Winning Coalitions in Presidential Systems:
Pre-Electoral Alliances and Post-Electoral Governments*

Marisa Kellam
Associate Professor
Waseda Institute for Advanced Study
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

and

Cecilia Martínez-Gallardo
Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science
University of North Carolina

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This paper examines the electoral and governing strategies that presidents pursue in multiparty systems. The subfield of comparative presidentialism emphasizes the importance of multiparty coalitions for policy-making, yet previous research conceives of coalition formation as starting only after the president is elected. In this paper we extend—theoretically and empirically—the study of the coalition-building by linking the incentives of electoral competition to the formation and maintenance of governing coalitions. We argue that parties forming a coalition to support a single presidential candidate negotiate a common platform before the election, instead of campaigning to distinguish their policy programs from one another, and that these inter-party agreements lead to cooperative and stable multiparty governments. We use data on electoral and governing coalitions in Latin America's presidential systems to test our argument. In the analysis we account for important empirical variation in patterns of parties' cabinet participation, the proportionality of cabinet portfolio allocation, and coalition duration.

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Introduction

Most presidential elections are multiparty contests and most presidents face multiple parties in the legislature. In these multiparty settings, presidential candidates often form electoral coalitions to win office and presidents once elected form governing coalitions to win legislative support for their policy agenda.

Not surprisingly, coalitional presidentialism has received a great deal of attention in the last decades. This work has greatly improved our understanding of the circumstances under which presidents form and maintain governing coalitions (Deheza 1997; Altman 2000; Chasquetti 2001, 2008; Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh 2004; Amorim Neto 2006; Negretto 2006; Cheibub 2007; Alemán and Tsebelis 2011; Raile, Pereira and Power 2011; Martínez-Gallardo 2012, 2014; Kellam 2013). According to this literature, cabinet appointments are a strategy that presidents use to further their policy agenda, and the composition and stability of governing coalitions reflects the relative bargaining positions of the executive and parties in the legislature.

A mostly separate body of work has compiled extensive empirical evidence showing that pre-electoral coalitions are common in presidential democracies where electoral rules often encourage competition among multiple small parties and presidential candidates usually cannot win the election based on the support of their party alone (Deheza 1997; Mainwaring and Shugart 1997; Chasquetti 2001, 2004, 2008; Golder 2006; Carroll 2007; Freudenreich 2012; Spoon and West 2013; Kellam *Forthcoming*). These pre-electoral coalitions (also called alliances or pacts) involve candidate nomination agreements among parties and an explicit or implicit agreement over a common policy agenda (Chasquetti 2004). Parties form electoral coalitions in presidential systems ostensibly with the short-term aim of maximizing their chances of winning the election, but also potentially with the longer-term goal of shaping the policy agenda of the next government.

Under what conditions, and to what extent, do winning pre-electoral coalitions translate into post-electoral governing coalitions in presidential systems? Whether electoral coalitions translate into governing coalitions influences whether governments are responsive not only to the president's political strategy but also to the preferences of the electorate. In the context of parliamentary politics, scholars argue that pre-electoral coalitions "increase the identifiability of government alternatives, thereby allowing voters to explicitly register their support for a particular government [and] pre-electoral coalitions also increase the transparency of the government formation process and provide government coalitions with greater legitimacy and stronger mandates" (Golder 2006, 105; see also Powell 2000). Yet, the potentially positive normative implications of pre-electoral coalitions for representation and transparency for the most part have been lost on scholars of presidential systems. Instead, scholars raise concerns that pre-electoral coalitions in presidential elections may allow for the election of more extreme presidents whose parties are not the median party in congress, thereby increasing the likelihood of subsequent executive-legislative conflict (Colomer and Negretto 2005). If presidential electoral coalitions fall apart after the election, then scholars worry that pre-electoral coalition formation will only serve to weaken, rather than strengthen, government mandates and legitimacy once presidents take office (Payne et al 2007).

Existing research on presidential pre-electoral coalitions comes to divergent conclusions as to whether electoral alliances actually translate into governing coalitions in presidential systems. On one hand, prominent scholars of presidentialism have claimed that electoral coalitions "are not binding past election day" (Mainwaring and Shugart 1997: 397) and foresee governability problems in multiparty presidential systems precisely because "loose electoral coalitions" do not become durable governing coalitions (Payne and Zavala 2007: 34; see also Mainwaring 1993; Conaghan 1995; Mainwaring and Shugart 1997; Colomer and Negretto 2005). Especially during the earlier period of democratic consolidation in Latin America, scholars tended to dismiss the presidents' electoral allies as sources of reliable legislative support.

On the other hand, recent work that revisits the connection between pre-electoral agreements and post-electoral governments in presidential systems reaches different conclusions. Carroll (2007) models presidential coalition governments as manifestations of vote-seeking exchanges made in the pre-electoral period and finds that presidents award ministerial portfolios in presidential cabinets to electoral allies in proportion to their electoral support rather than their post-electoral bargaining weight. This perspective differs substantially from most existing literature on coalitional presidentialism that models government formation as the result of post-electoral legislative bargaining. Chasquetti (2008) provides further empirical evidence that the majority of electoral alliances translate into coalition governments.

We concur with more recent work on presidential electoral coalitions that agreements made between presidential candidates and other parties before the election will influence the composition of government coalitions. In particular, we argue that parties that form a coalition to support a single presidential candidate tend to negotiate a common policy platform before the election, instead of campaigning to distinguish their policy programs from one another. At the same time, we consider pre-electoral coalitions subject to the post-electoral legislative context and other institutional factors. Consequently, pre-electoral interparty agreements *together with* the post-electoral distribution of power determine the composition and stability of governing coalitions in presidential systems. In other words, presidential cabinets reflect post-electoral legislative bargaining, but post-electoral bargaining occurs under a particular policy mandate, agreed upon during pre-electoral bargaining.

To test our argument, we use an original dataset that connects electoral and governing coalitions formed between 1982 and 2010 in twelve Latin American countries. We show that membership in presidents' electoral coalitions increases parties' probability of participating in multiparty governing coalitions. In addition, parties in the president's electoral coalition tend to receive a larger proportion of ministerial portfolios, relative to their seat share, than other members of the governing coalition. However, we argue—and show empirically—that the post-electoral legislative bargaining environment conditions government representation of presidents' electoral coalition partners in important ways not yet recognized by the literature on pre-electoral coalitions. Finally, we show evidence on the duration of coalition partnerships that supports the argument that coalitions based on pre-electoral arrangements are not an impediment, to governability in presidential systems, but rather might foster policy stability [duration analysis is incomplete].

The Consequences of Electoral Coalitions in Presidential Systems

A growing body of research on coalition government in presidential systems conceives of government formation as the result of bargaining between the president and parties in order

to construct majorities that will allow minority presidents to get their policy agenda approved by the legislature, and implemented (Cheibub, Przeworski and Saiegh 2004; Amorim Neto 2006; Negretto 2006; Cheibub 2007; Alemán and Tsebelis 2011; Raile, Pereira and Power 2011; Martínez-Gallardo 2012, 2014; Kellam 2013). With important variations, scholars of comparative presidentialism argue that presidents will include parties other than their own in the government only when they are too weak to pass their legislative agenda without the support of other parties. For example, Alemán and Tsebelis (2011) theorize that presidents are more likely to include other parties in their cabinets when the executive and legislative balance of power is less favorable to the president, Amorim Neto (2006) argues that stronger presidents construct cabinets that are less proportional to the legislature, and Martínez-Gallardo (2012) demonstrates that governing coalitions are less stable where presidents have extensive institutional powers because presidents have less incentive to compromise with other parties. From the perspective of previous research on government formation and duration in presidential systems, bargaining over policy and positions in the government reflects the bargaining environment that takes shape after the presidential election. Empirical analyses emphasize the relative ideological positions and powers of the president vis-à-vis political parties in the legislature, while ignoring the pre-electoral environment all together.

The paucity of research on the effect of pre-electoral coalition formation on government formation in presidential systems may be a consequence of scholarly expectations that pre-electoral coalitions simply would *not* form. Scholars of presidentialism offer several reasons why pre-electoral coalitions should *not* form: supporting a presidential candidate from another party may send confusing messages to voters, dilute parties' policy reputations, diminish their support in legislative elections as a consequence of presidential coattails, and even threaten their viability as independent political actors (Conaghan 1995; Golder 2006; Carroll 2007).[1] Scholars also argue that small parties may independently enter the presidential race not because they expect to win but rather because their electoral showing in the first round influences post-election bargaining (Shugart and Carey 1992; Samuels 2002; Colomer and Negretto 2005; Jones-West and Spoon 2010).

However, electoral coalitions do form in presidential elections (Deheza 1997; Chasquetti 2001, 2004, 2008; Carroll 2007; Freudenreich 2012; Spoon and West 2013; Kellam *Forthcoming*). In the presidential systems of Latin America, for example, electoral coalitions have formed *and* won at least one presidential election in every country except Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador.

In presidential elections, the most common explanation for pre-electoral coalitions among parties focuses on the incentives for coordination generated by plurality electoral rules (Shugart and Carey 1992, Jones 2004, Spoon and West 2013). Consequently, the move from plurality to "more-than-plurality rules of presidential elections" in most Latin American countries since 1978 has led scholars to expect fewer first-round pre-electoral coalitions but an increase in the number of second-round electoral coalitions (Negretto 2009: 117; Chasquetti 2004). The adoption of more-than-plurality presidential elections was justified, at least in part, based on their supposed tendency "to generate the conditions for the winner to form a governing coalition" (Chasquetti 2004: 503) and, thus, to contribute to the stability of presidential regimes in the region. The formation of pre-electoral coalitions, the argument went, should increase the probability that the winner in the election will form a governing

[1] Where there is legislative vote pooling and/or free media pooling scholars do expect to see electoral alliances because under these circumstances formalized electoral coordination benefits both the presidential party and its coalition partners on election day (Carroll and Cox 2007, Machado 2009).

coalition, reducing the likelihood of minority presidencies and increasing the prospect for governability. Nevertheless, scholars tend to consider second round endorsements to be "loose electoral coalitions among the two candidates and some minority parties, rather than more durable governing coalitions" (Payne et al 2007: 34; Chasquetti 2004).

Despite the prevalence of electoral coalitions and their importance to electoral outcomes in the region, the comparative presidentialism literature has not developed a theoretical understanding which links the incentives of electoral competition to the incentives of presidents to build governing coalitions so as to pass their policy agendas. Carroll (2007) draws a link between pre-electoral and post-electoral coalitions in presidential systems, but sees pre-electoral bargaining as an exchange of votes for the promise of office and not a part of a policy-seeking strategy. From this perspective, presidential candidates first form electoral coalitions to obtain a majority of votes. Once elected, presidents form governing coalitions to honor the vote-seeking exchanges that they made in the pre-electoral period. "Assuming parties' potential second-round vote contribution approximates their seats," Carroll (2007, 113) predicts "a rough relationship between seat shares and portfolio shares" under presidential pre-electoral coalitions. This differs from the prediction that post-electoral bargaining will depend upon parties' legislative voting weights. In his empirical analysis of portfolio allocation in presidential systems, Carroll (2007) finds that "the effect of a party's post-electoral bargaining advantage seems therefore to be nonexistent when electoral cooperation has taken place among parties within the presidential coalitions" (120; see also Freundenreich 2010).

Other research on electoral coalitions in multiparty presidential systems raises doubts about the credibility of pre-electoral exchanges of votes for the promise of office in presidential systems. Arguing that presidents cannot be held accountable to "cheap talk" agreements to share government, Kellam (*Forthcoming*) examines why parties join pre-electoral coalitions in support of other parties' presidential candidacies. She claims that pre-electoral policy compromises made between electoral coalition partners in the presidential campaign help parties reduce uncertainty over the future policy-making process, and provides evidence of policy-oriented electoral coalition behavior. Yet, whether policy motivated pre-electoral agreements influence the composition of coalition governments remains an open question, which we cannot answer without also considering the post-electoral bargaining environment.

In summary, existing research on presidential coalition government presents two different accounts: governing coalitions are formed either as a result of post-electoral legislative bargaining over policy or to fulfill vote-seeking exchanges made in the pre-electoral period. On the one hand, in most work on governing coalitions, cabinets reflect post-electoral bargaining in which presidents exchange office for policy with legislative parties. On the other hand, in the existing work which considers pre-electoral coalitions as influential, governing coalitions reflect pre-electoral bargaining in which presidential candidates exchange the promise of office for votes. However, a third possibility is that post-electoral coalitions reflect both pre- and post-electoral bargaining over policy. In the next section, we present an argument that integrates pre- and post-electoral bargaining in presidential systems in a unified framework.

Winning Coalitions are Policy Coalitions

In our account, governing coalitions reflect post-electoral legislative bargaining, conditional on a policy compromise that is made before the election. This also implies the converse; hence, we simultaneously argue that government coalitions reflect the policy preferences of

pre-electoral coalitions, conditional on institutional powers and legislative conditions that influence post-electoral bargaining.

We assume that the formation of electoral coalitions is policy motivated in the Downsian sense: the presidential candidate sets her policy position so as to gain enough votes to win. In a multiparty contest where the district magnitude is one (i.e. the presidency), this means that instead of just adjusting their campaign platform unilaterally in the direction of the median voter, presidents may also have an incentive to form electoral coalitions because the votes they need are controlled by other parties. Parties forming a coalition to support a single presidential candidate negotiate a common platform before the election, instead of campaigning to distinguish their policy programs from one another (Chasquetti 2004). In some cases, parties may outline an explicit and specific set of policy positions that they intend to jointly pursue should they take office. For example, in the *Carta por los Argentinos*, Argentine political parties, the *Unión Cívica Radical* and Frepaso (*Frente para un País Solidario*), established an anti-corruption platform and supported specific economic measures as part of their Alliance for Work, Justice, and Education which presented Fernando de la Rúa as its presidential candidate for the 1999 presidential elections. In Mexico electoral coalitions are bound by law to provide a common electoral platform and a government program (see COFIPE art 63). More commonly, members of a presidential pre-electoral coalition publically espouse a shared plan for governing simply by campaigning together.

In either case, the impact of the pre-electoral coalition after the election is over is that this pre-electoral bargain caused the president and her coalition partners to adopt a policy position that is closer to each other, and likely farther from other parties than it would have been if the pre-electoral coalition had not formed. After the election, the process of government formation follows the bargaining logic outlined in the previous literature on coalition presidentialism but occurs in a post-electoral environment in which the president and other legislative parties share a common electoral mandate based on the pre-electoral bargain. Presidents will pursue a governing strategy that best allows them to fulfill their mandate or achieve their preferred policy.

Presidential electoral coalitions likely reduce the costs of coalition bargaining and increase the probability of multiparty governing coalitions among coalition partners. Thus, we expect members of presidents' electoral coalitions to be more likely than non-members to join presidents governing coalitions. However, as noted in our literature review, scholars typically describe second round alliances as entailing less formal policy agreements than alliances formed prior to the first round. Consequently, our expectation is lower for parties that join the electoral coalition in the second round only.

> ***Government Participation Hypothesis 1****: All else equal, being a member of the president's first round electoral coalition increases the likelihood that a party will join the governing coalition once the president assumes office.*
>
> ***Government Participation Hypothesis 2****: All else equal, joining the president's second round electoral coalition increases the likelihood that a party will join the governing coalition once the president assumes office, but this positive effect is smaller than the positive effect of first round electoral coalition membership.*

Although we assume that presidents and parties form pre-electoral coalitions to maximize their ideal policy outcome during the (post-electoral) presidential term, this does not

necessarily imply that post-electoral coalitions are equivalent to their pre-electoral counterparts in composition. If a pre-electoral coalition is part of a policy-seeking strategy, then the coalition should be sensitive to the post-electoral situation influencing the policy outcome. Since larger parties are more important to passing the president's agenda, we expect pre-electoral partnerships to be more influential on the government coalition as the partner's seat share increases. On the one hand, the larger the ideological distance between the president's party and another party in the legislature, the less likely it is that the party will be included in the cabinet. However, if the party had agreed to a specific set of policy compromises with the president during the campaign, then it should be more likely to participate in the governing coalition. On the other hand, among parties with ideological positions closer to the president's party, they are likely to cooperate in government whether or not they formed an electoral alliance, such that membership makes less of a difference when parties' relative distances are small.

It is also possible that the coalition of parties that produce an electoral victory is not the same set of parties that produce minimum winning policy outcomes, given the particular distribution of seats and policy positions of parties in the legislature. In particular, presidents without unilateral legislative powers will be more dependent on the legislative support from other parties. In these conditions, pre-electoral coalition partners may have less cabinet involvement simply because presidents had to offer positions to other parties in order to obtain their support. In other words, pre-electoral coalitions will translate more directly into governing coalitions when presidents have stronger legislative powers.

More generally, pre-electoral coalition members' representation in the governing coalition is conditional on their relative strength in the legislative bargaining environment, as follows:

> ***Government Representation Hypothesis 1****: The effect of being a member of the president's electoral coalition on the party's cabinet representation will increase with its seats share in the post-electoral legislature.*
>
> ***Government Representation Hypothesis 2****: The effect of being a member of the president's electoral coalition on the party's cabinet representation will increase with its ideological distance from the president.*
>
> ***Government Representation Hypothesis 3****: The effect of being a member of the president's electoral coalition on the party's cabinet representation will increase with the extent of decree powers accorded to the president.*

In the post-electoral context, when presidents seek legislative support from other parties to pass their policy agendas, they trade cabinet posts for policy-making. These exchanges may result in governing partnerships with their electoral coalition partners, if they had in fact formed a pre-electoral coalition. However, presidents may also expand or change their coalition to include in their governments parties that were not part of a pre-electoral coalition as necessary to pass their legislative agenda. In these exchanges, larger parties will require more cabinet ministries. To increase the chances of passing policy that the president prefers, presidents should bring in parties positioned closer to their own ideal policy positions (Alemán and Tsebelis 2011). In addition, when holding party size and positions constant, presidents with strong legislative powers will likely offer fewer posts because they are less dependent on legislative support (Amorim Neto 2006, Martinez-Gallardo 2012).

Our argument here suggests that the effects of parties' bargaining power and ideological position relative to the president will differ between members and non-members of the president's electoral coalition. If pre-electoral coalitions involve a policy agreement and thus shared electoral mandate, the relative bargaining positions in the post-electoral context should be less important in determining the cabinet involvement of these parties. Note that the conditional relationships outlined in the government representation hypotheses 1 through 3 imply symmetrical relationships for these effects conditional on pre-electoral membership (Berry, Golder and Milton 2012):

> ***Government Representation Hypothesis 4****: The marginal effect of party size on cabinet representation is positive for all parties, but the magnitude is larger for members of the president's electoral coalition.*
>
> ***Government Representation Hypothesis 5****: The marginal effect of ideological distance on cabinet representation is negative for all parties, but the magnitude is smaller for members of the president's electoral coalition.*
>
> ***Government Representation Hypothesis 6****: The marginal effect of presidential decree power on cabinet representation is negative for all parties, but the magnitude is smaller for members of the president's electoral coalition.*

We have argued that presidential candidates and their coalition partners form pre-electoral coalitions to increase the probability of their ideal policy outcome in the post-electoral legislative session. Much of the time parties' expectations about how their support for a particular presidential candidate will translate into future policy outcomes will be consistent with the post-electoral reality. We expect that a governing coalition formed between the president and her pre-electoral members to enact a shared policy mandate should be stable.

However, when the post-electoral legislative environment differs from the expectation formed by coalition members before the election took place, members of the coalition may update their beliefs about how best to pursue their preferred policy outcome. If the president switches the policy direction of her agenda or if the president must bring in new parties that demand major compromises to her policy platform, then we expect the electoral coalition partners to leave the government since the point of their support for the president was to carry out a specified policy mandate. Similarly, if the policy agenda pursued by electoral coalition partners is driven by the "electoral connection" (Mayhew 1974), then we would expect the continued support of electoral coalition partners to the president's policy agenda to be sensitive to changes in public support for the agenda, as proxied by presidential approval. In short, we expect pre-electoral coalition partners who serve in governing coalitions to be more sensitive to policy changes in the post-electoral environment than other governing coalition parties whose participation came about through an exchange of office for votes only after the president assumed office.

> ***Government Duration Hypothesis 1****: All else equal, being a member of the president's electoral coalition increases the duration of a party's participation in the governing coalition when a president does not switch policy direction, but decreases the duration under presidents who switch.*

Government Duration Hypothesis 2*: All else equal, being a member of the president's electoral coalition increases the duration of a party's participation in the governing coalition when presidential approval is high, but decreases the duration when presidential approval is low.*

As before, the conditional hypotheses outlined in the government duration hypotheses above also imply symmetrical relationships for the effect of policy-switches and presidential approval conditional on pre-electoral membership. We expect these variables to have stronger effects on pre-electoral members' duration in government than on the duration of other parties in the governing coalition.

Government Duration Hypothesis 3*: The discrete effect of presidential policy switches on a party's duration in government is negative for members of the president's electoral coalition, but has no effect on the duration of other parties in the president's governing coalition.*

Government Duration Hypothesis 4*: The marginal effect of presidential approval on a party's duration in government is positive for all parties in the governing coalition, but the magnitude of this effect is greater for members of the president's electoral coalition.*

Below we describe the data that we use to test these three groups of hypotheses related to the government participation, government representation, and government duration of political parties in presidential systems, which we follow with a subsequent section on our methods of analysis and results.

Data

We test the hypotheses outlined in the previous section using an original dataset that includes all the pre- and post-electoral coalitions *formed* between 1982 and 2010 in 12 Latin American presidential countries, some of which continued to govern until 2015.[2] We include data on more than 300 different parties participating in the election of 70 presidents, and record whether they joined a coalition to contest the presidential election and/or joined the governing coalition after the election.[3] We also record the number of cabinet positions for each party that joined the government, and the number of months that they served in the government. In addition, our dataset includes information on parties' legislative strength and ideological position, and the environment in which bargaining over cabinet formation takes place.

Our three main dependent variables are (1) membership in the governing coalition, (2) the proportion of cabinet seats for each cabinet party, and (3) the duration of parties in the government. We consider a party part of the *governing coalition* if a member of that party

[2] We include presidents who were elected after 1982 and who began their term in office prior to January 1, 2011. We include only presidents that were elected, and thus exclude vice-presidents who assumed the presidency following the death or resignation of the president. We also exclude presidents elected in years when their country's Polity Score was less than 6. See Appendix for details.

[3] The unit of analysis is not an individual party but rather a combination of the party and the election, since many of the parties in the dataset participated in more than one election; the total number of observations in the dataset is 549. This total excludes parties that won less than one percent of the seats unless they are the party of the president.

accepted a position as minister in the president's cabinet as a representative of his or her party. In presidential systems, presidents are free to name their government ministers from any party or to appoint ministers who do not belong to any party—and they often do. With the exception of Costa Rica, Mexico and Paraguay, all the countries in our sample had coalition governments in the period we study. Although most cases of coalition government are straightforward, there are some cases in which a minister joined the cabinet *without* the support of her party; in these cases we did not include the party as member of the governing coalition (see Appendix for sources).

Our main argument is that government formation is significantly shaped both by pre-electoral bargaining and by the environment in which post-electoral coalition-building takes place. Thus, a key variable of interest is membership in a pre-electoral coalition in the presidential contest. Presidential electoral coalitions entail a nomination agreement for the presidential (and vice-presidential) candidacy. Presidential candidates can form a pre-electoral coalition with more than one party; however, each party that does not contest the race itself can support only one presidential candidate. As we define them, *presidential pre-electoral coalitions* involve either (i) two (or more) parties that officially contest the presidential election as a coalition or (ii) the official nomination by one party of the presidential candidate from another party as its own candidate. We separately analyze participation in first and second round pre-electoral coalitions. In our data, all first round partners continue on to the second round. However, to ease interpretation, the variable for pre-second round electoral coalitions includes only those parties that joined after the first round. Note also that we do not code the president's own party as a pre-electoral coalition partner in either the first or second round, even though they are obviously members of the coalition. Thus, according to our variable coding, a party may be *either* the president's party *or* a member of the president's pre-first round electoral coalition *or* a member of the president's pre-second round electoral coalition who joined after the first round, *or* none of the above. Based on the party-year observations included in the dataset, around 10% of the parties joined the winning president's pre-electoral coalition prior to the first round, and another 7% joined the president's electoral coalition only for the run-off election. Involving a somewhat different set of parties, around 17.5% served in the governing coalition (See Table 1).[4]

Table 1. Parties' Participation in the President's Electoral and Governing Coalitions

		Member of Pre-Electoral Coalition			
		No	**R1**	**R2 only**	
Member of Governing Coalition	**No**	363 (92%)	12 (24%)	20 (59%)	395
	Yes	32 (8%)	38 (76%)	14 (41%)	84
		395	50	34	479*

[4] These numbers do not include the president's party. We exclude parties that won less than 1% of the seats in the concurrent (or preceding) legislative election.

**Excluding the president's party and parties with seats<1%*

However, in our data, there is wide variation across countries in the frequency with which parties join electoral and governing coalitions. In Table 2, we weight parties by their seat share to give an accurate description of the importance of president's coalition partners, and sort countries from highest to lowest in terms of mean seat share of government parties (other than the president's party). In some countries, such as Brazil and Chile, both pre-electoral commitments and coalition governments are the norm. In other countries, like Costa Rica or Mexico, parties did not form pre-electoral coalitions or presidents' electoral partners included only very small parties and single parties governed throughout the period of study. In Uruguay, by contrast, pre-electoral coalitions were uncommon but coalition governments were common.[5]

Table 2. Average Total Seats Held by Presidents' Coalition Partners

Country	Preelectoral Coalition, R1*	Preelectoral Coalition, R2 only*	Governing Coalition*
BRA	14.4	10.6	38.4
COL	5.8	6.8	33.6
CHI	31.8	0.0	31.8
URU	0.0	3.7	25.4
BOL	4.3	0.0	19.6
PAR	8.8	0.0	8.8
VEN	9.1	0.0	6.2
ECU	6.6	16.1	5.9
PER	0.0	8.1	5.7
ARG	2.8	0.0	2.0
COS	0.0	0.0	0.0
MEX	1.1	0.0	0.0
Total	**6.6**	**4.3**	**15.5**

**Excluding presidents' parties*

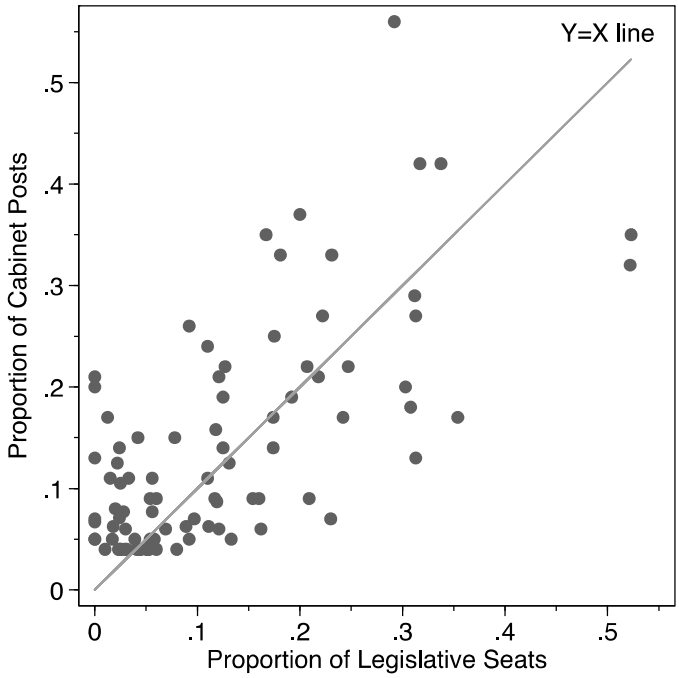
The proportion of cabinet posts that parties receive also varies widely. Among parties in the governing coalition, the average proportion of ministerial posts is .34, but when we exclude the president's party the mean proportion of cabinet posts goes down to .14 (presidents' parties hold an average of .61 of the cabinet positions). Note that Latin American presidents frequently include non-partisans in their cabinets (Amorim Neto 2006), such that only 15% of the presidents in our dataset distributed *all* of the ministerial posts to their co-partisans. The maximum proportion of seats held by parties in the governing coalition, other than the president's party, goes from zero in Mexico and Costa Rica where only single-party governments formed in the period we study, to more than one-third in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, and Paraguay. Figure 1 plots the proportion of posts awarded to parties that

[5] Although Uruguay's Broad Front (Frente Amplio) may be seen as a coalition of multiple parties, factions, and movements, because we cannot identify parties with separate seats, we think it is reasonable to treat FA as if it were a political party.

served in presidents' initial cabinets relative to the proportion of seats they held in the legislature.

We also examine the variation in the length of time that parties remained in the government among the parties that accepted posts in presidents' initial cabinets. Excluding the president's party (and also governing parties with less than 1% of the seats), our data indicate that across all governments and countries about 64% of the parties serve out the entire presidential term. Table 3 provides the average duration of the presidents' coalition partners in government, expressed in months and as a proportion of the presidents' terms in office. The data indicate substantial cross-country variation in the stability of governing coalitions.

Figure 1. Proportion of Cabinet Posts held by Government Parties



Note: This figure does not include presidents' parties.

Table 3. Average Duration in Government

Country	Months*	Proportion of Term*
PAR	42	1.00
COL	44	0.98
CHI	56	0.97
ARG	20	0.95
BRA	35	0.83
URU	46	0.81
BOL	27	0.79
ECU	16	0.71
VEN	27	0.70
PER	30	0.52

Total	**36.21**	**0.83**

**Excluding presidents' parties*

Analysis and Results

We present the results of the empirical analysis in three tables, corresponding to each of the three dependent variables. In Table 4 the dependent variable codes whether a given party was included in the president's initial cabinet (1) or not (0).[6] We use a random effect logit model to predict the probability that a party with at least 1% of the seats in the legislature will serve in the cabinet based on their membership status in the president's pre-electoral coalition and on the bargaining environment. The random effects account for heterogeneity across presidential terms that may be related to unobserved factors that increase or decrease the probability of coalition government in any particular legislative setting.[7]

In subsequent analyses we restrict the estimation sample to parties included in the governing coalition. In Table 6 the dependent variable is the proportion of cabinet seats that each government party received. In this case, we estimate a generalized linear model using a logit link function, with robust standard errors clustered by presidential term. Finally, in Table 8 the dependent variable is the duration, in months, of each coalition partner in the governing coalition [incomplete].

In each table of results, we report two models: with an additive model we examine the separate effects of pre-electoral coalition membership and bargaining conditions on the dependent variable, and with an interactive model we examine the effects of these variables conditional on one another.

Cabinet Participation

Table 4 indicates a strong relationship between pre-electoral coalitions and post-electoral government formation in Latin American presidential systems. Based on the additive model, the predicted probability that a party joins the cabinet is about .03 if they are not members of the president's electoral coalition and .88 if they are members.[8] In this model, both first and second round electoral coalition membership are associated with a higher probability that a party will join the government after the election, as compared to those parties that did not formally support the president in the election. However, as expected, the impact of first-round electoral coalition membership is greater than that of second-round only membership, and the difference is statistically significant. These findings support the Government Participation Hypotheses 1 and 2. Note that we include a dummy variable for Bolivia between 1980 and 2002 because the second round of the presidential election occurred in the legislature, for which we estimate a positive and statistically significant coefficient.

[6] We assume the president includes his or her own party and so do not include the presidential party in our analysis. This is always the case, with the rare exception of non-party presidents.

[7] The results indicate that the president-level variance component makes up about one quarter of the total variance, and a likelihood ratio test shows that the random effects model is preferred to a pooled logit model (pvalue of .01).

[8] We make this comparison while holding all other covariates at their means, except for dichotomous variables, which we set to their modes (random effects are set to zero). The difference is statistically significant.

Table 4. The Probability of Cabinet Participation

	Additive Model	Interactive Model
Pre-Electoral Coalition, R1	4.98***	5.85***
	(0.67)	(1.31)
PEC 1 * Seats		0.13
		(0.09)
PEC 1 * Relative Distance		-0.62
		(3.26)
PEC 1 * Decree Powers		-3.32**
		(1.67)
Pre-Electoral Coalition, R2 only	2.87***	2.49
	(0.65)	(1.56)
PEC 2 * Seats		-0.03
		(0.06)
PEC 2 * Relative Distance		7.96
		(5.69)
PEC 2 * Decree Powers		0.52
		(2.06)
Seats (%)	0.08***	0.08***
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Relative Distance	-0.91	-1.05
	(0.96)	(1.08)
Decree Powers	2.87***	3.41***
	(0.86)	(1.08)
Working Majority	-0.81	-0.82
	(0.69)	(0.76)
Non-Centrality	1.44	1.26
	(1.35)	(1.45)
Bolivia (1980-2002) Dummy	2.99***	3.35***
	(0.85)	(0.99)
Constant	-5.38***	-5.80***
	(0.77)	(0.94)
Number of Observations	493	493
Number of Presidential Terms	70	70

Random effects logit coefficient estimates, with standard errors in parentheses.
**** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1*

Besides the indicators for the membership in presidents' pre-electoral coalitions, we also assess how the legislative bargaining environment influences cabinet participation. Our findings show that larger parties, as measured by the percent of seats they hold in the legislature (*Seats*), are more likely to join the cabinet. We also include a measure of the ideological distance between the president and the party (*Relative Distance*), but do not a estimate statistically significant effect.[9] Our measure of the president's institutional powers (*Decree Powers*) is normalized to a 0 to 1 scale. We estimate a coefficient on decree powers with the opposite sign to what one would expect based on the coalitional presidentialism literature. Our finding indicates that stronger presidents are more likely to include other parties in their cabinet.[10] We explore this counterintuitive finding when we turn to the results of our interactive model.

[9] *Relative Distance* is measured as the squared distance between the president and the party divided by the sum of all parties' squared distances from the median legislative party (Aleman and Tsebels 2011).

[10] Aleman and Tsebelis (2011) find the same counter-intuitive effect.

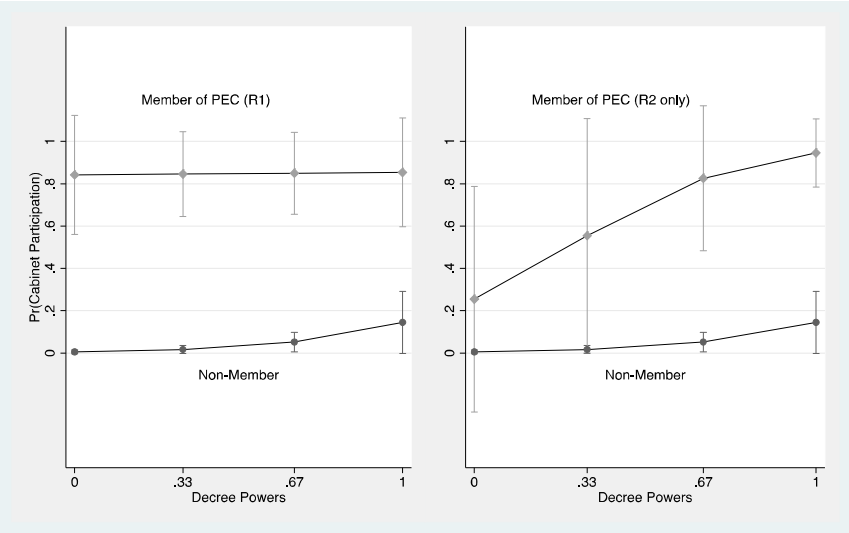
To interpret the results of the interactive model, in Table 5 we present the marginal effects of *Seats, Relative Distance* and *Decree Powers* for first and second round electoral coalition members, and non-members, on the probability of cabinet participation. We find that the marginal effect of party size is positive, but that the magnitude is much larger for members of the president's first round electoral coalition. As for decree powers, we see that the positive effect is not significant for first round electoral coalition partners. However, for those joining in the second round, the effect is very large. Although decree authority has a positive effect on the probability of government participation for parties outside of the president's electoral coalition, the magnitude of the effect is much smaller than it is for second-round coalition members. In Figure 2 we show how the marginal effect of membership in pre-electoral coalitions changes with presidents' extent of decree authority. Together these conditional effects suggest that membership in the second round electoral coalition only makes a difference when the president has extensive decree authority, otherwise the marginal effect of being part of the second round coalition is indistinguishable from zero.

Table 5. Conditional Marginal Effects of Bargaining Environment on Cabinet Participation

	PEC r1=0 & PEC r2=0	PEC r1=1	PEC r2=1
Seats	.002*	.023*	.012
Relative Distance	-.020	-.187	1.72
Decree	.066*	.010	.977*

*Continuous covariates set at means, dichotomous covariates set at modes, and random effects set at zero. * p<0.05*

Figure 2. Conditional Effect of Electoral Coalition Membership on Cabinet Participation



Continuous covariates set at means, dichotomous covariates set at modes, and random effects set at zero. Bars show 95% confidence intervals.

In these models, we also control for the relative ideological distance between the president and the median party in the legislature (*Non-Centrality*) and for whether the president's party controls at least 45% of the legislature seats (*Working Majority*), but neither achieves statistical significance.

Proportion of Cabinet Seats

We expect that membership in the president's pre-electoral coalition will shape not only the likelihood that a party will join the cabinet but also the proportion of portfolios that it gets. Table 6 shows the results of two models predicting the proportion of cabinet seats that go to each party. In this analysis, we restrict our set of observations to the parties in the governing coalition, including the president's party.

Table 6. Proportion of Cabinet Posts

	Additive Model	**Interactive Model**
Pre-Electoral Coalition, R1	0.28*	0.02
	(0.16)	(0.27)
PEC 1 * Proportion Seats		2.27*
		(1.18)
PEC 1 * Relative Distance		-1.90**
		(0.96)
PEC 1 * Decree Powers		0.42
		(0.28)
Pre-Electoral Coalition, R2 Only	0.05	0.12
	(0.19)	(0.18)
Proportion of Legislative Seats	4.63***	4.26***
	(0.48)	(0.54)
Relative Distance	-0.42	0.12
	(0.52)	(0.68)
Decree Power	-0.72***	-0.77***
	(0.18)	(0.22)
President's Party	1.24***	1.40***
	(0.18)	(0.20)
Working Majority	0.17	0.38**
	(0.25)	(0.18)
President's Party * Working Majority	0.45	0.32
	(0.37)	(0.35)
Constant	-2.27***	-2.31***
	(0.21)	(0.22)
Number of Observations	149	149

Robust standard errors clustered by presidential term in parentheses.
**** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1*

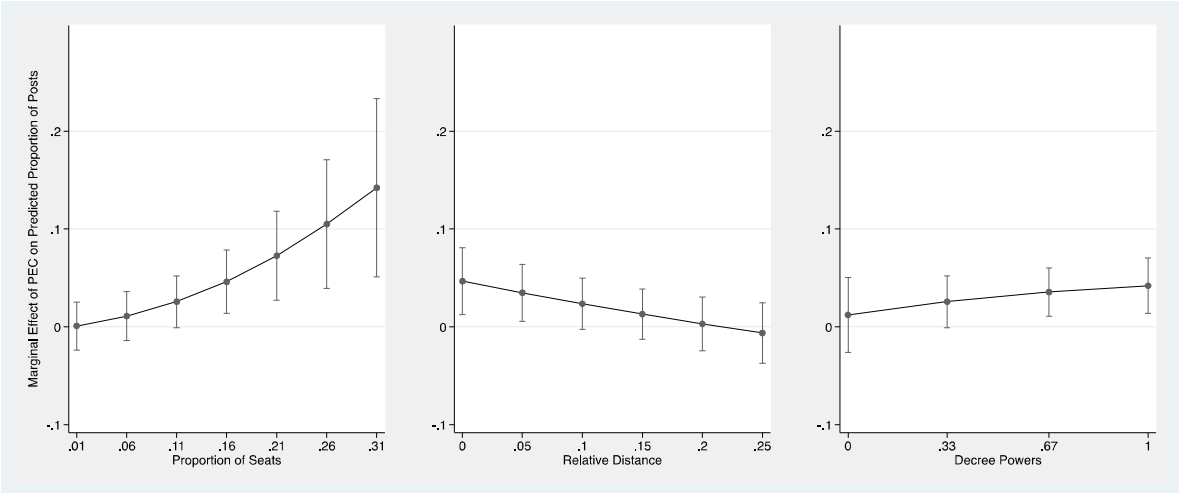
First, with regards to the *President's Party* dummy variable, we see evidence of a *formateur* bonus whether or not the president's party has a *Working Majority* (greater than 45% of the seats) in the legislature. Excluding observations where presidents have working majorities, the average proportion of seats held by all parties is .18 in our estimation sample. In this case, the predicted proportion of posts would be .37, on average, for presidential parties and .15 on average for non-presidential parties that were not electoral coalition members (assuming average values on other variables). According to the additive model, membership in the first round electoral coalition has only a small positive effect of about .05 on the average predicted proportion of posts and joining in the second round appears to make no difference.

In terms of the variables capturing the relative bargaining positions of presidents and legislative parties, the additive model fits with expectations in the literature. Parties that control a higher proportion of legislative seats are more likely to get a larger share of cabinet

portfolios. Also, presidents that have stronger unilateral power tend to give away a smaller share of cabinet positions. According to this model, the relative distance does not seem to influence the share of posts that parties receive.

The interactive model, however, reveals that the effects of an electoral coalition partnership and the bargaining environment are conditional on one another. We find that pre-electoral coalition membership increases the average cabinet representation for larger parties, but makes no difference when are parties are very small, consistent with Government Representation Hypothesis 1. However, contrary to the second Government Representation Hypothesis, we find that members of the electoral coalition tend to be awarded a larger share of posts than non-members only when the distance between the party and the president is relatively minor. Finally, our results suggest that pre-electoral membership has a significant effect on cabinet representation only when presidents hold strong decree powers, which supports Government Representation Hypothesis 3. Figure 3 plots these conditional effects, holding other covariates at their means or modes.

Figure 3. Conditional Effect of Electoral Coalition Membership on Cabinet Representation



Continuous covariates set at means, discrete covariates set at modes, and random effects set at zero. Bars show 90% confidence intervals.

These conditional relationships are symmetrical, such that the effect of the bargaining environment on parties' cabinet representation differs for pre-electoral coalition members and non-members, as presented in Table 7. Again, contrary to our expectation expressed in Hypothesis 5, we find that relative distance has a negative effect on the proportion of posts given to a governing party that was part of the presidents' pre-electoral coalition but no effect on the share of posts going to a governing party that joined the president's coalition only after the election. In contrast, while presidential decree authority tends to reduce the share given to all governing parties, it appears to have a much greater impact on parties that joined the president's coalition only after the election, consistent with Hypothesis 6.

Table 7. Conditional Marginal Effects of Bargaining Environment on Cabinet Representation

	PEC r1=0	PEC r1=1
Seats	.657***	.745***
Relative Distance	.019	- .202***
Decree	- .119***	- .040*

*Continuous covariates set at means, dichotomous covariates set at modes, and random effects set at zero. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1*

Duration in Cabinet **[analysis in progress]**

Conclusion

In their search for winning majorities, or at least winning pluralities, multiple political parties sometimes form an electoral coalition in support of a single presidential candidate. Among the 70 presidents elected in the twelve Latin American countries included in our dataset, 32 (or 46 percent) were supported by a coalition of two or more parties in the first, or only, round of the presidential election, and another 5 presidents formed multiparty electoral coalitions only for the second round. In this paper, we link the incentives for such electoral coordination among parties in presidential elections to the governing coalitions that presidents build to pass their policy agendas. We also show that the legislative bargaining environment mediates the relationship between pre-electoral coalition formation and post-electoral government formation.

Previous research on pre-electoral coalitions in Latin America emphasized how “governing coalitions in presidential systems can differ markedly from electoral coalitions" (Mainwaring 1993, 221). Our data suggest that such differences tend to come from the addition of new parties, not because electoral coalition partners are dropped after the election. Most of the excluded parties were very small, and in some cases they were part of the president's coalition even though they did not have a seat in the cabinet. Empirically, electoral coalitions are highly correlated with governing coalitions.

Nevertheless, we think it important to emphasize that cooperation in government in Latin America’s presidential systems also may come about only as the result of post-electoral arrangements. Of the 90 parties (not counting the presidents' own parties) that ended up serving in the initial cabinets, only 47 percent had formed an official alliance prior to the first round of the election. For instance, in Brazil the *Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro* (PMDB) frequently joined presidential governing coalitions even when they were not official members of the presidents' pre-electoral coalitions. In majority run-off systems, we find parties that presented competing candidates in round one but then lent support to the presidents' candidacies in round two and ended up in their cabinets. We also see rival presidential parties joining cabinets as part of pacts or “grand coalitions” in Colombia, Venezuela and Uruguay. In Bolivia, where the president is decided by congress if no candidate receives a majority, governing coalitions are formed after the election in a way that is similar to coalition formation in parliamentary systems.

Although an electoral coalition is neither necessary nor sufficient for cooperation in government, we find that when parties form electoral coalitions prior to voting, these

partnerships usually last into the president's term in office. Our evidence from twelve Latin American countries since 1982 challenges theoretically and empirically the claim that electoral coalitions are unimportant, or an impediment, to governability in presidential systems. Beyond the immediate concerns of coalition formation, our findings also suggest that governing coalitions are responsive to the preferences of the electorate and are, thus, more representative than has been understood to date.

Appendix: Sources

Cabinet data is from Martinez-Gallardo (2014) and was updated by the authors for this project based on online news sources such as Lexis Nexis Academic, Keesing's World Record and the CIA World Leaders.

Data on pre-electoral coalitions is from Kellam (*Forthcoming*) and updated by the authors for this project. We use official results from national electoral tribunals whenever possible to identify coalitions. Pre-electoral coalitions often appear in official electoral results, but not always. Additional coalition information comes from Nohlen (2005), Payne et al (2002), the *Latin American Weekly Report*, and various country specific sources.

The legislative seat shares of political parties are taken from several sources including national courts or tribunals and websites such as the Political Database of the Americas, observatorioelectoral.org and others. Ideological positions are based on Coppedge (1997) and updated/completed based on Pop Eleches (2009) and the authors' research. The United Nations Development Programme provides information on presidential powers in Latin America.

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