readings

All of the required readings are available either on Blackboard [**BB**] (under “Course Materials”) or as Electronic Reserves [**ER**]. There is one required book: W. Phillips Shively's *The Craft of Political Research* (Prentice Hall, 8th edition). I have ordered this book through Labyrinth; there are also numerous new and used copies available online. While we only read portions of the book, it is important to have such a book to consult as you progress through your independent research. Other such books that you might find useful include: Steven Van Evera's *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Cornell University Press); Kellstedt and Whitten's *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research* (Cambridge University Press); and Johnson and Reynolds' *Political Science Research Methods* (CQ Press). Also, if

you are employing a case study or studies in your paper, the following is a good resource: George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press). Affordable copies of each are available on the Internet. In addition, below I have listed recommended readings pertaining to various areas in the separation of powers.

Also note that I will assume a basic understanding of the institutions and structure of the American political system. If you need a review, I have placed a copy of *The Logic of American Politics*, an introductory textbook, on reserve at Firestone.

Finally, on September 24th, you will attend a library skills session at Firestone. David Hollander, the Law & Legal Studies Librarian, has put together a fantastic web page with links to all types of electronic resources. You may find it useful to refer to it before this date: <http://libguides.princeton.edu/sop>

Class Schedule

• Week One (9/17): Introduction and Overview

- “Writing a JP: The Handbook” [BB] (*Note some of this applies more to the spring junior paper—focus on the advice on how to conduct research.*)
- Mary Kennedy, “Choosing a Research Question” [BB]
- David Mayhew, “Divided Party Control: Does It Make a Difference?” [BB]
- **Optional:** If your background in American politics is not very deep, I’d recommend doing some reading on the role of the separation of powers in the American system. Particularly:
 - * Lowi et al. *American Government*, Ch. 3 [BB]
 - * Louis Fisher, “Constitutional Conflicts between Congress and the President,” Chapter 1 [ER]

• Week Two (9/24): Library Skills Session

- The session will be held during class time in Firestone, in **Room B-2-J**.
- Review the website David Hollander has created for the course: <http://libguides.princeton.edu/sop>
- Also, if there are specific things you are interested in tracking down (archives, data, etc.), come prepared with questions.
- You should also spend time this week working toward a research topic.

• Week Three (10/1): The Nuts and Bolts of Political Science Research

- **Assignment 1 due by email on Thursday (9/27) at 5pm:** Write one double-spaced page on what you are thinking about as a topic for your paper. This is not binding; its purpose is just to get you thinking about possible ideas. Come prepared to discuss your idea in class.
- Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*, Chs. 1, 2, 6, & 7

- Nolan McCarty and Rose Razaghian. 1999. “Advice and Consent: Senate Responses to Executive Branch Nominations 1885- 1996.” *American Journal of Political Science*. 43(4):1122-1143. [BB]
- **Week Four (10/8): No Class, *Mandatory* Individual Meetings**
 - We will not meet as a group; we will meet in individual meetings scheduled either during our normal class time to discuss your paper ideas.
- **Week Five (10/15): How to Write a Research Paper**
 - **Assignment 2 due via email on Thurs. (10/11) by 5 pm:** Write a 1-2 page preliminary proposal of your research topic. The details can be vague at this point, but you should provide a question or puzzle you are interested in writing about.
 - “Why Conduct a Literature Review,” and “The Research Report: An Annotated Example,” from Johnson & Reynolds *Political Science Research Methods*. [BB]
 - David Glick, 2009. “Conditional Strategic Retreat”. *Journal of Politics* [BB]
- **Week Six (10/22): No Class, *Optional* Individual Meetings**
 - Note: Including Fall Break, you have three weeks to work on your paper proposal (see Week Eight).
- **Week Seven (10/29): Fall Break, No Class**
- **Week Eight (11/5): Paper proposal due, No Class**
 - **Assignment 3 due by email on Thursday 11/8 by 5 p.m.:** Write a 3-6 page detailed proposal of your research paper. This proposal should demonstrate significant progress compared to Assignment 2, and should include: the question or puzzle you’re going to address; its relevance to the issue of separation of powers; a discussion of how you will add to existing knowledge; the specific argument you will advance or hypothesis you will test; and the evidence you will use to advance the argument or test the hypothesis. The outline should also include a brief discussion of relevant articles and books; the point here is not to write a book report, but to organize the literature in a way that facilitates your contribution and research plan.
- **Week Nine (11/12): Small group workshops**
 - Based on the topics of your paper, I will divide you into small groups. Each student will be responsible for reading the proposal of the other members of his or her group. Be prepared to offer advice and constructive criticism to your classmates. This is also a good opportunity to discuss any difficulties or speed bumps you are going through in the research process.
- **Week Ten (11/19): No Class, *Optional* Individual Meetings**

- **Week Eleven (11/26): First Drafts Due, No Class**

- The department deadline (and thus, non-negotiable) for the first draft of the paper is **Monday, November 26th, by 5 p.m.**, which is the day after Thanksgiving. I would encourage you to submit your draft by Wednesday, November 21st, so that you can enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday. In either case, please email me your drafts. The draft should be “complete” in the sense that it should be an actual paper, and not a proposal or an outline. However, if there are sections in the paper that are incomplete, you should indicate how you intend to complete them.

- **Week Twelve (12/3): *Mandatory Individual Meetings***

- We will hold mandatory individual meetings to discuss your drafts.

- **Week Thirteen (12/10): Small group workshops**

- We will meet for the last time as a group. This represents your best and last chance to get feedback from your colleagues.

- **January 8, 2013: Final Paper Due!**

- Reminder: you must submit your final paper directly to the Department of Politics, not to me.

Further Reading

The number of academic works on the separation of power is too large to provide a comprehensive list. However, here are some well-known studies in particular areas related to the separation-of-powers. You may find them useful for both summarizing a research area and for generating new ideas. Note that the categories overlap to some extent and should *not* be viewed as mutually exclusive.

Executive-Legislative Relations

- Mayhew, David. *Divided We Govern: Party Control, Lawmaking, and Investigations, 1946-1990* (1991).
- Scott Frisch and Sean Kelly. *Jimmy Carter and the Water Wars: Presidential Influence and the Politics of Pork*. Cambria. 2008.
- Krehbiel, Keith. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking* (1998).
- Fang-Yi Chiou, Lawrence Rothenberg. 2003. “When Pivotal Politics Meetings Partisan Politics.” *American Journal of Political Science* 503-522 47(3): 503-522.
- Sarah Binder, “The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-96,” *American Political Science Review* 93(Sept 1999): 519-533.
- Cameron, Charles. *Veto Bargaining: The Politics of Negative Power* (2000).
- McCarty, Nolan and Keith Poole. “Veto Power and Legislation: An Empirical Analysis of Executive-Legislative Bargaining from 1961-1986.” *Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization*, 11(1995), pp. 282-312.

The Presidency

- Wildavsky, Aaron. "The Two Presidencies," *Transaction* 4 (December, 1966), pp. 7-14.
- Neustadt, Richard. *Presidential Power* (1980).
- Kernell, Samuel. *Going Public* (2006).
- Skowronek, Stephen. *The Politics Presidents Make* (1997).
- Jacobs, Lawrence and Robert Shapiro. *Politicians Dont Pander* (2000).
- Howell, William. *Power Without Persuasion* (2003).

The Bureaucracy

- Lowi, Theodore. *The End of Liberalism* (1979).
- Arnold, R. Douglas. *Congress and the Bureaucracy* (1980).
- Carpenter, Daniel. *Forging Bureaucratic Autonomy* (2001).
- Epstein, David and Sharyn O'Halloran. *Delegating Powers. A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policy Making under Separate Powers* (1999).
- McCubbins, Mathew and Thomas Schwartz. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrol Versus Fire Alarm," *American Journal of Political Science* (1984), pp. 165-77
- McCubbins, Mathew, Roger Noll and Barry Weingast. "Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control of Agencies." *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization* 3 (1987), pp. 243-77.
- Kernell, Samuel and McDonald, Michael. "Congress and Americas Political Development: The Transformation of the Post Office from Patronage to Service" *American Journal of Political Science* 43 (1999), pp. 792-811.

The Judiciary

- Walter Murphy *Congress and the Courts: A Case Study in the American Political Process*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Tom Clark, "The Separation of Powers, Court Curbing, and Judicial Legitimacy", *American Journal of Political Science*.2009. 53(4):971-989.
- Rosenberg, Gerald N. 1992. "Judicial Independence and the Reality of Political Power." *Review of Politics* 54(3): 369 88.
- Keith Whittington, "Interpose Your Friendly Hand: Political Supports for the Exercise of Judicial Review by the United States Supreme Court" *American Political Science Review*. 2005.
- William N. Eskridge, Jr. *Dynamic Statutory Interpretation*

Appointments and Nominations

- McCarty, Nolan M. and Rose Razaghian. "Advice and Consent: Senate Response to Executive Branch Nominations, 1885-1996." *American Journal of Political Science*, 43 (1999), pp. 1122-43.

- Yalof, David. *Pursuit of Justices: Presidential Politics and the Selection of Supreme Court Nominees* (1999).
- Lee Epstein et al. “The Changing Dynamics of Senate Voting on Supreme Court Nominees”, *Journal of Politics* (2006) 68:2, 296-307.
- Lewis, David. *The Politics of Presidential Appointments* (2008).